



**Announcement of the Belmont Forum Collaborative Research Action on
Towards Sustainability of Soils and Groundwater for Society**

The [Belmont Forum](#) is pleased to announce the launch of a collaborative research call on the theme: *Towards Sustainability of Soils and Groundwater for Society*. **Registrations must be submitted electronically by July 23, 2020, and full-proposals by August 24, 2020.**

The goal of this CRA is to produce the necessary knowledge and propose solutions to maintain well-functioning soils and groundwater systems in the Critical Zone¹, or rehabilitate them where degraded, through:

- 1) Better understanding of the long- and shorter-time dynamics and functions of soils and groundwater, impacts from societal (including economics) decisions, integrative management practices, public policies, and how these systems have been transformed; and,
- 2) Providing avenues, pathways, and narratives toward transformation of management practices of the whole soil and groundwater systems through a fundamental shift of socio-economic actors' practices and related-decisions making processes.

Development of research consortia, supported financially by at least three participating partner organizations established in three different countries, is a key criterion. We encourage global geographic diversity to increase the scalability and applicability of the project outcomes. Consortium partners that are not eligible for funding from any of the participating funding agencies can participate in the research project at their own expense. Given the complexity and scope of the challenges, research consortia must be truly inter- and transdisciplinary, thus including researchers from: a) social sciences/humanities/economy and b) natural sciences/technology as well as c) societal partners (i.e. citizens, industry, civil society organizations), using a co-design, co-development and co-implementation approach.

Proposals should also clearly demonstrate the added value linked to the international nature of the projects and to the level of collaboration between teams from different countries.

A total of 9 funders from 8 countries have committed cash and in-kind resources for this call: the French National Alliance for Environmental Research (AllEnvi, France), the National Research Agency (ANR, France), the National Research Council (CNR, Italy), the Japan Science and Technology Agency (JST, Japan), the Qatar National Research Fund (QNRF, Qatar), the King Abdullah University of Science and Technology (KAUST, Saudi Arabia), the Russian Foundation for Basic Research (RFBR, Russia), the National Science Foundation (NSF, USA) and the Ministry of Science and Technology (MOST, Taiwan).

¹ *Critical Zone is a complex socio-ecological system in which water, rocks, soils living organisms, and societies interact at different timescales.*



In order to build strong inter-and transdisciplinary consortia able to submit proposals involving Natural Scientists; Humanities and Social Scientists; and Societal actors from different countries, the call will be open during 4 to 5 months. This period will be used to support activities of networking especially with various societal actors and disciplines, capacity building, workshops and/or webinars. This will contribute to addressing the challenge of this CRA been on transformation of management practices (transdisciplinary) using a holistic system approach (interdisciplinary).

This call aims at supporting medium-sized research projects with 3 years duration. Note that some contributions are in-kind. **See funding organization annexes for specific constraints and requirements of your funding organization(s).**

Results should be announced early 2021 and projects are expected to start on mid 2021.

For further information, please see <https://www.belmontforum.org/cras/#soils2020>.

Enquiries should also be sent to Johann Muller at BelmontForum@agencerecherche.fr