

AXA Investment Managers Research Award 2022

Enabling the Just & Green Transition
in partnership with the AXA Research Fund

September 2022

Award Guidelines

These guidelines provide information for nominators and nominees for the AXA IM Research Award. **This guide may be used as a reference by nominators and nominees. The information presented within overrides any contrary terms that could be found elsewhere.**

AXA IM Research Award background

It is unequivocal that human influence has warmed the atmosphere, ocean and land since pre-industrial times, according to the Climate Change 2022: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability report, released in February, part of the sixth assessment by the UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)¹.

From Antarctica's melting ice sheets to the bleaching of Australia's coral reefs, the devastating effects of climate change are long evidenced. However, it has now emerged that the risks associated with even lower levels of warming are greater than previously thought. The report deemed some losses as irreversible and claimed ecosystems were reaching the limits of their ability to adapt. According to UN secretary-general António Guterres, the findings were an *"atlas of human suffering and a damning indictment of failed climate leadership"*.

The report outlined impacts on both the planet and its people. Namely, 8% of farmland will become climatically unsuitable by 2100, even if warming is limited to 1.5°C, as agreed by 195 countries as part of the Paris Agreement in 2015. Even with 1.5°C warming, between 70% to 90% of reef-building corals will be lost, and 99% under warming of 2°C or more. Rising temperatures and extreme weather are driving plants and animals on land and in the ocean towards the poles, higher altitudes, or to deeper ocean waters critically impacting biodiversity: rising ocean temperature is moving marine species poleward by a staggering 59km every decade.

Those aged 12 or less are expected to witness a nearly fourfold increase in extreme weather events and around 800 million to three billion people are expected to experience chronic water scarcity due to droughts at 2°C warming, and up to around four billion at 4°C warming.

The frequency of extreme weather events, like floods, droughts and heatwaves is rising, with the percentage of the global population exposed to deadly heat stress predicted to rise from today's 30% to 48-76% by the end of the century. The most vulnerable regions of the world are west, central and east Africa, south Asia and Central and South America, plus many small island states at risk of flooding. In Europe, the number of deaths and people at risk of heat stress will at least double.

COP26 2021 in Glasgow saw the Paris Agreement reaffirmed under the "Paris Agreement rulebook". This includes new rules relating to transparency and declaration of national greenhouse gas emissions and removals, and progress in implementing and achieving Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs). The latest IPCC report says the current NDCs to 2030 would still make limiting warming to 1.5°C impossible. Greenhouse gas emissions, for example, must reduce by 43% by 2030 to be in line with a 1.5°C pathway.

¹ [Climate Change 2022: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability: The Working Group II contribution to the IPCC Sixth Assessment Report](#)

If we are to minimise the impacts of climate change and its impact on biodiversity, we have to act now. If we respond quickly, the authors suggest catastrophe can be averted. But even if we succeed in limiting global temperature rises to 1.5°C (the upper limit countries agreed to target at COP26 last year), we will still face more extreme weather. The IPCC says this opportunity for action will only last for the rest of this decade.

AXA IM Research Award focus

We believe investing in education, health systems and social justice may help people cope with climate change and we are strongly convinced that science and research remain at the forefront of discovering new solutions to help the world become sustainable. The AXA IM Research Award, in partnership with the AXA Research Fund, will thus recognise **transformative research focused on solutions seeking to enable the green and just transition, particularly in the following areas:**

1. Innovative solutions and approaches to climate change mitigation that **incorporate social factors** and enable the world to reach Net-Zero by 2050.
2. Novel approaches aimed at encouraging how, as a global society, we encourage a **shift in human behaviour** towards transitioning to a Net-Zero world and what the milestones are to achieve this.
3. Nature-Based Solutions as a key component of our climate transition & biodiversity protection, **both in terms of mitigation and adaptation**. Effectiveness and co-existence with other proposed solutions.
4. Innovative technology and processes to help **measure biodiversity**, for example soil diversity, as a means to further understand its inherent connection with climate change.
5. Measurement and tracking as the crux of the climate change issue, both in terms of assessing our limits and the extent of success or failure in reducing CO2 levels and other pollutants. For example, **carbon pricing** or alternative approaches to **financial and economic incentives to CO2** (and other warming gas) **reductions** and **measurement methodologies** for both **GHG emissions reduction and CO2 removal**.
6. Beyond CO2, the reduction of other shorter lived climate forcers as a **contribution to warming reduction**.

Nominees applying are expected to demonstrate the novelty, innovation, and impact of their research in these areas.

Nomination Rules

- Each nominator can nominate up to two eligible **researchers**.
- Self-nominations are not permitted. Family members and relatives cannot be nominated.
- Nominators cannot nominate a researcher from their team or someone they supervise neither a researcher engaged in a co-publication or close collaboration within the past 5 years.
- Researchers already supported by the AXA Research Fund or by AXA IM cannot be nominated even if their AXA grant has ended.

Researchers eligibility

The AXA IM Research Award is aimed at supporting an advanced researcher **between PhD + 8 years² and PhD + 12 years maximum³**. Candidates should **consider the application deadline i.e. October 24th, 2022 to calculate their PhD date and assess their eligibility.**

The support should be transformative for the researchers and the advancement of their field. **Candidates should be of the highest calibre** and have demonstrated **outstanding research achievements**, as evidenced by the usual indicators for assessing academic excellence such as research outputs (e.g. publications), research activities (e.g. organizing networks, being involved in communities) and research impact (e.g. policy report, specific recognition through awards, etc.).

Award amount and allocation

The total amount of the award is **100 000€**. The **money must be exclusively dedicated to research purposes**. The amount of the award will be paid to the university with which the researcher is affiliated.

Engagement

It is a requirement that the granted researcher would be **proactive in engaging science with society** when supported by the AXA IM Research Award and commit to share their research with a broad audience including AXA IM and its clients. See Awardee Obligations for more details.

Ethics

AXA places extremely high importance on the ethics of the work it supports. Programmes are required to comply fully with all relevant ethical review processes and for this compliance to be evidenced. Cases of scientific misconduct (such as fabrication, falsification, plagiarism or of inappropriate behavior towards staff or other parties) will be considered as breaches of the AXA ethical principles⁴ and will be excluded from funding.

Timeline, Application process & Awardee Obligations

- Nominations and applications must be submitted in English, on time, and complete.
- The research topic must fall within the scope of the eligible topic focus.
- Additional documents to the ones requested will not be considered.

² No flexibility for these dates: researchers below PhD+ 8 years and above PhD+ 12 years are not eligible.

³ Career breaks will not be considered, exceptions will only be made for maternity/paternity leave: 6-months per child to be indicated in the CV.

⁴ AXA Group Compliance and Ethics Guide: <https://www.axa.com/en/newsroom/publications/compliance-ethics-guide>

Timeline

Step	Date
Call for nominations	20th September – 5th October 2022 Nominations received after the deadline or that are incomplete will not be considered.
Full applications by nominees	12th – 24th October 2022
Selection	Monday 7th November 2022
Results announcement	w/c 7th November 2022 tbc Results will be sent by email to nominees and nominators will be informed of the final result if their nominee is selected.

Application process

Step 1 – Call for nominations – For NOMINATORS

The AXA Research Fund will launch a call for Nominations across the **Academic Community to recommend top researchers connected with the topic under investigation.**

Nominators will be able to **submit their nomination(s) via the following link:** [AXA IM Research Award 2022: Nomination Form · AXA RF Grantees Portal \(axa-research.org\)](#) **until October 5th 2022.**

Nominators will be asked to provide the following information on the nominee:

- First Name
- Last Name
- Civility
- Nationality
- Email
- Institution
- PhD date (only PhD 8 years – 12 years will be eligible)
- Main research area (50 words)
- Additional information regarding the nominee's main research area
- Reason for nomination (150 words)

Step 2 – Screening

The Selection Committee will perform pre-selection to ensure requirements are met.

Step 3 - Nominee Application - For NOMINEES

The AXA Research Fund team will approach pre-selected candidates to inform them that they have been nominated for the AXA IM Research Award and propose that they submit an application as well as share the guidelines and requirements for this Award. **Applications must be submitted via the link provided by email**

by October 24th 2022.

The nominee, if she/he so accepts, will provide:

The application form duly completed in English available on the application platform (A link will be provided). Requested supporting documents will include:

- Self-filmed video introducing themselves and research area (max. 2-3mins) (sent separately to remaining application details)
- Short CV (3 pages maximum including a link to an online full CV)
- Description of three public engagement examples (150 words)
- List of 5 most impactful publications, indicating the publication dates and media (e.g. journal, conference)
- Number of citations
- Google Scholar h-index
- Main research area with brief explanation (250 words)
- Relevance of main research area to the insurance sector (150 words)
- Further details on current research projects and motivations (250 words)

Awardee Obligations

The Grantee and AXA IM will enter into a legal contract for the grant of the award donation. The contract will specify the obligations for the grantee who accepts the award. The award money **must be exclusively dedicated to research purposes**. The amount of the award will be paid to the university with which the researcher is affiliated. It will require that the awardee makes themselves available to partake in communications, either during an event or dedicating a day to film an interview. Additional participation in communications might be proposed but it is not required that the awardee should promote AXA IM in any way.

Championing sustainability at AXA Investment Managers, part of AXA Group

AXA Group, as a responsible insurance industry leader, has implemented a number of actions to combat climate change and for the preservation of biodiversity, through divestment policies (from coal notably in 2015), as well as the development of green investment funds, and innovative insurance products and financial instruments in favour of low carbon solutions and natural ecosystem preservation and restoration.

As the investment manager for AXA, and a leading global responsible investor, employer and business, AXA IM is committed to explore solutions to balance social, environmental, and economic collective action, to overcome the world's sustainability problems.

As a leading responsible asset manager, AXA IM will become a Net-Zero Asset Manager by 2050 or sooner; with 65% of total assets under management currently in line to reach Net Zero (as of April 2022), we are taking a stronger stance on our investment stewardship - launching our strengthened engagement and voting policies, including a 'three stikes and you're out' strategy for climate laggards, and we are educating our global workforce to build their climate awareness.

We are committed to going beyond what is expected of us by partnering with academia to back and empower researchers and the scientific community through grants, awards or donations to drive the solutions we need to overcome the world's sustainability problems, in partnership with the AXA Research Fund.

The AXA Research Fund was launched in 2007 to support science in its crucial role in responding to the most important issues facing our planet. AXA's scientific philanthropic initiative is committed to supporting science, contributing to societal progress and encouraging researchers to share their work with the larger public to inform public decision-making.