



SOLSTICE

- *Enabling Societal Transformation in the Face of Climate Change*

Call for proposals by JPI Climate

In light of the IPCC special report on global warming of 1.5°C¹, there is a great urgency in accelerating societal transformations that help societies both mitigate and adapt to climate change. JPI Climate addresses this issue in line with its Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda² through contributions that connect people, problems and solutions in a systemic approach. Innovative and creative ways of developing policies and processes of change are required in order to gain invaluable new insights to help make decisions at all levels of society. This JPI Climate initiative helps to fill knowledge gaps not addressed by other international initiatives and strengthens climate change transformational research.

Introduction

Climate change is one of the most pressing global challenges facing society. This call aims to enable the Social Sciences and Humanities (SSH) research community to take the lead in understanding and contributing to solving the societal challenges of climate change. SOLSTICE will investigate key issues around mitigation, anticipation, adaptation and sustainability, and will generate and connect knowledge to inform the development of more ambitious and effective climate-related policies. The impact of climate change will increasingly affect the daily lives of people across society at a range of scales, from individual to international, and across different sectors. We face challenges to food and water security, employment and livelihoods, and health and housing as a result of a changing climate. Climate change modifies the way we live, consume, produce, and more generally engage in life and give meaning to it. It questions our very future and consequently affects us in all parts of who we are. Therefore, the need to incorporate insights from across the SSH has been recognised as essential to enable and accelerate positive transformation in the face of climate change within the wider framework of the SDGs.

¹ [1.5°C Special Report](#)

² [JPI Climate Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda](#)

JPI Climate invites the SSH community to take the lead and to submit proposals, with the objective of opening up new perspectives and understandings on the societal aspects of climate change. SOLSTICE prepares the European research community in SSH for the future Framework Program Horizon Europe; the questions tackled in SOLSTICE aim at providing the basis for further research in these crucial issues for the future of Europe and the world.

To enable transformational change, novel interdisciplinary collaborations across social sciences and humanities and potentially beyond are required. Different perspectives on levels and domains of climate-related governance, including questions of leadership and the role of different actors, are welcomed and should be integral to all projects. Developing effective communication and engagement with stakeholders, as well as creative and innovative routes to impact, is encouraged.

Topics

The JPI Climate White Paper “Operationalising knowledge on and for societal transformations in the face of climate change”³ developed recommendations and insights for connecting and mobilising key SSH research perspectives to climate change. Three topics emerged that were considered key, and are at the core of SOLSTICE. These topics, while taking into consideration the European and international research landscape, fill knowledge gaps and address issues that have been underexposed so far. The three topics below can be addressed separately or be combined.

- **Social justice and participation**
- **Sense making, cultural meaning and risk perception**
- **Transformative finance and economy**

Social justice and participation

As climate policies becomes more established within public policy, people across all different groups in society will be affected by those policies to greater or lesser extents. This topic seeks to improve the understanding of social justice and participation in climate actions.

Key questions include:

- How does the involvement of different actors⁴ in climate mitigation and adaptation affect ethics, values, political and societal processes and outcomes? And vice versa, how do different political and societal forms of participation shape climate change outcomes?

³ [JPI Climate White Paper](#)

⁴ The definition of actors is to be understood as a large concept and includes for example individuals, businesses, policymakers, administration, NGOs, communities, etc.

- How can possible distributional inequalities and impacts of climate policies be evaluated and managed?

Actions taken to address climate change within and beyond the borders of nation states reflect political priorities and interpretations of obligations, rights and responsibilities and can have consequences not only locally but also globally. The temporal dimension of climate change underlines the importance of intergenerational justice. The dynamics of (individual and collective) participation and political behaviour in facing climate change and climate policy measures need to be further analysed to support the ownership and legitimacy of sustainable transformations towards the UNFCCC objectives⁵.

Sense making, cultural meaning and risk perception

This topic is targeted to understanding the sense making, cultural meaning and risk perception of climate change.

Key questions include:

- What does climate change and climate action mean in different cultural, societal and generational contexts and how do risk perceptions, values and world views enable or impede transformations?
- How does the perception of climate change (and its framing) influence attitudes, social practices and behaviour of people?
- How do individuals navigate in this complex issue and consequently, where do they locate themselves in terms of their individual impact on the global system?

Research within this topic addresses the need to better understand the nature and role of transformative learning models and creative methods in challenging particular mindsets and motivations, as well as the reasons for societal indifference versus engagement concerning climate change. The role of narratives, communication and language is central to facilitating dialogue on complex issues, identifying and dealing with conflict, sharing understandings and enabling transformative learning.

Transformative finance and economy

This topic addresses the mechanisms of transformative finance and economy.

Key questions include:

- How do economic rationalities and targets align with the UNFCCC objectives? Economic transition towards a low carbon society depends on critical understanding of innovation, adoption and investment.
- How can markets, the public and the financial sector evolve through policy actions and investments in innovative solutions for adaptation and mitigation that take fully into

⁵ See [UNFCCC](#) or more specifically, the objectives of the [Paris Agreement](#) and the [1,5°C Special Report](#)

account the social cost of carbon?

This perspective embraces the possibility of integrating aspects of wider institutions and society with the economic research on transformative economy and finance through connecting with disciplines such as (including, but not limited to) sociology, law, political sciences, history, philosophy and other disciplines in order to investigate the legal, ethical and governance aspects of the topic. Moreover, a wider perspective on addressing markets and behaviour can include aspects of psychology and culture to enrich the understanding of the economics of climate change.

Content & Methods

Interdisciplinarity is an absolute requirement and the participation of those who may not have engaged with climate change research yet is welcome. Contributions should be led by social sciences and humanities; cross-disciplinary collaboration in unusual and innovative combinations is encouraged. Submissions can also originate from disciplines that have already worked together successfully. Through these novel approaches, this call gives special attention to societal aspects of change in order to enable and accelerate positive transformation in the face of climate change.

Depending on the chosen subject of research, *transdisciplinarity* - engagement of societal actors in co-design or co-production - is highly encouraged where appropriate.

Given the pressing nature of global climate change, SOLSTICE aims at producing knowledge that can have an *impact* on society and policy; impact should not be limited to scientific publications, but should have the potential to trigger change in behaviour and attitudes at any level of society.

In order to invite a wide range of disciplines, SOLSTICE showcases different approaches with the aim to innovate climate change research. While considering *climate-related governance*, including questions of leadership and the role of different actors, projects should choose at least one of the three following lenses when developing their proposal:

- *Operational upscaling*: This lens looks at concrete examples on a micro level (communities, regional, national...) and finds ways to transfer or extend them to a wider context.
- *Deliberating norms*: This lens questions norms in the respective topics. It asks fundamental questions, common assumptions can be dismissed and be subject of a new analysis opening visions for setting new norms.
- *Systemic approach*: Structures and interdependencies between components should be analysed on a macro level without losing sight of the transformative dynamics of the system.

Timeline

(to be adapted with the exact dates for the call)

pre-announcement	15 July 2019
call opening	10 Oct 2019
submission of proposals	13 Jan 2020
funding decisions	Apr 2020
start of projects	Sept 2020