Call for proposals 2023

September 7th, 2023

A. Prerequisites

E4S invites researchers from its three founding institutions (UNIL, IMD, and EPFL) to submit proposals for projects that contribute to E4S' mission: *spearheading the transition to a resilient and inclusive economy, within planetary boundaries, seizing the opportunities and addressing the challenges raised by scientific and technological change*.

Funded projects should meet the four criteria listed below.

1. *Requested budget not exceeding 85'000 CHF*

As a nascent center with limited resources, E4S privileges diversity and inclusion of research groups. To maximize the number of funded projects, grants are capped at 85'000 CHF per project. All types of cost can in principle be claimed (human resources, datasets, surveys, equipment, etc.) for carrying on the research itself or developing teaching or impact material related to its findings.

2. *Proven contribution to E4S's mission and research focus*

The annex "E4S' mission and areas of focus" describes the focus and objectives of E4S as well as the organization of research projects in thematic platforms. This call is open to all projects contributing to E4S' mission in any of the platforms described in the annex.

3. *Knowledge transfer and reasonably quick turnaround*

UNIL, IMD, and EPFL are academic institutions primarily devoted to the production of research and its dissemination amongst student bodies and outside stakeholders. E4S connects our scientific community to society, businesses and governments, utilizing innovative ideas to define tomorrow's economy.

1

Funded projects should therefore lead to relevant and actionable research insights (mainly in the form of articles, policy notes, white papers, media interventions, roundtable reports, etc.) targeting policymakers, business leaders, and society as a whole. In particular, a 4-pager non-technical "E4S brief" will be published for each funded project (see section C on below).

E4S funding does not replace traditional sources of financing (SNSF, ERC, etc.), but rather complements them during any of the following three stages:

1. E4S can provide *kick-off support* at the start of projects that will be subsequently funded by other sources;

2. A research project funded by SNSF-like sources, spanning several years and leading to scientific publications, can be supported by E4S to produce shorter "sub-products" with a quicker turnaround that increase its impact and outreach. At this stage, E4S would encourage the integration and onboarding of researchers from the other partner institutions to support the original project team.

E4S offers several advantages, in terms of support and collaboration, to participating researchers of the three institutions:

- A collaboration with other researchers under the E4S umbrella (including researchers from other disciplines) while also providing opportunities to forge new research partnerships;

- Funding;

- Widespread public exposure, a strong media and policy impact; dedicated page in E4S' website and publication of a brief.

- A direct link to partner companies or institutions, which may support the project, by adding practical expertise and creating real playgrounds to test ideas;

- Visibility amongst the three partner institutions; support in organizing a research seminar.

- Coaching to address non-scientific audiences.

4. Inter-institutional collaboration

E4S embodies the conviction that combining the unique skillset of the three partnering institutions (UNIL-HEC, IMD and EPFL) creates significant positive spillovers. Therefore, E4S encourages researchers to explore and take advantage of the existing competencies and know-how among faculties of all three partnering institutions. Inter-institutional projects will be given preference (at least 2 founding institutions meaningfully involved in the project). Collaboration with other institutions outside of the E4S institutions is possible. In case of doubt, the E4S team can provide help and suggestions.

B. Guidelines

Proposal. The project proposal should be no longer than 4 pages and should include the following information:

- The names, titles and affiliation of the researchers involved in the project and an outline of the expected contribution to the project by each of them.
- The research question, its importance, how it relates to E4S's mission (see annex), and a description of the expected output.
- The name of the E4S platform(s) in which the project fits (see annex, section II).
- A detailed budget using the template spreadsheet "E4S_GRANT_BUDGET", and a description of what alternative sources of funding are being considered. The start date and expected duration of the project should clearly be indicated.

Project proposals should be sent to submissions@e4s.center before

Friday, December 1st, 2023, 23h59 CET

Evaluation. Submissions will be evaluated by E4S' management board (Jean-Philippe Bonardi UNIL-HEC, Florian Hoos IMD, Michaël Aklin EPFL) and the working group research (Boris Nikolov UNIL-HEC, Anand Narasimhan IMD, and Thomas Weber EPFL). Beyond the four criteria listed in section A, the evaluation committee will consider the quality and originality of the proposal, as well as the relevance of the topic with regards to current societal issues and the ongoing research agenda of E4S and its three founding institutions. Projects will be selected on a competitive basis until the available budget for this call is exhausted.

Decisions will be communicated by mid- December, 2023.

C. Accepted projects

Duration. The grant has a duration of 12 to 18 months, starting the date stipulated by the research team in the requested budget. A justified request to extend the deadline (at no extra cost) can be submitted at least 2 months in advance.

Reimbursement. Please be informed that any remaining amount at the end of the grant period will be reimbursed to E4S. Furthermore, the unit(s)/laboratory(ies) of the principal investigator(s) are financially responsible for any expenditures related to the project that

exceed the amount of the E4S grant. A financial report will be requested together with the final report at the end of the grant period.

Reporting and E4S brief. We kindly request accepted projects to submit a final report at the end of the grant period. This final report includes a 4-pager "E4S brief" summarizing the questions, the methods and key take-aways in non-technical terms, to be published in E4S' website.

Templates of the final report and the E4S brief will be shared by E4S when the deadline is approaching.

Website. Each project will have a dedicated webpage in E4S' website, describing the project and listing the participants.