

a. What is this Project About?

This project will develop a Local Policy Innovation Partnership (LPIP) in the region of the Forth Water Basin in Scotland (including the Firth of Forth and the capital city, Edinburgh). A ‘solutions-led’ approach to innovation will address some key unanswered questions regarding productivity, place-making, and the creation of win-wins. This includes some important issues that lie at the core of our life and economy, that are essential for Scotland’s existing and emerging industries, businesses, and communities. Water resources are critical to some of the nation’s biggest exports, a big draw for tourism, and a source of many other economic, health and cultural benefits.

However, pressures on water resources and systems (e.g. through changes in climate) need us to think more carefully about our relationships with water. As the Scottish regulator, SEPA, puts it: “If everyone lived as we do in Scotland, we would need 3 planets to sustain our current lifestyle”. These issues are complex, and we need better co-ordination and co-operation to address the various challenges and opportunities that arise. This LPIP’s innovative structures will assemble an excellent academic and stakeholder team to take on these key issues, identifying and commissioning new opportunities for sustainable growth, value creation and community wellbeing.

b. Local Policy Innovation Partnership – some FAQs answered...

Q. What do we mean by Local? A. Our region is the Forth Water Basin, covering the areas of East Lothian, City of Edinburgh, West Lothian, Falkirk, Stirling, Clackmannanshire and Fife.

Q. What do we mean by Policy? A. Promotion of sustainable and inclusive economic growth, community resilience and empowerment, and more productive and harmonious relationships between human and natural systems.

Q. What do we mean by Innovation? A. A ‘solutions-led’ approach that identifies new opportunities for sustainable growth, value creation and community wellbeing: ‘*optimising outcomes*’ and from our water resources and systems and ‘*raising levels*’ of utility.

Q. What do we mean by Partnership? A. A diverse, multi-disciplinary and multi-sectoral team of academics and non-academic stakeholders. The LPIP will be supported by a high-quality evidence base to support improved decision-making: the ‘Hydro-social Observatory’ (HsO). This will bring together the best data and analytics we have available to inform the whole partnership - combining the strengths of each for the benefit of all. Community engagement will be central to our approach. The Partnership includes a number of communities and community organisations. We wish to take an innovative approach to their integral involvement within the Observatory alongside wider participation in our activities.

Q. What do we mean by ‘optimising outcomes’ and ‘raising levels’? A. Our preliminary discussions with everyone at the end of last year helped to identify five key ‘optimisation challenges’, which we will use to discuss how we will ‘raise levels’ of productivity, value, connection, inclusion, enterprise, growth, co-ordination, sustainability, ecosystem services, and health and wellbeing. These challenges are:

1. Optimising Productivity and Value
2. Optimising Connections and Opportunities
3. Optimising Business and Industry
4. Optimising Place and Natural Capital
5. Optimising Health and Wellbeing

We already have a great team and fantastic stakeholder support. The team comprises around sixty key stakeholder organisations. The academic team is from Stirling, Edinburgh and Heriot Watt Universities, the James Hutton Institute and National Institute for Economic and Social Research (see Notes at the end).

c. Where are we with the process?

We have been successful, against strong competition, in our bid to become one of just ten LPIPs across the UK.

We are now in **Phase 1**

Our mission in Phase 1 is to be selected as one of 4 LPIPs to go forward to **Phase 2 – worth £4.8m** for our region

One of the £4.8m awards is guaranteed to be in either Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland

Around £1.2m of this award will be available to fund various actions and initiatives *on the ground*

We have received excellent feedback from our Phase 1 bid, so we are very well positioned for Phase 2

d. What happens next?

Phase 1 involves a series of conversations to make our bid at Phase 2 as strong as possible. We need to do three things – build our network, identify useful data, and gather resources and insights to help build our narrative for Phase 2.

e. What can I do to help?

BOOK IN A TIME TO SPEAK WITH THE PROJECT DIRECTOR (Richard Simmons)

We would love to speak with you very soon to talk about your role in the project!

This might include discussion of the following:

- **Resources and insights** (*e.g. Useful reports, policies and other publications; Unpublished documents; We particularly welcome undocumented information/intelligence on forthcoming initiatives, etc, so that we can ensure that LPIP activities align with these*)
- **Data** (*What data/information does your organisation hold or use that might help? Nb. it does not have to be about water. It could be anything related to sustainable and inclusive economic growth, community wellbeing, or natural capital and ecosystem services*)

THANK YOU SO MUCH AGAIN -

WITH YOUR SUPPORT WE CAN WIN THIS £4.8m FUNDING

AND MAKE A REAL DIFFERENCE!

Please contact Richard Simmons (Project Director) at lpip@stir.ac.uk