HARVARD UNIVERSITY
OFFICE OF THE VICE PROVOST FOR CLIMATE & SUSTAINABILITY
CLIMATE RESEARCH CLUSTERS
CALL FOR PROPOSALS, SPRING 2022

All applications should be submitted online at harvard.communityforce.com
The application portal opens on March 10, 2022

March 9, 2022 Application website opens	May 20, 2022 Step 1 of Application Due	August 8 2022 Step 2 of Application Due	Oct. 24, 2022 Step 3 of Application Due	January 2023 Funding begins

As part of the Presidential initiative on climate and sustainability, the Office of the Vice Provost of Climate and Sustainability invites proposals from Harvard University Principal Investigators (PIs) for the new Climate Research Clusters Program.

The Climate Research Clusters Program. The purpose of the Climate Research Clusters Program is to produce useful and impactful solutions to climate problems. Research clusters are intended to be ambitious, interdisciplinary, cross-School efforts to take on climate problems that are narrow enough to ensure that concrete solutions emerge, but broad enough that the solutions represent significant progress in meeting the world's climate challenge.

Research clusters will comprise Harvard faculty, post-docs, and students, and they may include visiting scholars, practitioners, and external collaborators. Cluster activities should include external engagement, for example, through conferences and/or convenings. The final result should be a concrete proposal or proposals to address an aspect of the climate crisis based on the new knowledge that the research cluster produces.

Available Funding

Grant amount. The OVPCS will award as many as five climate research clusters of up to $600,000 per project, per year, for a period of up to three years.

Eligibility and Review Criteria

Evaluation criteria. A faculty review committee, appointed by the Vice Provost for Climate and Sustainability, will evaluate proposals based on a set of core criteria: innovation, real-world impact,

interdisciplinary and cross-School collaboration, and equity. (See the Additional Information section below for a discussion of these criteria.)

Submission Cycle Timeline

Three-step proposal process. PIs should submit a 500-word concept proposal by **May 20, 2022**. The concept proposal should state the problem, describe sample research questions to be explored, explain why that research could lead to impactful real-world outcomes, address any equity concerns associated with the topic, and provide a provisional list of the research team including co-PIs. OVPCS will confer with the proposal teams, potentially suggest mergers or extensions of proposed projects, and hold brainstorming sessions. Based on this process, teams will update their concept proposals by **August 8, 2022**. Selected teams will then be invited to provide a full proposal, which will be due **October 24, 2022**. Awards will be announced by **December 2022**, and funding will commence in **January 2023.**

How To Apply

To apply for funding from the Climate Research Clusters program, please visit [*the Harvard University Funding Portal*](). *You will be asked to submit the following information at each step of the proposal process:*

- Step 1: Concept Proposal (500 words) – due by May 20, 2022
    1. Title
    2. Submitting team (PI and any co-PIs)
    3. Statement of the real-world climate problem the cluster addresses
    4. Description of cluster research questions
    5. Possible additional cross-School collaborative opportunities for the cluster
    6. Likely uses of funds, in broad terms

- Step 2: Revised Concept Proposal (1000 words) – due by August 8, 2022

Step 2 proposals will be reviewed by the Climate Research Cluster Review Committee, comprised of internal and external experts. In early September, the Committee will invite some teams to prepare a full Step 3 proposal.

1. Title
2. Submitting team (PI and any co-PIs) (please note any changes to the team)
3. Statement of the real-world climate problem the cluster addresses and the objectives of the cluster
4. Cluster research questions
5. Description of work plan describing how the research questions will be addressed and how the objectives will be achieved, including methods, data sources, engagement, etc.

6. Contribution of the proposed work in the context of related existing work in the proposed area, e.g. relation to existing research & academic work, relation to other entities working in the area, and what important contribution the cluster will make given the existing intellectual and institutional landscape.
7. Likely uses of funds, in broad terms

- ## Step 3: Full proposal – due by October 24, 2022

Step 3 proposals will be sent to outside referees, both academic and, if appropriate, from the practitioner/NGO community.

1. **Contact information** that includes applicant's name, affiliation, title, address, phone number, and email.
2. **Project Summary** (300 words) (should be accessible to the climate-educated public)
3. **Project Description** (4000 words). Describe the proposed cluster's motivation, objectives, relation to existing intellectual and institutional landscape, including academic literature, comparable projects or activities including within NGOs and governmental organizations; intended real-world contributions in the context of that landscape; and work plan, including research plan, methods, role of personnel (postdocs, visitors, etc.), academic workshops, data sources; and external engagement strategies including entities and anticipated timetables.
4. **References Cited**
5. **Description of the cross-School collaboration and use of Salata Institute resources.** A goal of the Climate Research Clusters Program is to foster meaningful cross-School collaboration and interaction under the auspices of the Salata Institute for Climate & Sustainability, so that the multiple complementary strengths and perspectives of Harvard and external scholars are brought to bear on pressing climate challenges.
   a. Describe the nature of the cross-School collaboration, including the contributions of each member of the proposed cluster.
   b. The Salata Institute, housed in the Belfer building in the Harvard Kennedy School complex, will provide collaborative work space, which will be made available to Climate Research Clusters on a reservable, hoteling basis. In addition, office space at the Salata Institute will be available for visitors, post-docs, and other researchers. Limited such space will be available in Spring 2023, with more space becoming available starting Fall 2023. Describe anticipated cluster uses/needs for space in the Salata Institute.
   c. The Salata Institute will also provide engagement and convening resources (staff, space) to facilitate and to promote the work of the research clusters. The proposal should acknowledge the use of these resources. Please describe anticipated joint engagement and convening activities (e.g., with an existing Harvard center or with external entities such as other academic institutions or NGOs).
6. **Bio sketch or CV of Principal Investigator, Co-Investigators, Collaborators, and other team members**. External team members, from other institutions including NGOs as appropriate, are

welcome and appropriate when their participation enhances the likely success of the proposed cluster.

7. **Supplemental information** that can include (as appropriate for the cluster) up to three publications or pre-publications, preliminary participation agreements by individual/institutional collaborators, documentation of availability of key third-party data or other information needed to conduct the research, indications of willingness to participate by key stakeholders, and so forth.

8. **Project Budget** requires both a **Budget Form** and **Budget Justification**. Applicants must use the Budget Form and Budget Justification Form **provided in the application**.

   i. Non-allowable expenses include student tuition, capital project costs, and renovation costs.

   ii. Academic-year salary support for faculty principal investigators is an allowed expense. Requests for partial support of principal investigator summer salary will be considered only in limited circumstances. Applicants requesting salary support must include a letter signed by their school's academic dean, or other appropriate institutional officer, indicating the school's approval of the request for salary.

   iii. If the total cost of the proposed project is larger than the award requested from the Climate Research Clusters Program, please include an overall financial plan for the project that indicates other sources of funding.

   iv. Applicants should note that any benefits-eligible personnel (e.g. faculty, exempt employees, union employees, post-doctoral fellows, teaching assistants, temps) expenses in the budget must include the appropriate fringe rates for each year of funding. If the application proposes to fund a certain amount of an existing employee's time, then the budget must also include that percentage of applied fringe. Applicants should consult with Human Resources at their home schools for applicable rates.

   v. Staff support for engagement, outreach, and events will be provided by the Salata Institute and should not be included as budget line items.

   vi. Space at the Salata Institute used by a cluster will not be charged to the budget of the cluster.

   vii. The recipient of any funding involving travel should adhere to Harvard University's travel policies.

9. **Other Support:** Applicants must **use the form provided in the application** to summarize active and pending support for the Principal Investigator. Other Support includes all financial resources, whether Federal, non-Federal, commercial, or institutional, available in direct support of an individual's research endeavors, including but not limited to research grants, cooperative agreements, contracts and/or institutional awards. Please include any Harvard internal grants or major, project-specific support. Please do not include any "start-up" packages and/or tenure-transfer funding.

10. **Assurance of Compliance:** All recipients of an award from the Climate Research Clusters Program are expected to comply with all University, (or local institutional, if awarded through an affiliated entity), policies governing the conduct of research including, but not limited to, the use of animals, human subjects, hazardous materials, and export controls. Awardees will be asked to provide the name and signature of a school or department administrator who, in addition to the principal investigator, will certify that the project complies with all relevant policies. Funds will not be made available, and invoices from non-Harvard entities will not be reimbursed, without such certification. All applicants are subject to audit.

Additional Information

Please refer to our [FAQ page](#) for answers to frequently asked questions.
Step 3 proposal submission page: https://bit.ly/3RZUtZ6