
Request for Research Tender on

Non-domestic water use; learnings from international data and conservation initiatives

Closing Date:
15th September 2022
Queries to be addressed to:

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1. INTRODUCTION TO THE WATER FORUM

The Water Forum (An Fóram Uisce) was established on a statutory basis in June 2018, in accordance with the Water Services Act 2017. The Forum has advisory roles in relation to the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage, Irish Water, the Commission for Regulation of Utilities and the Water Policy Advisory Committee.

The Forum is the national statutory body representative of stakeholders with an interest in the quality of Ireland's water bodies, to facilitate stakeholder input to water policy development in Ireland. The Forum consists of 25 members including representatives from a wide range of organisations with direct connection to issues relating to water quality and also public water consumers. Approximately 50 different organisations were involved in the nomination of members.

The Water Forum provides an opportunity for stakeholders to debate and analyse a range of issues with regard to water quality, rural water concerns, issues affecting customers of Irish Water and the implementation of the Water Framework Directive and Ireland's River Basin Management Plan. As an independent entity, the Forum has discretion to determine its own work programme and means of communicating its views and analysis. The vision of the Water Forum is for clean and healthy waters, supporting biodiversity, community wellbeing and economic sustainability.

Dr Matt Crowe is the Chairperson of the Water Forum, Mr Donal Purcell is the Senior Executive Officer, Dr Triona McGrath is the Research Lead, Dr Gretta McCarron is the Communications and Education Lead, and Martin Ryan is the Administrative support.

Further information on the work of the Water Forum is available at www.thewaterforum.ie

2. RESEARCH BACKGROUND

Under to the Water Services Act 2017, a key function of the Water Forum is to advise the Minister on water conservation. In order to provide a strong voice and informed advice on water conservation the Forum gathers intelligence, science and best practice through commissioned research. A key objective of our Strategic Plan for 2022-2027 is to contribute to the debate on water conservation in collaboration with agencies. We aim to act as a conduit between the scientific community, policy development and the public.

Despite Ireland's predominantly wet climate and abundance of water resources, there is high strain on Ireland's water supplies, with 58% of water resource zones supplying the public water supply already having a supply demand deficit in normal conditions and 66% in deficit during drought¹. Population growth, climate change, aging infrastructure and spatial-economic changes will add additional challenges for water suppliers to ensure resilience in the supply of high quality drinking water to domestic and non-domestic customers. Efforts to improve water conservation will have to increase to not only reduce volumes of water required by households and businesses, but also to reduce the volumes of wastewater and pressure on our wastewater infrastructure, along with reducing the

¹ Irish Water, 2021; National Water Resources Plan Consultation Document

greenhouse gas emissions associated with abstracting, disinfecting and pumping water across the country.

In 2021 the Water Forum commissioned research on *A Framework for Improving Domestic Water Conservation in Ireland*, (Cotterill and Melville-Shreeve, 2021)²; the research introduced issues around water scarcity in Ireland and used learnings from international best practice to develop a framework for domestic water conservation. Ten policy recommendations were proposed as part of this research with an aim to improve domestic water conservation nationally. Domestic water users account for approximately two thirds of Irish Water’s customers, with the remaining one third being non-domestic customers, such as industry and agriculture.

The Water Forum now wishes to learn more about non-domestic water use in Ireland and international best practice in non-domestic water conservation. The Research Lead of the Water Forum is currently engaging with Irish Water to gather information on non-domestic water use in Ireland, while acknowledging that due to GDPR of Irish Water customers, information on sectoral water usage may be limited.

In addition to this, the Water Forum is commissioning this **research to explore what information is available internationally on non-domestic water use**, which will support internal research being carried out by the Research Lead of the Water Forum.

On average, 44% of total water abstraction in Europe is used for agriculture, 40% for industry and energy production (cooling in power plants), and 15 % for public water supply³. According to the World Resources Institute, demand for water used to grow crops and livestock grew by more than 100% in the last century, while industrial water demand more than tripled, due to the rising demand for electricity, fuel and water-intensive goods like textiles.

Applications are invited by researchers from any research institute in Ireland (including Higher Education Institutes, public body or private research organisations), or appropriate consultancy. Applications from postgraduate or postdoctoral researchers are also welcome once they have relevant knowledge in the proposed topic and will be supervised by a senior researcher from their institution.

3. PROJECT OVERVIEW

The proposed project will explore what data and information is available on water requirements across non-domestic users, along with a comparison of sectoral water use.

A desk review should be carried out, where research should include, but not limited to,

- Non-domestic sectoral water requirements
- A review of available sectoral water usage data (national and international)
- International initiatives for non-domestic water conservation
- Approaches for water conservation initiatives with non-domestic users (regulation, incentives, communications, engagements, transparency, etc)
- Recommendations for measures in Ireland based on international best practice

² Cotterill and Melville-Shreeve, 2021; [A Framework for Improving Domestic Water Conservation in Ireland - Research Report - An Foram Uisce \(thewaterforum.ie\)](https://thewaterforum.ie)

³ [Water use by sectors — European Environment Agency \(europa.eu\)](https://europea.eu)

It is intended that the Researcher will work with the Research Lead of the Water Forum to take international learnings from water use and conservation initiatives and compare it with the current situation in Ireland. The Research Lead will facilitate meetings between the Researcher and Irish Water to discuss their Water Stewardship Programme⁴ for non-domestic customers.

The final phase of this research will involve the writing of a policy brief, which will be done by the Researcher with support from the Water Forum's Research Lead, summarising key findings and any policy recommendations which have been identified in the research in relation to non-domestic water conservation, transparency around sectoral water use and environmental protection through a catchment-based approach to water abstractions.

4. PROJECT DELIVERABLES

The following deliverables are required for the award:

- Final report prepared by the Researcher summarising the international learnings on non-domestic water requirements and sectoral water usage
- A Policy Brief, prepared by the Researcher with support from the Water Forum's Research Lead, identifying the key findings from both national and international data, along with policy recommendations supported by the research.

5. BUDGET

The currency and invoices in which all prices and rates shall be quoted, and which payments under the contract will be paid, shall be Euros (€).

The **maximum budget is €10,000**, inclusive of VAT and overheads where applicable.

5.1 Payment Schedules

An upfront payment of 50% of the total agreed budget will be made upon receipt of invoice from the contracted service provider or institution following the initiation of the project.

A final payment of the remaining 50% of the total agreed budget will be made on project completion following receipt of the final report, and within the timeframes agreed between the Researcher and the Water Forum.

⁴ [Water conservation for business | Conservation | Irish Water](#)

6. TIMELINES

An approximate timeframe for the research is outlined in Table 1, however dates can be discussed and agreed between the Researcher and the Water Forum once the project is awarded, where some flexibility can be facilitated.

Table 1: *Timeframe for project delivery*

Publication of tender	27 th July 2022
Deadline for tender submissions	15 th September 2022
Award of tender and start of project	30 th September (to be confirmed with awardee)
Project initiation meeting	30 th September (to be confirmed with awardee)
Draft research report submitted	15 th December (to be confirmed with awardee)
Draft policy brief submitted	To be confirmed with awardee

Following review of the draft report, a completed final report is to be submitted which takes into account proposed amendments to the draft report.

7. MARKING SCHEME

All submissions will be assessed by a panel of suitably qualified persons. Marks will be awarded (maximum 100 marks) based solely on the information provided in the submission, as follows:

- Demonstrate a clear understanding of the subject matter of the brief and the requirements of the project (40 marks)
- Project management arrangements (10 marks)
- Details of budget, including compliance within the stated budget (10 marks)
- Timeline including mandatory GANTT chart outlining the timeline for project actions and deliverables (10 marks)
- Demonstrate relevant research track record of team appropriate to the subject matter, including previous/ongoing projects delivered and scientific publications (30 marks)

8. SUBMISSION OF TENDERS

Applications must be submitted no later than **5pm on the 15th of September 2022** via email to Dr Triona McGrath, Research Lead, the Water Forum: triona@nationalwaterforum.ie.

Submissions must include:

- A completed application form
- A CV of the lead researcher to whom the tender will be awarded
- A CV of the supervisor of the researcher, if the lead researcher is a postgraduate or postdoctoral researcher

An acknowledgement of receipt of applications will be issued within 48 hours of the submission deadline.

9. AWARD OF TENDERS

One award will be made through this request for tenders.

Applicants will be notified of the success of their submissions no later than the 30th of September 2022.

Bodies of work may be initiated immediately from the date of award, with an initial project meeting to take place, where the date will be agreed with the successful awardee.

10. TERMS AND CONDITIONS

- All applications must be made using the official application form.
- Applications may be received from any research institute (including Higher Education Institutes, public body or private research organisations), or appropriate consultancy in Ireland.
- Applications may be received from consortiums of individuals from different institutions. Such applications must identify the **lead person** to whom the tender may be awarded. All other members of the consortium will be sub-contracted by the lead person. The maximum total budget of €10,000 (inclusive of VAT and overheads) is applicable to single service provider applications and consortium applications respectively.
- The Water Forum will disqualify incomplete applications, applications not using the application form provided and any application received after closing time/date. Compliance with the word limitation contained on the Application Form is a requirement of the application process.
- It is a necessary requirement of the application process that the successful applicant must provide a copy of their Organisation/University/Institution's current Tax Clearance Certificate.
- Failure to address within the final report each of the items included under Section 3 and the relevant thematic area will result in the withholding of final payment until all requirements are met.
- The Water Forum will have copyright ownership of any material developed for use by The Water Forum under the terms of this tender. The service provider may have a non-exclusive licence to use such material but only for its own purposes (to be agreed with the successful service provider).
- The principles of Ireland's National IP Protocol 2019 will be applied where there is any potential for commercial exploitation of project outputs resulting from this tender.
- The Water Forum encourages an open access publication policy. Publications arising from tender awards funded by The Water Forum should, as a minimum, ensure open access via Green methods (depositing the peer-reviewed manuscript in an online repository before, at the same time, or after publication). All reports will be uploaded to, and publicly accessible via, The Water Forum's website: www.nationalwaterforum.ie.
- Any publications arising from tender awards funded by The Water Forum must acknowledge An Fóram Uisce|The Water Forum as the source of funding.
- Projects funded by The Water Forum must uphold the highest standards of research integrity and The Water Forum expects all tender awardees to abide by the guidelines outlined in the National Policy Statement on Ensuring Research Integrity in Ireland; and the European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity.
- Data Protection and Freedom of Information – When an application is received by The Water Forum, a record is created in the name of the applicant. This information will be

stored by the office of The Water Forum, where relevant, in paper/electronic form. Information that is collected by the Office, including information that you give us, is added to the record. You have the right, given by the Data Protection Act of 1988 and 2003, to a copy of your information at any time. The Office is also subject to the Freedom of Information (FOI) Act, 2014.

The information we record is used for the following purposes:

- Processing and assessing of applications;
- Payment arrangements;
- Auditing requirements;
- Informing and advising The Water Forum in relation to the Project and using same as a basis for further consideration by The Water Forum including research projects and policy analysis and recommendations;
- Publication of the Project Outcomes.

End/