

Climate Emergency

Joint call from the UCL Environment Domain and UCL Grand Challenges

Deadline for applications: 23:59 on 9 January 2022

The Global Climate Emergency

The world is changing because of human impacts, and without significant intervention will continue to do so. Human influence has warmed the climate at a rate that is unprecedented in at least the last 2,000 years ([IPCC, 2021](#)). In 2019, atmospheric CO₂ concentrations were very likely to be higher than at any point in the last 2 million years, reaching average concentrations of 410 ppmv. Global surface temperatures have increased faster since 1970 than any other 50-year period over at least the last 2,000 years, and changes in the biosphere during this period are consistent with shifting climatic zones as a result of global climate change.

Such variations are unequivocally caused by human activities, and no region of the planet will be spared. If we do not implement drastic changes to current emissions and behaviours, then by 2040 almost 700million people a year are likely to be exposed to droughts of at least 6 months duration. Over the same timeframe, some 3.9 billion people are likely to experience major heatwaves, and by 2030 the number of people exposed to heat stress beyond the survivability threshold is likely to surpass 10 million per year ([CCRA3, 2021](#)).

Cascading risks associated with shifting global boundaries will also impact mortality rates, threaten national and international security, cause economic and trade disruption, drive migration pressures, threaten global food security, cause health crises and challenge energy security. Many changes will be 'locked in' by 2040 and go beyond the limits of what some nations can adapt to. The climate emergency is not only dangerous for our planet and natural environment but will have significant consequences to human life as we know it.

We must act now. Research has the potential to drive real world impacts and it is vital we mobilise to meet the challenges of the global climate emergency.

Areas of research activity in scope for this call could include, but are not limited to, aspects of:

- fairer finance
- transport, energy and the future of cities
- climate change resilience
- climate change and health
- the biodiversity crisis
- sustainable food production and linkages to the climate emergency
- understanding environmental change, planetary health and prosperity

Two Funding Opportunities

This funding builds on the outcomes of COP26 and the [UCL Generation One Climate Campaign](#). We are seeking ambitious, short-term proposals for cross-disciplinary and cross-boundary projects and activities that generate societal impacts leading to published reports.

Activities could include:

- Research or policy workshops
- Symposia or conferences
- Reports
- Articles or comment pieces in peer publications or media channels
- Preparatory or exploratory research towards larger grant applications
- Public and community engagement activities
- Videos and reports focused on policy
- Research-led performance/public art-based outputs, including documentary films

There are two separate funding opportunities for the Climate Emergency Call:

Grand Challenges and the Environment Domain

Applications for projects costing up to £10,000 will be considered.

The UCL fiscal year-end is 31 July. All expenses must be invoiced by that date, with costed activities completed by 22 July 2022. Use of awarded funds cannot be deferred to a later date.

Allowable costs include payment for part-time Research Assistants.

Restrictions

Please note the following items are **not fundable** under Grand Challenges schemes:

- Activities with costs after 31 July 2022
- Capital equipment costs
- Studies in basic science or research that is exclusively lab-based
- Article processing costs (publication fees)
- Staff 'buy-out', maintenance fees or bench fees

Discipline Hopping for the Climate Emergency

A grant of up to £20,000, which must be spent no later than 31 March 2022.

The short timescale will be taken into account when assessing proposals.

Funding for this call is provided by the *NERC Discipline Hopping for Environmental Solutions initiative*. Proposals should align with the [NERC Environmental Solutions agenda](#).

We are seeking ambitious, short-term proposals that will facilitate and enhance inter/cross disciplinary working (discipline hopping) and strengthen our capacity to address complex challenges associated with the climate emergency. Collaborations that build momentum towards true discipline integration.

Unique to this call, **funding can be used** for:

- Directly Allocated staff costs, plus associated indirect and estates costs,
- Directly Incurred staff costs, plus associated indirect and estates costs,
- Equipment (up to £10k)

Successful applicants will be required to complete a reporting form no later than 1 June 2022.

We strongly encourage applicants from across the UKRI remit, including the natural sciences, arts, humanities, engineering and technology, built environment and medical sciences.

Eligible Applicants

First Applicants must be UCL-based researchers holding academic positions or postdoctoral appointments in academic Faculties. [NB Doctoral students are not eligible to stand as lead applicants, but can be paid project research assistants].

Second Applicants can be either UCL staff (researchers in an academic Faculty different from the First Applicant or from a Professional Services department) or external partners – either academic (i.e. at another university in the UK or overseas) or non-academic (e.g. at a Local Authority, NGO, community or business organization).

Additional Collaborators can be from within, or external to UCL. We strongly welcome and encourage external partners, including third sector organisations, policy, think tanks, industry, and charities whose expertise and missions focus on societal impact. If not standing as ‘Second Applicants’ they can be shown as ‘Additional Collaborators’.

As part of our commitment to equity and inclusion in relation to the Equality Act 2010, we would particularly like to encourage applications from colleagues who identify as underrepresented groups including, but not limited to, women, BAME, LGBT+ community and disabled individuals at UCL to apply for this opportunity.

Assessment of Applications and Notification of Decisions

Applications will be assessed by panels comprising members of Grand Challenges Working Groups from UCL Academic and Professional Services departments, and members of the Grand Challenges team. The scoring criteria are:

- Quality of the application and originality of topic and/or approach
- Cross-disciplinarity:
 - How does the research/activities develop an understanding of different research perspectives and methodologies to address the climate emergency?
 - How does the research go beyond common disciplinary boundaries?
 - What new collaborations will be created?
- Crossing boundaries (academia to civil society): What are the strengths of the collaborating applicants and any external partners?
- Societal relevance and potential to deliver significant positive impact
- Extent to which the proposed activities can be delivered within the timeframe and budget

In addition, applications to the NERC Discipline Hopping fund will be assessed on how the proposal aligns with the [NERC ambitions around Environmental Solutions](#).

Funding decisions will be announced in January.

Terms and Conditions

Successful applicants must:

- Permit UCL Grand Challenges and UCL Environment Domain to publicise the immediate, medium, and long-term outcomes attributable to funded projects.
- Acknowledge UCL Grand Challenges and UCL Environment Domain support in publications or external communications.
- Provide a report by 30 November 2022 describing activities, outputs, and impact to-date
- In addition, holders of the NERC Discipline Hopping award will be required to complete a reporting form no later than 1 June 2022

Submitting Your Application

Applications must be made [online on the Grand Challenges website](#). Unfortunately, we will not accept emailed applications. If you cannot apply online, or require this application in an alternative format, please [contact James Paskins](#).

Discipline Hopping to Address the Climate Emergency (NERC funding)

Applicants must liaise with departmental finance administrators to complete a standalone worktribe costing using the regular NERC template with indirect costings allowed.

If you have questions about the NERC Discipline Hopping for the Climate Emergency call please [contact Becca Burns](#) in the Environment Domain.

For all other enquiries, please [contact James Paskins](#).