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## Call for Research Proposals:

### **Accelerating the Transition to an Equitable, Resource-Efficient, Low-Carbon Economy**

Submissions due: February 16, 2024

The [Economics and Environmental Policy Research Network \(EEPRN\)](#) is launching a new request for research proposals (RfP) targeting academic research on **accelerating the transition to an equitable, resource-efficient, low-carbon economy**. This RfP uniquely builds upon recent work by a partnership led by Smart Prosperity Institute (SPI) on the material needs of decarbonization and is designed to feed into emerging policy-oriented research needs on a clean energy transition that ensures Canada's continued prosperity in a low-carbon future.

Topics of particular interest are focussed on building a cluster of research to **inform policy and regulatory decision-making around the inter-relationship between low-carbon and circular-economy transitions**. Examples of questions within those topics include but are not limited to:

#### **1. Policy, regulatory, and governance challenges for low-carbon, circular transitions.**

- What policies or regulatory changes are needed to better integrate resource efficiency or other circular economy objectives into project approval, siting, construction, maintenance, and decommissioning decisions for low-carbon energy production, storage, or infrastructure projects? What are the potential costs and benefits of this integration?
- What regulatory innovations are required to accelerate new project approvals to support a low-carbon energy transition (e.g. new critical mineral extraction or refining, or new renewable energy infrastructure) while also driving improved performance on environmental and social outcomes?
- What evidence or data exists from theory, practice, modelling, or case studies about how circular policy approaches can complement existing climate policy frameworks in accelerating an economy-wide low-carbon transition, or within specific sectors? How cost-effective are these approaches?

#### **2. Advancing Reconciliation and/or equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) outcomes within a low-carbon, circular transition**

- What innovative regulatory, institutional, governance, or finance reforms are needed to align the material needs of decarbonization with Reconciliation and/or EDI goals?
- What are the impacts (positive or negative) of circular policies or approaches to drive resource efficiency and lower environmental footprints of material sourcing for a low-carbon transition on Indigenous Peoples, equity-deserving groups, or low-income Canadians?

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### 3. Supporting greater coordination between national, regional, and local efforts for low-carbon, circular transitions.

- What challenges exist for local and regional governments in the establishment of circular, clean energy value chains and how can local/regional efforts inform federal policy design for greater resource efficiency?
- How can multi-scale or multi-jurisdictional collaboration for low-carbon solutions and greater circularity be facilitated, and how should existing regional or federal policy frameworks be shifted to accommodate new solutions at each level of government? Is there any evidence on what approaches tend to be most successful?

### 4. Data, metrics, and indicators for a low-carbon, circular economy.

- What new metrics or indicators are needed to inform decision-making, set targets, and track progress on climate, environmental, sustainability, reconciliation, and social goals in the context of a transition toward a circular, low-carbon economy? Are there opportunities for big data to support these objectives?
- What new data or indicators (or better integration of existing data and indicators) are needed to track the environmental or climate footprint of products from upstream material sourcing through downstream primary, secondary, tertiary, etc., markets?

## HOW TO APPLY:

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**Research proposals are due no later than 11:59 pm PT on February 4, 2024, with a complete submission comprised of two parts:**

1. Submission of a completed proposal (see template below) to: [research.network@smartprosperity.ca](mailto:research.network@smartprosperity.ca)
2. Completion of the following [Google Form](#)

Proposals should describe work that is focused on informing Canadian policy discussions, with projects starting no earlier than March 1, 2024 (backdating of expenses to this date is allowed).

Proposals describing full research projects (i.e. original research, data analysis, case studies) or research development work (i.e. literature synthesis, dataset development) will be considered for funding.

- **Research development activities** can apply for up to one year of funding, with proposals generally not exceeding CAD\$10,000, for research scoping work to be completed no later than March 31, 2025.
- **Full research projects** can apply for up to two years of funding, with funding for Year 2 conditional on the successful completion of Year 1 deliverables. The maximum funding available is CAD\$30,000 over two years, with projects to be completed by March 31, 2026. Note that the funding request does

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not need to be balanced between years, but no more than CAD\$20,000 will be awarded for any given fiscal year.

All proposals should specify intermediate deliverables and/or updates to be submitted every six months, such as draft working papers, presentations of interim results, interim literature review findings, status reports, or other summaries of preliminary findings. Two-year proposals must specify at least one substantive deliverable (e.g. initial literature summary, preliminary analysis, draft working paper, or other detailed output) for the end of Year 1, to allow progress to be evaluated, as well as produce at least one shareable output (e.g. blog post, issue brief) by the end of Year 1.

All proposals should also specify final deliverables to be submitted at the end of the project. While a variety of deliverable formats are welcome (e.g. webinars, presentations, policy briefs, videos, op-eds, shareables, and other online or social media content), at a minimum, all projects must include:

- i. A **final report** such as a published academic journal article, a working paper published in the Smart Prosperity [Clean Economy Working Paper Series](#), or a background literature review/synthesis/report on dataset development (in the case of research development projects)
- ii. A **short, policy-maker-oriented [blog post](#)** summarizing key findings.

Project proposals that leverage other sources of funding or build on current pilot projects or other research initiatives are encouraged (but not required). Research proposals may be submitted by faculty, graduate students, or post-doctoral fellows. (Proposals by graduate students must include a signed letter from a permanent faculty member agreeing to supervise the proposed research).

**We will endeavour to make funding decisions promptly, with successful applicants notified in early March 2024.** If you have any questions, please submit them to: [research.network@smartprosperity.ca](mailto:research.network@smartprosperity.ca).

## RESEARCH PROPOSAL TEMPLATE

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*[This research proposal must not exceed **two pages**, **excluding the deliverables and budget tables shown below**. Please submit this completed template as a PDF to: [research.network@smartprosperity.ca](mailto:research.network@smartprosperity.ca) and complete the second part of your submission via this [Google Form](#). Feel free to delete any instruction text in blue when completing this template.]*

**Title of Research Project:** *[Provide brief title describing your proposed project]*

**Keywords:** *[Provide several keywords describing your proposed project]*

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**Name of Research Supervisor(s)/Principal Investigator(s):** *[Name, Position, Department/Institute/etc., University, E-mail]*

**Name of Researcher(s)/Student(s) (if known at this time):** *[Name, Degree sought, Department/Institute/etc., University, E-mail]*

**Type of Proposal:**          Full research project (to be completed by March 31, 2026)  
*[select one]*                Research development activities (to be completed by March 31, 2025)

**Total Funds Requested:** *[Not exceeding \$30,000 for a full research proposal and \$10,000 for research development activities]*

**Details on any additional leveraged funding that will also support this project:** *[Applicants are requested to disclose additional research funding received for this project from outside sources]*

**Anticipated End Date of Project:** *[When all funds will be spent by]*

**Background/Problem Description:** *[Provide background and/or description of the research problem, along with a brief overview of the relevant literature.]*

**Objectives and Research Question(s):** *[Clearly state the research objectives of your proposal. What research questions are your project seeking to answer? How does this contribute to the existing research literature?]*

**Methodology:** *[Explain how you plan to answer these research questions.]*

**Activities and Timeline:** *[Explain what activities you plan to undertake and outline your expected timeline for these activities.]*

**Summary of Outputs:** *[Please fill out the table below, indicating both the type of intermediate and final outputs you expect to produce (e.g. working papers, policy briefs, detailed literature reviews, blog posts, webinars, conference presentations, etc.) and an estimate of when they are expected. All successful applicants will be expected to present their final research results at either our network research symposium or other related events organized by SPI, as timing aligns.]*

All proposals should specify intermediate deliverables and/or updates to be submitted every six months, such as draft working papers, presentation of interim results, interim literature review findings, status reports, or other summaries of preliminary findings. Two-year proposals must specify at least one substantive deliverable (e.g. initial literature summary, preliminary analysis, draft working paper, or other detailed output) for the end of Year 1, to allow progress to be evaluated, as well as produce at least one shareable output (e.g. blog post, issue brief) by the end of Year 1.

All proposals should also specify final deliverables to be submitted at the end of the project, including:

- i. A **final report** such as a published academic journal article, a working paper published in the Smart Prosperity [Clean Economy Working Paper Series](#), or a background literature review/synthesis/report on dataset development (in the case of research development projects)
- ii. A **short, policy-maker-oriented blog post** summarizing key findings].

Deliverable	March 1, 2024 to March 31, 2025		April 1, 2025 to March 31, 2026	
	Mar-Oct	Nov-Mar	Apr-Oct	Nov-Mar
<i>Six-month Project Update Call with SPI</i>	Sept 2024	Mar 2025	Sept 2025	Mar 2026
<i>Intermediate Deliverables</i> <i>(Please specify. Two-year projects must specify at least one substantive deliverable and one shareable output (e.g. blog post) for the end of Year 1, to allow progress to be evaluated.)</i>				
<i>Final Blog Post</i>				
<i>Final Working Paper</i>				
<i>Other Final Deliverables</i> <i>(Please specify.)</i>				

**Cost Breakdown:** [Please fill out the table on the next page detailing the various budget components of your proposal]:

- Budgets must explicitly reflect the proportion of funds to be spent per fiscal year (i.e. between March 1, 2024, and March 31, 2024; between April 1, 2024, and March 31, 2025; and between

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*April 1, 2025, and March 31, 2026). All awarded funds not expended by March 31, 2025, and 2026 will not carry over to the following year but will be required to be returned to the funder.*

- *Please do not include university overhead costs in the cost breakdown. The terms of the funding agreement with Environment and Climate Change Canada do not allow us to fund overhead.*
- *Successful applicants will be expected to present their research (once completed) either in-person in Ottawa or virtually, as invited by SPI. If relevant, travel costs to attend the symposium will be provided separately (do not include this travel in your proposed budget).*
- *While we encourage applicants to include plans in their proposal to present their research at other academic or related conferences and events, please do not include funding for conference travel in your proposed budget. Funding for such travel will be awarded on a competitive basis with proposals to be submitted to SPI for consideration once project results have been obtained.*
- *Travel expenses directly related to research activities (e.g. project group meetings, interviews, etc.) are eligible for funding and may be included in the budget template.*

