Environmental Protection Agency
An Ghníomhaireacht um Chaomhnú Comhshaoil

EPA's Grant Management System - User Guide for Research Proposal Authorisers

Updated June 2023

EPA Research Programme 2021-2030

User Guide for Research Proposal Authorisers

Introduction

This document is a guide for Research Proposal Authorisers using the EPA's Grant Management and Application Portal (System). It describes the key steps required when reviewing and authorising proposals submitted from applicants within your organisation in response to an EPA Call for Research Proposals. The system can be accessed using the following link: https://epa.smartsimple.ie/s_Login.jsp .

Please read this document carefully prior to using the system.

This document does not replace, but is complimentary to the:

1. EPA Research Call Technical Description

2. EPA Research Guidelines and Terms & Conditions

The above documents are available to download from the EPA's Grant Management and Application Portal or from the EPA Research Calls section of the EPA website.

The EPA Research Programme has implemented the following policies and strategies, which should be referred to when reviewing and authorising proposals:

- Gender Strategy

- Policy on Maternity, Paternity, Adoptive and Parents Leave

Guidance materials are available to users of the EPA's Grant Management and Application Portal and can be downloaded when logged in, or from the Grants Management page on the EPA Website.

More Information

For further information or assistance please contact research@epa.ie.

Disclaimer

Although every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the material contained in this document, complete accuracy cannot be guaranteed. The Environmental Protection Agency does not accept any responsibility whatsoever for loss or damage occasioned or damages claimed to have been occasioned, in part or in full, as a consequence of any person acting, or refraining from acting, as a result of a matter contained in this document.

Contents

Enabling Pop-ups

Please ensure that your browser settings permit pop-ups from the web site address displayed by the EPA's Grant Management and Application Portal (https://epa.smartsimple.ie/s_Login.jsp).

> **IMPORTANT**: If you do not enable pop-ups when logged on to EPA's Grant Management and Application Portal, some functions will appear not to work because the associated pop-up windows cannot be displayed.

EPA's Grant Management and Application Portal

The EPA's Grant Management and Application Portal is a web-based system which enables you to authorise a proposal submitted by an applicant within your organisation/company (except for the submissions of Event Support Grants).

Research Proposal Authoriser Functions

You will be able to access and review details of applications in order to:

- Authorise an application before submission to the EPA
- Request revision of an application before submission to the EPA
- Decline an application
- Accept an offer of grant funding

Applicant Functions

Applicants can:

- Create a researcher profile via the Registration Page
- Complete and submit grant application (when a call for proposals is open)

If a proposal is recommended for funding following evaluation, applicants will use the EPA's Grant Management and Application Portal to respond to any technical and/or financial queries raised during the evaluation process.

Grant Evaluators Functions

The Evaluation process will be completed using the EPA's Grant Management and Application Portal. Grant Evaluators will be able to:

- View and review proposals submitted by applicants
- Complete and submit an Evaluation Form

Post-Award (Grantee) Functions

If a proposal is awarded funding, grantees will use the EPA's Grant Management and Application Portal to manage the grant award with the following activities:

- Project Management and Interim Reporting:
    - View and download/upload meeting documentation
    - Submission of Project Progress Reports
    - Submission of Financial Cost Statements
- Deliverables:
    - Submission of EPA Research Reports, Policy Briefs, etc
    - Submission of End of Project Questionnaire
- Miscellaneous Requests:
    - Submission of Project Time Extension Requests
    - Submission of Travel Outside the EU Requests
    - Submission of Budget Reallocation Requests
    - Submission of Family Leave Requests

# Reviewers/Steering Committee Members Functions

Following the award of a grant, Steering Committee Members will be able to:

- View and download/upload meeting documentation
- View/download Project Progress Reports
- View/download Deliverables and carry out their review

Research Office Workbench

When you first log into the EPA's Grant Management and Application Portal you will be presented with the Research Office Workbench. The Workbench is laid out in the following sections:

1. Information
2. Items for Action (Research Proposal Authorisers)
3. Application & Award Information
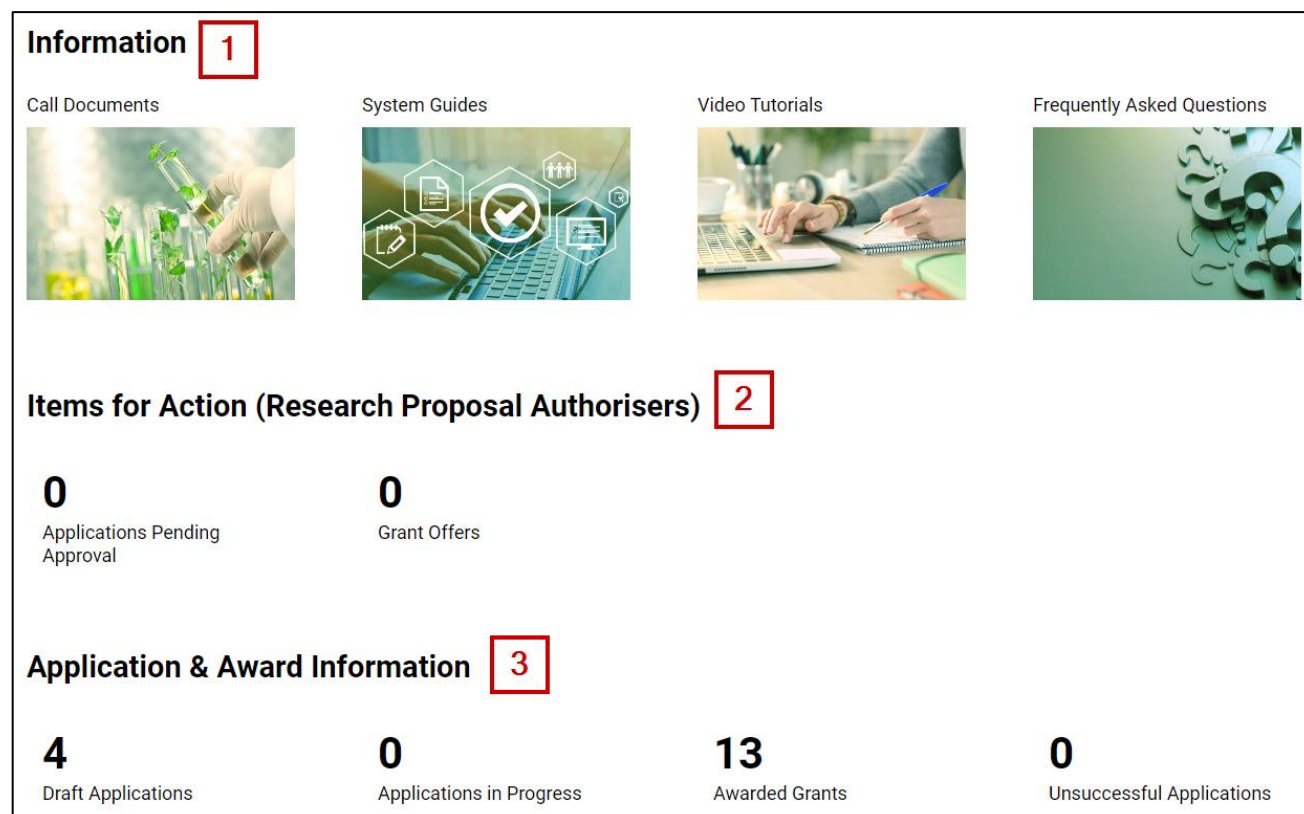
Information Section

This section provides links to the following:

1. Call Documents
2. System User Guides
3. Video Tutorials
4. Frequently Asked Questions

Items for Action Section

The buttons in this section provide access for you to:

1. Review and approve, decline or request revision of an application on behalf of your organisation
2. Accept a grant offer on behalf of your organisation

Application & Award Information Section

The buttons in this section provide access for you to:

1. View a list of all draft applications for your organisation. Please note, in order to prevent conflicts with editing rights (i.e. a record being locked by a member of the Research Office which prevents the applicant from being able to edit or submit it) this is a view-only list. Please contact the applicant to discuss details of the application.

2. View details of all applications in progress (i.e., applications that have been submitted and are under review)

3. View details of all the awarded grants for your organisation

4. View details of any unsuccessful applications for your organisation

Reviewing Proposals

You will be notified by automated email from dontoreply@epa.ie when a proposal has been submitted by an applicant from your organisation/company. The email will include the proposal number, project title, the name of the applicant, and details on how to access the EPA's Grant Management and Application Portal.

Important Information

PLEASE NOTE THE FOLLOWING IMPORTANT INFORMATION WHEN REVIEWING PROPOSALS:

- With the exception of applications for Scholarship funding, all applications must be created and submitted by the Lead Applicant – this includes applications for Research Fellowships. Applications submitted on behalf of another individual (e.g., an application for a Research Fellowship created and submitted by a supervisor with the intention of hiring a Fellow if the application is successful) will not be accepted. The EPA is not responsible for ensuring the accuracy of the project team/application details. Should it subsequently transpire that an application has been submitted by a third party who is not the Lead Applicant, the application will be withdrawn from further consideration by the EPA and any offers of funding will be rescinded.

- Applications must be submitted under the correct Call Topic (as indicated in the Technical Description Document) – mistakes will not be rectified. Proposals submitted under an incorrect Call Topic **will be considered ineligible and will not proceed to evaluation**.

- For all co-funded topics (indicated in the Technical Description Document), applicants may not apply for or participate in projects that are to be co-funded by their organisation, even if their organisation would not be in receipt of funding.

- Proposals that exceed the maximum duration and/or request funding in excess of the maximum specified for the Call Topic **will be considered ineligible and will not proceed to evaluation**.

- Any proposed changes following submission of the proposal **will only be considered in exceptional circumstances** and must be agreed by the EPA. It must be clearly demonstrated that the changes will not have any adverse impact on the original proposal – this applies to all changes including changes of Lead Applicant, Lead Organisation, Co-Applicants, Co-Applicant Organisations, and scope of the proposed research and associated tasks. The EPA's decision on this matter will be final.

- The following must be completed for all applications:
    - All fields on the online application form (including the Work Package Summary Table)
    - All sections of the project description template. Applicants must use the template provided in the online application form – variations will not be accepted by the EPA and will render the proposal ineligible.
    - All relevant sections of the budget template. Applicants must use the template provided in the online application form – variations will not be accepted by the EPA and will render the proposal ineligible.

- It is the responsibility of the Lead Applicant to ensure the proposal is submitted **before the Submission Deadline** as indicated in the Technical Description Document and the online application form.

- For a submission to be valid it must be authorised by the Research Proposal Authoriser in your organisation **before the Approval Deadline** as indicated in the Technical Description Document and the online application form.

Approve, Decline or Request Revision

IMPORTANT: Proposals that have not been authorised by the Approval Deadline will not be processed any further by the EPA.

1. Log into the portal and click on the Applications Pending Approval button – a list of proposals awaiting approval by your organisation will be displayed.

2. Click on the Open button to view the proposal number you want to review.

Applications Pending Approval

	#	Project Number	Lead Applicant	Lead Organisation	Grant Type	Project Type	Project Title	Status
Open	1	1034	Holly Dayin	EPA Research Test Organisation	Project Based Award	Medium Scale Project	Test Project Title	Submitted Pending Organisation Approval
Open	2	2021-NE-1060	Holly Dayin	EPA Research Test Organisation	Project Based Award	Medium Scale Project	Test Protecting and Restoring Our Natural Environment 2021 Call Topic 4 29th March 2021	Submitted Pending Organisation Approval

3. The proposal details will now be displayed on screen and the information completed by the lead applicant is available under each of the following tabs:

   - Project Scope
   - Project Team and Work Allocation
   - Outputs and Impact Delivery
   - Budget Details

4. To approve, request revision or decline the proposal click on the Edit button in the top left-hand corner, then select the Declarations and Authorisation tab:

1034

Approvals are open

GENERAL   PROJECT SCOPE   PROJECT TEAM & WORK ALLOCATION   OUTPUTS & IMPACT DELIVERY   BUDGET DETAILS   DECLARATIONS & AUTHORISATION

Grant Type:	Project Based Award
Status:	Submitted Pending Organisation Approval
Project/Proposal Number:	1034
Lead Applicant:	Holly Dayin
Lead Organisation:	EPA Research Test Organisation

5. Scroll to the bottom of the page to locate the Authorisation - Lead Organisation section:

Approve the Proposal

Complete the Authorisation Confirmation tick-box and click on the Approve button at the bottom of the screen – a notification will be issued to the lead applicant confirming the proposal has been approved by their organisation. The status of the proposal will change to Submitted Approved by Organisation.

Request Revision of the Proposal

1. Complete the Authorisation Confirmation tick-box

2. Enter an explanation into the "Provide Justification / Reason if not authorised or revision is required" field (this information will be made available to the applicant)

3. Click on the Revisions Required button at the bottom of the screen

The status of the proposal will change to Submitted Pending Revision by Applicant and a notification will be issued to the lead applicant advising them revisions are required.

The applicant will need to address the revisions and resubmit the proposal for organisation review/approval before the approval deadline.

Decline the Proposal

1. Complete the Authorisation Confirmation tick-box

2. Enter an explanation into the "Provide Justification / Reason if not authorised or revision is required" field (this information will be made available to the applicant)

3. Click on the Declined button at the bottom of the screen

The status of the proposal will change to Submitted Declined by Organisation and a notification will be issued to the lead applicant advising them the application has not been supported by their organisation.

Proposals that have been declined by the organisation will not be processed any further by the EPA.

Grant Offers

View the Offer

1. Log into the portal and click on the Grant Offers button – a list of offers awaiting acceptance by your organisation will be displayed.

2. Click on the Open button to view the offer.

Grant Offers

	#	Project/Proposal Number	Lead Applicant	Lead Organisation	Activity Type	Owner	Activity Status	Grant Status
Open	1	2021-ID-1051	Holly Dayin	EPA Research Test Organisation	Grant Offer & Advance Payment	Holly Dayin	Offer Issued	Grant Offered

1-1 of 1

3. Locate the Notification of Award of Research Grant section to view and download the following documents:

- Notification of Grant Award

- Acknowledgement of Receipt of Grant Award

- Accompanying Documents (e.g. Technical Description document, Guidelines and Terms & Conditions document)

Instructions

The following documents and policies relate to this award:

1. EPA Research Programme 2021-2030 - Guidelines and Terms & Conditions Document (uploaded below)
2. EPA Privacy Policy (https://www.epa.ie/footer/privacypolicy/)
3. Terms of Use of EPA Websites (https://www.epa.ie/footer/termsofuse/)

Notification of Grant Award

	File Name ▲	Size	Date
📄	Notification_Grant_Award_____.pdf	922.5 KB	13/07/2022 15:42

Total Files: 1

Acknowledgement of receipt of grant award

	File Name ▲	Size	Date
📄	Acknowledgment_____.pdf	883.2 KB	13/07/2022 15:42

Accept the Offer

The Acknowledgement of Award of Research Grant must be signed and stamped by an authorised signatory and returned by the date stipulated via the Grant Offer and Advance Payment activity on the EPA's Grant Management and Application portal.

> **IMPORTANT**: The grant will not be awarded until the signed Acknowledgement has been returned to the EPA.

1. Upload the signed Acknowledgement (1)
2. Complete the confirmation drop-down option (2)
3. Click on the Accept Offer button (3)

4. The status of the activity will now change to Offer Accepted.

Awarding of the Grant

On receipt of the correctly signed Acknowledgement the EPA will arrange to award the grant (the status will change to Grant Awarded) and issue the advance payment[1] (as applicable).

An email will be issued from donotreply@epa.ie to the Lead Applicant, Research Proposal Authoriser(s) and Finance Office Contact(s) within your organisation confirming that the status of the proposal is now Grant Awarded.

End of document	User Guide for Research Proposal Authorisers

---

[1] Advance payments may not be applicable to all grant types.