TPM Energy Transition Lab – Open Exploration

Call for proposals for TPM researchers

Open exploration of the energy transition: The energy transition comes with many changes that seem to go faster and have more invasive consequences. Energy researchers must respond quickly and adequately, and engage in rapid research and they have to do so by deploying interdisciplinary approaches that are able to address energy issues in a holistic way. However, conventional funding institutes such as NWO and the European Union often do not provide the right opportunities for research projects that respond to these urgent questions. Moreover, we are of the view that conventional funding channels do not provide sufficient opportunities for small-scale risky playground research. Applications for risky research often involve 250k+ research grants, whereas wild and ground-breaking ideas sometimes start with a very small and playful research project. The TPM Energy Transition Lab (aka ET Lab) aims to fill this gap by providing a safe environment for such risky research and it will facilitate, design, and execute interdisciplinary, boundary-crossing research that can quickly respond to urgent questions of the energy transition.

Short risky projects: In line with these goals, the ET Lab invites TPM researchers to submit proposals in which urgent, relevant, and/or risky research activities are outlined. These activities will need to have an interdisciplinary and integrative nature, and will have to have a short time frame of about three months. The total budget to fund research in this round is 25,000 euro in cash, we expect proposals to ask for an amount between 3,000 and 15,000 euro. We will also fund activities in kind, for which a total amount of 0.4 fte for a period of three months is reserved. Proposals that ask for research time are expected to apply for between 0.1 and 0.2 fte (for the duration of the project). The lab will put in effort to realize granted research time, but achieving this will depend on negotiations with the respective department management teams. What exactly the money and time can be spend on is very flexible – as long as it benefits the TPM faculty.

We envision the funded projects are the lab's and the faculty's playground that enables an open exploration of the energy transition.

Proposals: Proposals are no longer than 1,000 words and no longer than two pages. The proposals need to answer the following questions:

- What is the focus and content of the proposal?
- What is the amount of funding requested and for what will this funding be used?
- What is the expected outcome of the project and what are its deliverables (maybe you have crazy out-of-the-box idea for output?)?
- Why do you think this proposal deserves to be funded (e.g. explain the urgency/potential impact of the project or convince us that no mainstream funding agency will fund this crazy and risky research idea)?
- How does the proposal cross boundaries between disciplines, departments, or other aspects?
- How does the proposal feed into the goals of the ET Lab (see: https://www.tudelft.nl/tpm/energy-transition-lab/)?
- Why would this project be good advertisement for the lab?

Process: TPM researchers (staff, but also postdocs or PhD students) can submit proposals on or before 16 October 2020 by email to Xandra Tober (X.Tober@tudelft.nl). The management team of the ET Lab will assess the quality of the proposals based on the criteria and questions presented above.

Results for this round will be announced before or on November 10th. When funded, project members are expected to make vlogs and/or blogs for the webpage of the ET lab before start and after completion.

More information: for further information with respect to the call, contact Udo Pesch (U.Pesch@tudelft.nl) or Niek Mouter (N.Mouter@tudelft.nl). Submit your proposal by email before the deadline to Xandra Tober (S.I.Tober@tudelft.nl).

We look forward to your inspiring ideas!

Udo, Niek, Emile and Gerdien   Management Team TPM Energy Transition Lab