



## EPICamp IV: Hydrosphere: Challenges of preserving and using WATER (Eco-)Systems in the Anthropocene .

### Call for Participation

– primarily aimed at early career researchers –

**DATE: 23/24 March**

Application deadline for active participation: **February 15**

This EPICamp is part of the EPICUR Research project. More info on EPICUR Research can be found at the end of this call.

Addressing the hydrosphere, this EPICamp will look at water (eco-) systems impacted by both natural processes and human intervention. Water is equally a natural and social resource at the core of human existence which in turn has deeply shaped the waters that flow through the Earth. Taking an Anthropocene perspective, we invite a fully interdisciplinary approach - combining ecological, biological, earth, and social sciences - to discuss challenges, opportunities, and solutions for the socio-ecological systems of water. This includes thinking about sustainable management of water resources, the preservation of biodiversity, the ecosystem functioning for healthy societies but also the interconnection between the environment and cultural identities, such as the conservation of traditional ways of life and the creation of resilient economies based on water(s).

Aquatic ecosystems are fragile and sentinel systems of reckless human-induced global change. In the future, they are likely to become even more fragile in terms of ecosystem functions and services. Human-induced environmental changes including elevated greenhouse gases, over-fertilization of aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems, habitat fragmentation, increasing extraction of resources from terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems, and the mass production of harmful substances worldwide all negatively affect ecosystem functioning, global natural cycles, and biodiversity. They also have long-term consequences on the human health and the viability of entire communities. Therefore, it will be a precondition to identify the complex interplay of local and global human actions which lead to local environmental impacts and adaptation. Considering far-reaching challenges related to the global changes we are facing, this EPICamp will integrate knowledge on adverse human impacts on the ecosystems formed by lakes, rivers, water sheds, marshes, and marine waters. It will stimulate discussion on adaptive and mitigation efforts against these challenges, identifying solutions which provide a balance between satisfying human needs and ecosystem demands. In order to balance the natural / engineering sciences with more human-centred approaches, this EPICamp in particular invites scholars from the emerging field of Environmental Humanities. The EnvHum address ecological and sustainability-related issues through historical, political and cultural lenses to aid in the development of appropriate forms of resilience and sustainability as well as their communication to society.

#### Potential subthemes include but are not limited to:

- Hydrology and ecosystem adaptation
- Water as a source of life and change
- Inland waters – pollution, restoration and management
- Community activism for water protection: sociological & natural science perspectives
- History(ies) of Waterways and Water Bodies: from local cases to global challenges
- Changes in human metabolism, connectivity and the effects on aquatic systems
- Scaling up or Scaling Down: impacts of global environmental change on the hydrosphere
- Balancing human needs and ecosystem demands: sustainable management of water resources
- Global water cycles: arctic waters and climate change, marine waters and pollution

- Hydrological extremes: challenges of intensifying droughts and floods
- Masses of water, water of the masses: land use, forests and human settlement
- Socio-ecohydrological systems in the tension between natural processes and human intervention
- Multi-functionality of aquatic systems to conserve biodiversity and ecosystem functions
- The fragility of water body's ecosystem functions: surface and groundwater systems
- Scarcity, migration, war: the economics and politics of / for water
- Water science & engineering: technological innovation, ecological challenges and social impact

## Submissions and Participation

EPICUR invites scholars, NGOs including public institutions, institutes, social organizations, funding agencies, infrastructure providers (such as archives, libraries, museums etc.), business etc. to come together and share their insights, concerns, needs and vision for the future. There are **three options for participation in the EPICamp**:

- 1) **Participation with Thematic Contribution:** you may submit a proposal for one of the following potential formats. As EPICamps are non-traditional gatherings, so are potential submissions. We invite prospective participants to apply with innovative and creative formats as well as submissions that are more traditional in format but aim for inter- and/or transdisciplinary exchange. Applicants may choose one of the following proposed formats or add their own:
  - **Pitch Presentations** (not more than 5 slides / 5min) / virtual posters introducing current research as well as research ideas
  - **Open Discussion Groups:** please submit topic/theme along with three discussion questions
  - **Workshops & Skill Presentations:** please submit a short paragraph outlining the particular topic/method/skill you wish to address in a mini-workshop
  - **Plenary Presentation**, ca. 30min (we particularly encourage Early Career Researchers to submit in this section)
  - **Other formats:** please describe the format and content
- 2) **Participation with Organizational Contribution:** you can offer to moderate a format (open discussion), facilitate group interactions, or report on sessions in which you participated. Applicants will receive their assignments and guidelines from the organizing team.
- 3) **Participation as an active attendee:** you can also simply join the EPICamp as a participant actively listening and contributing to the discussions and networking activities.

**ALL applications**, regardless of the manner of participation, have to be submitted through **this form** [<https://forms.office.com/r/mpTswB7T52>]. We highly encourage you to fill out all relevant sections with care, as matchmaking and networking events will be based on these responses.

**Applications must be submitted February 15, 2022 for due consideration, with the exception of the third option registration, which will be considered until March 19, 2022.**

You can contact the EPICUR organizing team ([epicur-research@mail.uni-freiburg.de](mailto:epicur-research@mail.uni-freiburg.de)) for all questions.

***Disclaimer: Equity – Diversity - Inclusion***

*EPICUR is an alliance dedicated to the values of equity, diversity, and inclusion and aims to provide a space that is welcoming and encouraging to all scholars, particularly those, which have been traditionally underrepresented in academic environments. We, therefore, welcome all suggestions and ideas that help us make this event as inclusive and useful to the EPICUREan community of researchers as possible, with special regard paid to the need of early career researchers. Please do not hesitate to get in touch with us at any point before, during or after the EPICamp.*

## EPICUR

EPICUR, *the European Partnership for an Innovative Campus Unifying Regions*, is a first-generation European University Alliance, dedicated to shaping European Society in Transition through the development of collaborative inter- and transdisciplinary teaching and learning. With support of Horizon 2020, EPICUR establishes a complementary research and innovation agenda. Initiating a bottom-up process, **EPICUR aims to connect Early Career Researchers (ECRs)** in new European networks. With the help of several open fora – the so-called EPICamps - EPICUR seeks to foster the formation of research groups across disciplines and national borders, who address one of three societal (EPI-) challenges: **sustainability, mobility/migration/identity, public health**. Under the umbrella of these EPIChallenges, EPICUR will organize six EPICamps throughout 2021/22, each narrowing in on different aspects of these broad themes and inviting a diverse round of researchers and societal partners to exchange ideas. Following the EPICamps, researchers in collaboration with external partners, will have an opportunity to compete for grants to grow their emerging research networks (the EPICradles) and transform research ideas into EPIClusters: collaborative, challenge-based research projects run by ECRs.

## EPICamps – New Collaborative Formats

As societies struggle to address and govern increasingly complex challenges which defy the bounds of modern states, governmental institutions, such as the European Union, turn to research communities to provide answers. According to the European Commission (EC) and its funding schemes, this requires a new – larger and more intensive – collaboration between researchers across Europe and in all research fields. With its support of European University Initiatives, the EC thus seeks to contribute to the establishment of research collaborations reflecting the diversity of Europe.

Expanding the concepts of traditional scientific conferences and workshops, **EPICamps will be open gatherings engendering new partnerships and serving as seedbeds for research ideas beyond the scopes of single disciplines or fields**. Thus, EPICamps will feature various formats, ranging from short presentations and panel discussions to academic matchmaking events and interactive ad-hoc discussion rounds, from virtual posters and project exhibits to search/offer blackboards. EPICamp will offer emerging scholars the opportunities to present their research, interests, and ideas as well as discover and meet with peers who complement and expand their work. To foster manifold exchanges, the EPICamps – in addition to thematic sessions – will also give room to researchers and non-university partners to connect over questions of methodology, tools, ethical queries and data management, didactics, science communication and other aspects of academic pursuits.

## Next on the EPICUR Pathway to Research: EPICRadle

Settled along the EPICUR Pathway to Research, EPICradles are an opportunity for Early Career Researchers (ECRs) from EPICUR partner universities

- to acquire new research skills and competences, especially in the area of interdisciplinary & transdisciplinary collaboration in a European context;
- to gain information on funding schemes,
- to connect to ECRs and to develop collaborative projects.

As such EPICradles function as **‘incubators’ for innovative research projects led by ECRs**. If research groups find each other during an EPICamp, the EPICradle will be an opportunity to develop their initial ideas into viable research or research-related projects. Make sure you do not miss the info session on the EPICUR Pathway to Research during the EPICamp, followed by a networking event. More information can also be found here: <https://epicur.education/research/research-activities/>