



canadian institute of ecology and evolution  
institut canadien d'écologie et d'évolution

**NEW CALL FOR VIRTUAL WORKING GROUP PROPOSALS (ALL TOPICS),  
INCLUDING A SPECIAL CALL FOR PROPOSALS ON IMPROVING EQUITY,  
DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION IN CANADA'S ECOLOGY AND EVOLUTION  
RESEARCH COMMUNITY**

The Canadian Institute of Ecology and Evolution (CIEE) seeks proposals for new **Virtual Working Groups** to be staged over the 12 month period from March 2021 to February 2022. The **deadline** for submission is **October 15, 2020**.

**Regular stream**

Proposals should outline a plan to address significant questions in ecology and/or evolution through synthesis-based research in the form of (a) unified and comprehensive data aggregation, (b) methodological integration, (c) conceptual synthesis, (d) analysis of information from multiple sources (e.g., meta analysis) or of multiple types (e.g. cross-disciplinary integration), or (e) application of compiled research data to environmental problems. CIEE supports projects in any area of ecology and evolution which address questions of high conceptual or applied (including environmental issues) importance. Applicants must define the project objectives, scope, agenda of virtual meeting, inclusive budget, and plan for publication. CIEE provides logistic support and virtual meeting expenses including targeted stipends.

**Special topic stream**

The goal of this special stream is to improve the equity, diversity and inclusiveness (EDI) of Canada's ecology and evolution research community. Although there are important EDI initiatives at the level of individual departments, universities and agencies, this working group should focus particularly on the national Canadian level. The aim of the working group should be concrete improvements in at least one of: equity (e.g. distribution of costs and benefits in a fair and transparent manner either between researchers or between researchers and local communities), inclusiveness (e.g. promotion of a working environment that explicitly meets the unique needs of all populations, especially under-represented groups, meaningful inclusion of Indigenous knowledge and respect for traditional territories in research), and diversity (increasing the participation of historically under-represented groups in ecology and evolution



research). We recognize that in some cases the first step to improving EDI is to document and analyse the problem; such proposals should explain how the activity of the working group will also include development of specific solutions. Proposals that involve the collection of identifying information for individuals are expected to obtain human ethics approval from university boards, ensure the security and privacy of personally identifying information and demonstrate respect and sensitivity in the collection of such information.

### **Application Procedures**

Proposals can be submitted in either official language. Proposals include a completed application form (available online at [www.ciee-icee.ca](http://www.ciee-icee.ca)), a three-page proposal, and short resume(s) of the organizers.

The **application form** should be completed with the following information:

1. The project title, name and complete contact information for the organizer(s), and project summary (max. 300 words), suitable for public circulation. At least one of the organizers must be a faculty member at a Canadian university to allow transfer of funds between universities.
2. A list of participants, with affiliations and a short (one paragraph) biographic profile including description of their expertise contributed to the working group. CIEE will fund working groups from 8 to 15 participants. Proposals for large numbers of participants should be well justified, as previous analyses have shown that per capita productivity declines as group size increases (Hampton and Parker. 2011). Productive working groups typically include participants from a variety of career stages, including early career researchers (graduate students, postdoctoral fellows) as well as mid to later-career researchers (e.g. university faculty, government research scientists, senior managers). CIEE requires the participation of at least one graduate student and one postdoctoral fellow in each working group. Participants should be drawn from multiple universities or other organizations. CIEE is a national organization, and therefore encourages geographic breadth of the Canadian participants. International participants are welcome. Working groups must have demographic diversity, including gender balance ( $\geq 40\%$  self-identified as female or gender non-binary), and consider under-represented racialized minorities, Indigenous people, persons with disabilities,



self-identified LGBTQIA+, and those with very different disciplinary, social and cultural backgrounds. Please only provide such identifying information that participants freely volunteer to disclose. There is strong evidence for the positive impact of institutional and demographic diversity on the productivity of working groups (Hampton and Parker 2011, Campbell et al. 2013, Crowston et al. 2015). Finally, please distinguish between those who have committed to the project and those who are potential participants.

3. A Data Management Plan. Funded working groups are required to deposit original or derived data in a data repository. Some of the information that is relevant to a data management plan includes: (1) ownership of the data and conditions for accessing and publishing results based on this data; (2) how the data will be compiled and integrated prior to the first meeting; (3) how the data will be stored and backed-up; and (4) the plan for making the meta-data and original or derived data publicly accessible at the end of the project with timelines and names of those responsible.
4. A budget to a maximum of \$9,000 total. Costs for all virtual meetings can include: (1) fees and training associated with online meeting technology, excluding hardware; (2) Up to \$5000 for stipends for 5 weeks full-time work by a graduate student or postdoctoral fellow that explicitly and only supports the working group, such as data collation for a database that is subsequently analysed by the working group, development of a model that is subsequently used to test hypotheses by the working group, analysis of literature for a structural review, and development and maintenance of digital infrastructure used to make the collaboration more efficient (e.g. R packages, version control platforms); (3) Professional facilitator fees, where the facilitator guides the dynamics of the group rather than the science; (4) Costs associated with increasing accessibility for participants with disabilities, for example a contract with a professional captioner. (5) **For the Special Topic Stream proposals only**, the budget can additionally include costs associated with implementing EDI action plans, or obtaining data on EDI in Canada's ecology and evolution research community (e.g. operating costs associated with surveys and focal groups).

Please note that overhead costs, travel and accommodation costs, faculty stipends and equipment cannot be included as eligible expenses. Our experience is that few working groups are able to



have manuscripts accepted for publication within the 12-month timeframe of the budget, so we are not currently allowing publication costs as eligible expenses. We encourage applicants to consult with the CIEE Program Co-ordinator if there is any uncertainty about allowable budget items. **Working groups can be co-sponsored with other organizations.** For example, CIEE has sometimes sponsored an additional meeting for working groups already or simultaneously funded by other synthesis centres. In this case, please inform all sponsors that co-funding is being sought.

**Appended** to the application form should be a:

5. A maximum three-pages, single-spaced proposal (12 point font, 2.5 cm margins). Please note that proposals longer than 3 pages will not be accepted. The proposal should include:
  - 5.1. Brief introduction to the project goals.
  - 5.2. Work plan of activities: schedule of any pre-meeting activities, agenda of the planned meetings, follow-up plan in order to reach the expected outcomes. Although in-person working group meetings are normally constrained to be 4-5 consecutive full days, there is no such constraint on virtual working group meetings and we encourage researchers to envision the most productive way to schedule the equivalent amount of meeting time. For example, you may want to meet one day a week for 5 weeks, or one morning a week for two months (see CIEE-ICEE Guide for Virtual Working Groups). As appropriate, please include the source of the data to be synthesized and methods of the analyses.
  - 5.3. Discuss how your working group will ensure a broad diversity of participations (see #2 in Application Procedures), and create an equitable, inclusive and productive working environment.
  - 5.4. Expected outcomes for Regular Stream (e.g., publications, white papers, open access databases) or Special Topic Stream (e.g. action plan, data synthesis, national program).
  - 5.5. Importance to Canada for Regular Stream (e.g., benefit to Canadian environmental and economic well-being) or Special Topic Stream (e.g. increase in EDI in Canada's ecology and evolution research community).
6. Short resume(s) of the organizer(s). Maximum 3 pages for each resume.



### **The selection process**

As in the past grant cycles, CIEE's funding decisions for new Working Groups will be based on confidential evaluations performed by individual members of the CIEE's Scientific Advisory Committee. The CIEE's Directors will determine the final level of funding to be received by each awarded project, and will provide all applicants with formal feedback on the strengths and weaknesses of their proposals. In the case of a conflict of interest, the CIEE Directors will defer to the CIEE Management Board.

In general, scientific excellence and likelihood of success are the main criteria for evaluation, although consideration will also be given to the benefits to Canada, cost effectiveness, participant complementarity and diversity, and benefits to CIEE member institutions. The *specific criteria* of evaluation are:

1. Project rationale: Applications to the Regular Stream: scientific and/or applied significance of the questions, likelihood to advance understanding in ecology, evolution and/or environmental issues, evidence of novel synthesis, and evidence of benefit to Canadian environmental and economic well-being. Applications to the Special Topic Stream will be evaluated with respect to the stated goal of improving the equity, diversity and inclusiveness (EDI) of Canada's ecology and evolution research community.
2. Project description: clarity of objectives, outcomes, work plan, meeting schedule.
3. Expertise and appropriateness of applicants and participants (from the organizer's resume and the summaries of the participants).
4. Participant diversity, including the criteria of career, geographic, and demographic diversity as defined in criteria #2 of the Application Procedure.
5. Anticipated outcomes. Applications to the Regular Stream: Potential for defined scientific products, including refereed publications, white papers and open access databases. Applications to the Special Topic Stream: Concrete improvements in at least one of equity, diversity or inclusiveness of Canada's ecology and evolution research community.



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6. Budget adequacy and feasibility (complete estimates and coherent justification). Presence of matching funds or partner organizations should be indicated. The maximum that can be requested is \$9000.

**Deadline for both General and Special Topic Streams:** Submit the full proposal by **October 15, 2020, 5pm** to:

[ciee-icee@biodiversity.ubc.ca](mailto:ciee-icee@biodiversity.ubc.ca)

Applicants are encouraged to contact the CIEE Director, Deputy Director or Program Co-ordinator with any questions, including those on content, budget and facilities.

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**Program Co-ordinator, Canadian Institute of Ecology and Evolution**



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## References

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Crowston, K., Specht, A., Hoover, C., Chudoba, K.M. and Watson-Manheim, M.B., 2015. Perceived discontinuities and continuities in transdisciplinary scientific working groups. *Science of The Total Environment*, 534, pp.159-172.

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