

Call for research projects Fessenheim Human-Environment Observatory

2026

As part of the Interdisciplinary Research Facility on Human-Environment Interactions (LabEx DRIIHM), the Human-Environment Observatories (OHM) network.



Deadlines

Opening : November 1, 2025

Closing : December 1, 2025

Results : December 2025

Project duration : 12 months (Jan. – Dec. 2026)

Background

The Fessenheim Human-Environment Observatory (OHM Fessenheim) was created in 2018 by the CNRS Ecology & Environment with the joint support of the CNRS Nuclear & Particles, Humanities & Social Sciences, Science & Universe, and the University of Strasbourg. It is the 13th OHM to be created and to join LabEx DRIIHM, which brings together a total of 14 OHMs in France and abroad.

OHM Fessenheim's research focuses on long-term monitoring of the territorial, social, economic, and environmental dynamics of a cross-border territory subjected to the closure and decommissioning of a nuclear facility: the Fessenheim nuclear power plant.

Through the calls for projects and PhD theses it has co-financed since its launch, OHM Fessenheim has sought to provide information on the starting point for observation (the “pre-closure” state), to explore/test methodologies for monitoring the evolution of the impacted socio-ecosystem, to document the reconfiguration of networks of actors, socio-economic transformations, and to explore perceptions of the territory and nuclear risk.

Recently, part of the observatory's work has been refocused on issues related to decommissioning: its environmental and sanitary impacts, its implementation at the territorial level, and the associated conversion strategies.

Priority topic

This new call intends to pursue this thematic focus. It aims to highlight the dismantling of industrial facilities, specifically nuclear ones, and the associated challenges.

Dismantling, deconstruction, and decommissioning are all concepts that we wish to explore, as well as their impact on every aspect of our socio-ecosystem of interest: the “post-nuclear power plant territory of Fessenheim.” This “territory” is deliberately not bounded *a priori*, as the scale of impact may differ depending on the topics under consideration.

The topic of decommissioning covers several areas of research, ranging from technical and metrological issues to public policy issues or aspects relating to occupational health, heritage, legacy, etc. This list is by no means exhaustive.

This call for proposals is intended both to complement/ deepen studies currently being carried out on decommissioning and supported in previous calls, and to explore other areas of work that fit within the scope described above.

Comparative studies with other sites in France or abroad that ultimately shed light on the “Fessenheim case” may also be considered and will be appreciated.

The OHM Fessenheim aims to enlighten an interdisciplinary community and establish and facilitate dialogue between disciplines and institutions (academic research, local authorities, nuclear industry stakeholders, associations, etc.).

Particular attention will be given to proposals that implement this dialogue. This may be through the methodology recommended for the study, the methods of promotion/dissemination envisaged, or the diversity of the partners involved.

It should be noted that the observatory will now launch calls for projects every year on similar financial terms (see below). If necessary, project leaders will therefore have the opportunity to have their project renewed for several years by submitting a request with each call. Renewal will be at the discretion of the OHM Fessenheim management committee.

Open topic

The OHM Fessenheim will be attentive to any proposals that do not fall within the priority topic but which could contribute to the observatory's other topics (<https://ohm-fessenheim.fr>).

Funding of proposals

Proposals will be reviewed by the OHM Fessenheim steering committee and approved by the LabEx DRIIHM board. The amount of funding allocated to each successful proposal will be assessed by the OHM Fessenheim steering committee and will depend on the eligibility of the expenses and the relevance of the proposed expenditure items.

The grant requested must not exceed the indicative amount of EUR 10,000. It may be used to cover the entire cost of the project or to supplement other sources of funding—either already secured or in the process of being secured. Where applicable, the sources of co-financing should be specified in order to clarify the feasibility of the project.

The planned expenditure must comply with the eligibility rules set by LabEx DRIIHM. All information is available in the general framework document provided (available on November 1). Compliance with the eligibility conditions is one of the criteria for evaluating proposals. A few key points are already outlined here:

- All amounts awarded must be engaged during the 2026 calendar year.
- Salary expenses are not eligible.
- Internship stipends are eligible, but limited.

One, and only one, stipend is eligible per application. The duration of the internship is limited to 5 months. The amount of the stipend is set at EUR 3,500 (EUR 700/month). The internship must be completed within the calendar year (2026). It cannot be extended into the following year. If an internship is not filled, the corresponding amount cannot be reused for another purpose. A request for an internship stipend therefore constitutes a firm commitment.

Specificity of the budgetary context

As the French budget has not been voted on, OHM Fessenheim cannot guarantee that it will have the full amount initially budgeted for this call (approximately EUR 20,000). This budgetary uncertainty could also lead to further delays in the deployment of funds. This is completely beyond our control, and we understand the uncertainty and considerable discomfort this may cause for project leaders and potential interns.

Financial management

The research grant allocated to each successful project should be set up in the specified unit before the end of the first trimester of 2026. The entire grant must be committed¹

¹ Committing does not mean spending. Funds can be committed in year n for use in year $n+1$. Consult with your managers.

before the end of November. Any remaining funds cannot be used beyond the fiscal year (2026).

The managing unit for all successful projects must be under CNRS aegis. No repayment agreement is possible; the procedural and implementation deadlines for the funds would exceed the eligibility period for the funds. It is imperative for project leaders whose affiliated unit is not under CNRS aegis to contact a CNRS unit² for the management of the grant (UMR or UPR).

Commitment of successful applicants

All successful applicants undertake to become members of OHM Fessenheim and to sign the partnership charter. In doing so, they acknowledge the observatory's objectives and accept the following principles:

- The study will be the subject of a written report (template provided in due course) with a summary table of expenses incurred, and an oral presentation at the OHM Fessenheim seminar.
- The storage and archiving of scientific information are two of the objectives of the OHM. The data produced as part of the study must be described (metadata sheet) and must be entered into the OHM information system or, failing that, into the LabEx DRIIHM information system, after being valorized by their author; the dataDRIIHM group can assist each of the researchers in this task.
- Each scientific partner in the project undertakes to mention OHM Fessenheim and LabEx DRIIHM in all publications and communications of the results. For articles, the following acknowledgment must be included: “This work was supported by the Fessenheim Human-environment Observatory (OHM Fessenheim) and the Interdisciplinary Research Facility on Human-Environment Interactions (DRIIHM), an “Investissements d'avenir” program with reference ANR-11-LABX-0010.” For oral presentations and posters, the logos of OHM Fessenheim and LabEx DRIIHM (to be requested if necessary) must be displayed. All publications and communications relating to the projects are intended to be included in the HAL collection of OHM Fessenheim and LabEx DRIIHM, at least their reference if you are unable to distribute the document itself widely.

Submission

Proposals must be submitted via an online platform hosted on the LabEx DRIIHM website. You must first create an account on the website. All submission instructions are

² UMR 7362 (Image, City, Environment Laboratory), a unit affiliated with OHM Fessenheim, could be an option in this case for the project leaders in the Strasbourg campus. Please contact us in advance (see next page for contact details).

explained in the dedicated news section or in the general framework document for the call provided by LabEx DRIIHM.

<https://www.driihm.fr/>

To help project leaders prepare their submissions, a guide is provided. It lists all the information that must be entered on the online platform.

For inter-OHM projects, you must obtain the approval of the directors of each OHM concerned before submitting your proposal. For projects involving the OHM Fessenheim, please contact the OHM board in advance.

After submitting any project (OHM or inter-OHM) on the platform, project leaders must inform OHM Fessenheim by email or phone call (contact information below).

Deadlines

Opening of the submission platform: November 1, 2025

Closing of the submission platform: December 1, 2025

Results: December 2025

Project duration: 12 months (January - December 2026)

Presentation at the OHM seminar and written report: first quarter of 2027

Contact information

Please do not hesitate to contact OHM Fessenheim for further information. We are available to discuss your project ideas, even at a very early stage.

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