

## Center for Climate Impact and Action (CLIMACT) Starting Grant

### Call for proposals

#### CLIMACT's mission

The [Center for Climate Impact and Action \(CLIMACT\)](#) is a joint center between the Ecole polytechnique fédérale de Lausanne (EPFL) and the University of Lausanne (UNIL) designed to foster interdisciplinary and interinstitutional research and implementation activities that address the social, scientific, and technological challenges associated with climate change and a sustainable future. Projects funded through the CLIMACT Starting Grant should be aimed at proposing to societal stakeholders novel and systemic approaches to deal with current issues in society and technology, associating researchers from both UNIL and EPFL.

#### Call for proposals' mission

Through an annual call for projects, CLIMACT provides competitive grants to support new seed research endeavours with the potential to grow into full-scale interdisciplinary research projects. This fund is thus designed to foster novel collaborative research efforts, which will explore new ideas, solutions and communication methods in order to maximise societal impact.

#### Call for proposals

- A call for proposals is now open, with a deadline set on **Monday 6 March 2023 (17:00 CET)**.
- Applications must involve at least one investigator from an EPFL research group and one investigator from an UNIL research group.
- Partnerships are encouraged, but funding for partners is limited to 10% of the total requested grant amount.
- Funding is available for projects with a duration up to 12 months.
- The maximum amount that can be requested is CHF 50'000 per project.
- Projects may start as early as 1 June 2023 and **must be finished by 31 May 2024. No extension will be granted.**

#### Requirements

The requirements are:

- The project is proposed by an interdisciplinary team made up of at least one researcher from each of the institutions (EPFL and UNIL).
- The project falls within the scope of CLIMACT's mission.
- At the time of the application and for the whole duration of the project (up to 12 months), applicants must be employed as professors, senior scientists (maîtres d'enseignement et de recherche – MERs) or scientific collaborators (holding a PhD at application time) at EPFL or UNIL.
- Adjunct professors ("professeurs titulaires"), MERs and other scientific collaborators (holding a PhD at application time) who are not financially independent must include a letter of commitment from their host professor or head of unit if the latter is not already a co-applicant to the project. The letter should indicate that he or she:

- guarantees the feasibility of the project for its full duration using the means of his/her unit;
- takes administrative responsibility for all EPFL or UNIL personnel financed by the project, in particular with respect to any induced costs or additional resources needed and not covered by the grant.
- Each project team designates a main applicant who is responsible for coordinating the research work. This responsible (main) applicant is a professor, senior scientist (MER) or scientific collaborator (holding a PhD at the application time) of one of the two institutions.
- Researchers or groups of researchers can propose multiple projects but only the highest marked proposal can be granted.
- Applicants must not be part of the evaluation committee of the CLIMACT Starting Grant.

Applicants who contravene the rules of research integrity or good scientific practice will not be considered for funding from the CLIMACT Starting Grant.

### Eligible costs

Eligible direct costs include and are limited to:

- Personnel costs for personnel specifically hired to work on the project, i.e. doctoral students<sup>1</sup>, postdoctoral researchers, and other employees (e.g. technical assistants);
- Research funds: i.e. consumables, direct costs of infrastructure use, open research data costs, open access publication costs, expenses of third parties (subcontracting) as well as travel, conference, and workshop costs. Note that subcontracting expenses cannot exceed 10% of the total direct costs.

Funding from the CLIMACT Starting Grant cannot be used to cover already existing (e.g. administrative) services, equipment, and/or the salary of the grantee(s).

No overheads shall be paid on the direct costs of the CLIMACT Starting Grant projects.

### How to apply

All required documents must be submitted in English via [calls@climact.ch](mailto:calls@climact.ch) before the submission deadline of **Monday 6 March 2023** (17:00 CET). Please note that a reception notice will be sent to every applicant.

<b>Project proposal</b>	This <a href="#">template</a> must be used for the project proposal.
<b>Budget</b>	This <a href="#">template</a> must be used for the budget.
<b>Letter of support from the host professor or head of unit (if applicable)</b>	Any applicant who is not a professor or a financially independent adjunct professor/MER must provide a letter of support from his/her host professor or head of unit.
<b>CV (including major scientific achievements) and list of publications</b>	All applicants must submit a CV (including major scientific achievements) and a list of publications.

<sup>1</sup> Applicants must commit to employing doctoral students until completion of their PhD.

<b>Ethical issues questionnaire</b>	The responsible applicant will be required to fill out the <a href="#">ethical issues form</a> .
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Applications will only be considered if they strictly meet the guidelines, notably with respect to length and format.

## Evaluation

Each application will be evaluated and scored by a committee appointed by CLIMACT and comprised of independent experts, based on the following criteria:

1. Excellence – 50% of total evaluation grade
  - a. Novelty and innovativeness (40% of Excellence):  
To what extent are the objectives ambitious and beyond the state of the art (e.g. novel concepts and approaches and development between and/or across research areas)?
  - b. Balance and complementarity of the teams (60% of Excellence):  
To what extent does the interdisciplinary and interinstitutional approach of the project go beyond what the individual applicants could achieve alone?
2. Implementation – 20% of total evaluation grade
  - a. Research activities and planning (50% of Implementation)  
To what extent are the proposed activities and working arrangements appropriately articulated to achieve the goals of the project?
  - b. Timescale and resources (50% of Implementation)  
To what extent are the proposed timescales and resources necessary and properly justified?
3. Impact – weight 30% of total evaluation grade
  - a. Technical and scientific impact (40% of Impact)  
To what extent will the project lead to new technical and/or scientific developments?
  - b. Benefits to society (60% of Impact)  
Through what extent will the results and deliverables benefit society directly through actions from the project team?

The final decision will be made by this ad hoc committee.

## Decision and start of the projects

Decisions will be announced in April 2023 and granted applicants can start their project as early as 1 June 2023. The decision may include additional legal requirements with which the Applicant must comply with.

Funding will be disbursed at the start of the project once the responsible applicant has complied with all administrative requirements, including a grant agreement, a collaboration agreement and ethical requirements.

## Reporting

Granted responsible applicants will be required to submit:

- A Data Management Plan (DMP) within the first half of the funding period;
- A final financial report prepared by the financial services of each institution as well as an Excel summary table based on these financial reports;
- A final technical report on the activities carried out, deviation from the initial proposal, results attained and the future prospects (including submissions to funding agencies).

Granted researchers agree to participate in events with other CLIMACT participants to present and discuss their projects, and to pass on information that CLIMACT may request to assess the programme ex-post.

Granted researchers must inform CLIMACT about any publications and direct societal activities or outputs resulting from the project as well as any further grants received.

## Contact

If you have any questions, please contact [calls@climact.ch](mailto:calls@climact.ch).

## Open access

Grantees should ensure open access to all data and scientific publications (self-archiving or open access publishing) related to their project results.

## Ethical and legal compliance

Applicants bear the main responsibility for the planned research project. In particular, they take into account all ethical, legal and societal aspects of the proposed research, and, if granted, they shall comply with all applicable laws and regulations in relations with these matters. In addition, the Applicant must contact its competent internal service if the project requires to allocate the intellectual property or other liabilities (such as data protection responsibilities).