



Pacific Institute  
for Climate Solutions  
Knowledge. Insight. Action.

## **Pacific Institute for Climate Solutions Theme Partnership Program Guide for Applicants**

### **Eligible Activities and Recipients**

The PICS Theme Partnership Program supports the development of climate solutions that address complex problems and that build long term research partnerships. Its objectives are threefold:

1. To stimulate the development and implementation of climate change adaptation and mitigation solutions by interdisciplinary teams of researchers and climate solution seekers working together on thematic areas of high complexity.
2. To establish durable long-term partnerships that will exist beyond the nominal term of the project and build capacity for tackling ongoing climate change problems into the future.
3. To build international leadership in the BC research community around climate change solutions in key thematic areas.

Meeting these objectives will both address near-term new knowledge needs in key theme areas and establish a foundation of long-term solution generating capability in British Columbia and beyond.

The PICS Theme Partnership Program is an initiative under the PICS Research Engagement Program. Refer to that [webpage](#) for important information on the overall context and requirements that apply to the Theme Partnership Program.

PICS recognizes that developing effective solutions for complex issues will require integration of work across multiple disciplines and involve partnerships between people and organizations that extend well beyond normal academic linkages. The Theme Partnership Program will facilitate that process, thereby supporting excellence in near-term solution generation while at the same time encouraging the establishment of longer-term partnerships and ongoing effective collaborations on climate solutions.

Project teams must include at least one applicant who holds a regular faculty position at one of the four PICS partner universities: University of Victoria, Simon Fraser University, University of British Columbia, and University of Northern British Columbia. Participation of faculty from more than one PICS university is encouraged. Projects can include national and international collaboration with the possibility of a reasonable amount of funding to support that collaboration. Solution seeking partners must have a major role in problem identification, project framing, delivery and use of results.

PICS will maintain a continually renewing portfolio of three to four Theme Partnership projects. Projects will be funded to a maximum of \$250,000 per year, per project for up to four years. At least 50 per cent of project funding must be spent to support graduate students or post-doctoral fellows' salaries at PICS partner universities.

One Theme Partnership will be awarded through this 2018-2019 competition. Subsequent award competitions will be held approximately every 12-18 months with a deadline for application submissions to be announced at a later date.

## **Application Procedure**

Given the complex nature of the themes expected to be supported and the relatively few awards that will be made under this program, applications will be made using a two-tier process consisting of an open call for letters of intent followed by an invitation only application for the most promising Theme Partnership proposals received.

### Open Call Letter of Intent.

A Letter of Intent (LOI) (maximum three pages) for a Theme Partnership project should be developed jointly by the proposed theme partners using the guidelines in Appendix A. LOIs must be submitted by email to [picstheme@uvic.ca](mailto:picstheme@uvic.ca) before 15 February 2019 (5 p.m. PST). Applicants are encouraged to contact PICS staff through [picstheme@uvic.ca](mailto:picstheme@uvic.ca) to discuss their project intention before submitting a LOI. PICS staff may provide some guidance at that time to increase alignment of the LOI with the goals of the Theme Partnership program. Three to four LOIs will be chosen for advancement to full proposal stage based on PICS selection criteria and a consideration of the diversity in PICS' portfolio. Notification of LOI adjudication decisions is anticipated by 15 March 2019.

### Full Proposal

Successful LOIs will be invited by PICS to complete a full proposal prepared according to the guidelines in Appendix A. Full proposals must be submitted as a single PDF by email to [picstheme@uvic.ca](mailto:picstheme@uvic.ca) before 15 May 2019 at 5 p.m. PST.

Staff time, organizational support and some offsetting costs for workshops and proposal preparation will be contributed by PICS to all LOIs selected for full proposal development. Applicants chosen for development of a full proposal will be encouraged to conduct at least one 'strengthening workshop' where they will describe the proposed research, invite other potential partners and researchers to contribute their ideas and ideally expand the scope of the partnerships and/or strength of the full proposal.

Notification of adjudication decisions is anticipated by late summer 2019. One award per call will be made. Awardees will be required to adhere to PICS terms of reference for research engagement as described in Appendix B.

## **Evaluation**

Full proposals will be subject to external review by nationally and internationally recognized domain experts relevant to the proposed theme. This will be followed by evaluation by a panel with expertise relevant to proposal topics. The PICS Executive Director will make the final selection in consultation with the Associate Director and additional expert input, as needed. Selection will consider the external reviews, panel advice, PICS selection criteria, available budget envelope for a given year, and diversity of the PICS portfolio.

Proposals will be evaluated on the following three broad areas with equal weight given to each major area:

1. Relevance of the proposed project to meaningful climate change solutions:
  - The proposal has high potential to make a major contribution to effective adaptation to climate change and/or reduce net GHG emissions in BC and beyond.
  - Demonstrates the need for original research to address the specific climate change adaptation and/or mitigation problem and contribute to its solution.
  - The originality of the proposed solution and research approach are demonstrated.
  - Identifies the main intended outcome(s) and longer-term impacts and explains the means by which the project will contribute to and track their realization.
  
2. Credibility of the research component of the proposed project:
  - The solution partners have had a major role in problem identification and framing, and demonstrate a clear need for the research results.
  - The research problem, research question, objectives and supporting activities are clearly defined and logically defended.
  - Research methods and team are well-suited and qualified to answer the research questions and achieve the objectives.
  - The proposal reflects critical understanding of relevant theory and experience from a variety of perspectives.
  - Actual, perceived, and potential bias in the research is clearly stated and accounted for.
  - Plans for project collaboration clearly outline all partners' roles and contributions in defining the research problem, co-designing, co-producing, and implementing the research results.
  - Wider user engagement, knowledge translation and implementation plans are adequately described.
  - Budget is realistic and other resources are sufficient to make the proposed work successful.
  
3. Effectiveness of proposed project:
  - The project plan includes strong, specific actions to engage with intended users beyond the project team and to position the research results for use.
  - The proposal anticipates and appropriately takes account of stakeholder and other perspectives, values, and contexts.
  - Indicators and methods for monitoring progress during the project and for assessing outcomes during and afterwards are defined.
  - The role of each partner and tangible partner contributions must be fully described in the research proposal. Partner activities during and after the formal research program form an important part of PICS sponsored research activities and must be described in the research proposal.
  - Partnerships contribute to diversity and interdisciplinarity in the project and enhance representativeness.
  - The project will build capacity in the identified area (e.g., students/postdocs; knowledge mobilization to academic and user communities, etc.), including the development of a long-

term expanded partnership network in British Columbia that continues to address new questions after the PICS support ends.

- The project has high potential to build new international leadership in the BC research community in the thematic area.

## Appendix A: Proposal submission and checklist for applicants

### Letters of Intent (LOI)

Letters of intent for Theme partnerships should be submitted by email to [picstheme@uvic.ca](mailto:picstheme@uvic.ca) before 15 February 2019, 5 p.m. PST. Acknowledgement of the submission will be sent by PICS to applicants upon receipt of the LOI.

A completed LOI will include:

1. [Cover page](#) using supplied template.
2. Maximum three-page description of the proposed Theme Partnership addressing the following major points:
  - The importance, timeliness, originality, feasibility of the solutions planned to be developed, and anticipated major outcomes during the tenure of the project (i.e. definition of the theme, what tangible progress will be made while the award is ongoing).
  - The nature of the partnership with planned contributions between project partners and partner engagement activities clearly outlined (i.e. definition of the partnership, including meaningful partnership engagement process designed to assist in the implementation of solutions).
  - A description of how the research partnership can extend beyond the period for which PICS may provide funding (PICS aims to support long-term initiatives and themes that can continue to develop beyond the timeline of the PICS allocated award).
  - Indication of how this project could lead to international leadership in BC in climate solutions research.
3. Maximum one-page summary budget outlining planned use of funds (estimated yearly totals for major categories: students/postdocs; other personnel; travel and workshops; supplies; other).
4. List of cited literature.
5. Names and contact information for three suggested reviewers.
6. CVs (maximum two pages each) for major project participants.

### Full Proposals (only by invitation based on LOI selection)

Theme Partnership proposals should be submitted as a single PDF by email to [picstheme@uvic.ca](mailto:picstheme@uvic.ca) before 15 May 2019, 5 p.m. PST. Acknowledgement of the submission will be sent by PICS to applicants upon receipt of the proposal.

A full proposal must include:

1. Cover page prepared using supplied template.
2. Main body (maximum seven pages):

The main body of research proposals are not to exceed seven pages in length, minimum 11 pt. font and 2.5 cm margins.

Required components and suggested length:

  - Objective of the project. Explain the need for the research, scale, scope and originality of the targeted solution (1.5 pages).

- Description of anticipated climate solution impacts and proposal for how impacts will be measured and tracked (1.5 pages).
  - Details of proposed research activities, work plan, timeline, and roles/responsibilities of project team and relevant decision-making position of solution partners within their organization (2.5 pages).
  - Plans for implementation of anticipated solutions (1 page).
  - Justification and plans for development of expanded network that is self-sustaining after PICS funding ends (0.5 page).
3. List of cited literature.
  4. Proposed budget and justification, including description of partner contributions as described in Appendix A.
  5. Project collaboration plan including how the entire project team will work collaboratively and include consideration of the various perspectives, values, and contexts of all partners as the project moves forward (~1 page).
  6. Suggested reviewers' names and contact information: three reviewers for the research component, and three solution seeking reviewers who can evaluate the proposed project from the user perspective.
  7. Two-page CVs of all project participants.

Additional guidance will be provided to candidates who are invited to submit full proposals.

## Appendix B: Budget details

1. Include an annual budget for each year of the planned program.
2. What PICS will fund under the Theme Partnership Program:
  - Salary support of graduate student and post-doctoral fellows (minimum 50 per cent of budget must be for students/postdocs at PICS four partner universities).
  - Equipment, materials, supplies, as needed to conduct the research and mobilize the knowledge generated.
  - Support for research associates or other support staff, incremental from current staffing.
  - Costs associated with specialized software, costs associated with obtaining access to data.
  - Travel, in particular for workshops, partner engagement, knowledge mobilization and fieldwork.
3. What PICS will NOT fund under the Theme Partnership Program:
  - Staff costs for project administration;
  - Hospitality;
  - Capital equipment, furniture, space refurbishment or improvement;
  - Indirect costs of research i.e. overhead charges will not be paid as per the terms of the PICS endowment.

Financial contributions from partner organizations is desirable but not required. Where appropriate, indicate partner contributions in the form of in-kind or financial contributions to the project. In situations where contributions do not take the form of auditable expenses please list the nature of anticipated contributions (e.g. access to data, use of facilities, etc.) below the detailed budget table.

## **Appendix C: Terms of Reference – Theme Partnership projects**

### Project Funding

Project funds will be transferred to the recipients' home institution semi-annually following an updated expenditure request.

Unspent funds will not in general be allowed to be carried forward into future years. If circumstances merit carry forward, a written request and justification must be submitted to PICS at least 60 days prior to the end of the current project year.

Renewal of funding beyond the first year will be subject to an annual PICS progress review. If progress is unsatisfactory to PICS, funding may be reduced or wound down to zero in the following year.

### Reports

An annual report (four pages maximum) will be submitted to PICS at least 60 days prior to the end of the current project year to allow for review and approval of subsequent year's funding.

### Project Team and Meetings

In addition to regular project meetings, project participants will organize an introductory kick-off meeting at project initiation and an end-of-project meeting at project conclusion in collaboration with PICS.

The project partners must be committed to defining a suite of activities that will move the new research knowledge into the realm of implementation. Solution Partners must be prepared to contribute significantly to the project in the form of not only regular engagement with the researchers, but as appropriate through contributions such as data, equipment, resources for field studies, financial contributions, human resources, etc.

### PICS Acknowledgement

Researchers will inform PICS of plans to publish articles and to develop other communication products.

- Researchers will provide PICS with details of their publication plan upon submission of manuscripts and theses for review. This is for planning purposes so that PICS will have sufficient lead time to work with authors to help publicize research contributions once they are published.
- The project team will provide PICS with a copy of documents/infographics/etc. for knowledge mobilization and engagement for PICS feedback and layout/editing/graphic assistance as necessary. All such products will contain the PICS logo and follow the PICS branding guidelines.

Project participants will acknowledge the support of PICS on all publications, documents/infographics/etc., activities and events related to PICS-sponsored projects. Acknowledgement will be in the form of researchers identifying themselves as being affiliated with PICS in addition to their normal title, as well as acknowledging financial support by PICS.



## Research affiliation pro forma

Author<sup>1</sup>, author<sup>2</sup>, and author<sup>3</sup>

*Example:*

Name, Pacific Institute for Climate Solutions, School of Environmental Studies, University of Victoria, Victoria, British Columbia, Canada

<sup>2</sup> Name, Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research, University of Manchester, Manchester, UK.

<sup>3</sup> Name, Pacific Institute for Climate Solutions, School of Resource and Environmental Management, Simon Fraser University, British Columbia, Canada

## Acknowledgements prof forma

The authors wish to acknowledge the Pacific Institute for Climate Solutions for funding this research under the Research Engagement Program. (Proposal # xxxxxx-xxxx).

Students who are working on a PICS-sponsored project will be acknowledged as *PICS Scholars* and will be invited to participate in PICS student engagement activities. To facilitate this the project team will provide PICS with the names, contact information and research topic/title for students and postdoctoral fellows working on the funded project.

## PICS Engagement

Upon award of a Theme Partnership project, PICS will become a partner with the project team and will work to facilitate effective collaboration among participants, facilitate engagement with other relevant organizations whose goals are aligned with those of the research project, and facilitate communication and engagement of project activities and results to the broader community as a whole.

The project partners shall make themselves available for occasional meetings, media interviews and other knowledge mobilization activities throughout the duration of the project.