

SFI Public Service Fellowship 2023

1. Name of Governmental Department or Agency
Environmental Protection Agency
2. Title of the Project
EPA3 Foresight and Horizon Scanning for Climate, the Environment and Sustainability
3. Description of the Project
<p>Strategic foresight is a “structured and systematic way of using ideas about the future to anticipate and better prepare for change. It is about exploring different plausible futures that could arise, and the opportunities and challenges they could present”. In 2021, the OECD, working with ‘Our Public Service’, published the report Towards a strategic foresight system in Ireland, supporting the development of Ireland’s capacity in this area. Strategic foresight can be used to identify the early signs of oncoming disruptive change, and to reframe and broaden the scope of what is considered relevant in policy making.</p> <p>In the context of climate change and associated environmental and sustainability challenges, and the critical role of research and innovation in addressing these, as highlighted in for example <i>Impact 2030</i> and the Climate Action Plan 2023, it will be essential that national investment is directed to areas of research that will be most impactful. The development of a foresight system could support this by identifying emerging trends, knowledge and technology gaps, and research priorities for possible futures to 2050 and beyond.</p> <p>It is envisaged that the outputs of this project will inform future national research priorities in the areas of climate, the environment and sustainability, and support research funding organisations in the development of the most impactful and internationally competitive research funding programmes.</p> <p>The EPA has statutory responsibility for the coordination of environmental research in Ireland, and as such would be an appropriate organisation to host a Fellow to conduct this wide-reaching nationally relevant project.</p> <p>The Fellow would work directly with the EPA Research Team but would engage across the organisation and more widely.</p>
4. Project Scope
<p>Potential components of such a project may include, in the context of climate, the environment and/or sustainability:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review of international approaches to strategic foresight and horizon scanning, e.g., Joint Research Council, Global Megatrends, OECD activities, European Environmental Agency and other relevant European organisations, international strategies, etc.

2. Development of a framework for conducting foresight and horizon scanning
3. High-level identification of national research and innovation priorities in the areas of climate and the environment.
4. Detailed briefs on selected priorities.

It is envisaged that this approach would be broad and could address societal, policy, technological, and economic dimensions of research in climate, the environment and sustainability.

5. Skills/Expertise Required

STEM or AHSS expertise in areas related to climate, the environment or sustainability, or in disciplines such as economics or social sciences relevant to policy analysis, strategic planning, etc.

6. Expected Outputs of Project

Report(s) detailing foresight and horizon scanning approach, high-level outputs and a selection of detailed briefs.

7. Working Arrangements

EPA Research is located in the EPA Offices in Wexford and Dublin. Fellows may elect to be based in either of these offices. Blended working arrangements can be accommodated.

8. Expected Timeline

6-9 months full-time or up to 18 months part-time

9. Contact Details

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