

RESEARCH PROJECT THE SOCIAL VALUE OF THE SOLAR PARK AT UNIVERSITÉ DE SHERBROOKE

Call for Interest

Key dates

Deadline for submitting files	5 december 2021, 5 p.m.
Announcement of results	Week of 13 december 2021

1. Context

The **Université de Sherbrooke solar park** or 3IT.helios platform, which was inaugurated in 2019, is an infrastructure that has contributed to the development of a new visual signature for the university. This showcase for technological innovation constitutes a Canadian benchmark for academic research in solar power. It makes it possible to test or validate different configurations for the generation or storage of renewable energy or injection of energy into the system in cold climates.

KHEOPS is an international research consortium and partner of Université de Sherbrooke. It studies infrastructure projects from the perspective of social value creation. Its research projects reflect on ways of ensuring a better balance between the execution constraints affecting infrastructure projects and the needs of society. The consortium also reflects on the integration of social values and sustainability into the governance of these infrastructures. Its mission includes supporting decision-making by key infrastructure development stakeholders in Quebec and Canada.

In 2021, stimulated by KHEOPS, the solar park undertook to move forward with the innovative principle it proposes, in order to make this university infrastructure more than just a place dedicated to applied engineering research by creating a unique location for social science research: a social innovation laboratory. In this context, it seems very important to consider **the solar park's social value**. What kind of value does this infrastructure create for the various partners involved? That is, for Université de Sherbrooke, its industrial partners and the wider community?

Consequently, KHEOPS and the solar park at Université de Sherbrooke (3IT.helios platform) are jointly launching a call for expressions of interest. This call is addressed to the KHEOPS scientific community and researchers at Université de Sherbrooke, in order to conduct a research project on the topic of the solar park's social value. To promote this project, KHEOPS is offering funding, while

the 3IT.helios platform is offering access to the solar park. The research project developed will allow for an understanding of how the solar park creates social value for the living environment in which it is integrated, and how much value it creates. In collaboration with the communities concerned, and in partnership with KHEOPS and the 3IT.helios platform, the research team will work to identify **the social impacts** of this infrastructure's implementation. For example, they may examine positive and negative externalities and identify the non-financial benefits to be integrated into the management of this kind of infrastructure in order to maximize the potential for social value creation. The research project might also engage citizens or local communities in this reflection process to study the social acceptability of this kind of clean energy and the infrastructures needed to exploit it. Is solar power associated with greater social acceptability than other kinds of renewable energy? How does the surrounding community take ownership of this new kind of renewable power generation and the facilities and infrastructures required to exploit it?

2. Objectives of the call

This call for expressions of interest is intended to support the development of a research project, conducted in partnership with KHEOPS and the 3IT.helios platform, concerning the social value of the Université de Sherbrooke solar park and its social impacts.

More specifically, the objectives of this call for interest are to:

1. Support the start-up of a research project;
2. Support the execution of a research project conducted in partnership.

3. Description and conditions of funding

The funding to be provided consists of two parts:

1. Part 1 – Support for project start-up:

KHEOPS is offering **\$2,000** in financial support to allow the submission of an application for a SSHRC Partnership Engage Grant¹ or a grant from any other Quebec or Canadian granting agency.

¹ https://www.sshrc-crsh.gc.ca/funding-financement/programs-programmes/partnership_engage_grants-subventions_d_engagement_partenarial-eng.aspx

2. Part 2 – Execution of the research project:

When a research grant is obtained further to part 1, KHEOPS, as a *partner organization*,² will make a contribution to allow for two MITACS Accelerate internships (a contribution from KHEOPS of **\$15,000**, which will be doubled by MITACS for a total of \$30,000).

To receive this funding, the research project must:

1. Be directed by a KHEOPS principal researcher or associate researcher or by a researcher at Université de Sherbrooke who is not a member of KHEOPS. Note: co-researchers may be members of other universities or research units;
2. Concern the solar park's social value and social impacts;
3. Include KHEOPS as a partner and engage the consortium in all project phases through relevant activities;
4. Enable students or postdoctoral researchers to be recruited;
5. Aim to submit an application for a Partnership Engage Grant from SSHRC or any other Quebec or Canadian granting agency, within a maximum of 6 months after obtaining the funding under part 1 of the call.

4. Follow-up and reporting

All researchers who have obtained KHEOPS funding must:

For part 1:

- Issue a short administrative report: This report must be sent to KHEOPS a maximum of two months after a grant application is submitted to a granting agency. It will include the project title and summary; the application date and name of the funding program for which an application was submitted; the expected date the competition results will be known; the justification of the expenditure of the \$2,000 granted for start-up support (NB: If the \$2,000 in financial support is not fully used, the remaining balance may be used for project execution – part 2); a list of students and postdoctoral researchers engaged, and their involvement or mandate; and the anticipated next steps of the funded project, if applicable.
- Follow up with KHEOPS regarding the results of the grant competition: As soon as the granting agency informs the researcher of the results of the competition for which he/she

² See the MITACS Accelerate program: <https://www.mitacs.ca/en/programs/accelerate>

applied (see point 3.1, page 2), the researcher must send KHEOPS a follow-up email informing it of whether the grant application was or was not accepted.

For part 2:

- Write a research report using the KHEOPS report template, which will be provided: This report must present the highlights, background, theoretical approach and method, a discussion of results and a reference list. A copy of this report will be sent to KHEOPS, which will make it accessible to the public on its website.
- Participate (in person or virtually, if applicable) in one seminar, conference or other knowledge mobilization activity organized by KHEOPS along with the solar park following the awarding of the grant. The activity will promote the results of the research with the KHEOPS community and more broadly among other knowledge users. The format of the activity remains to be determined; however, candidates for a grant may include this activity in their knowledge mobilization plan and provide for travel expenses for a half-day activity in Montreal in the budget submitted with their application.
- Provide KHEOPS with a list of publications (reports, articles, publications or communications) resulting from the project. KHEOPS will make these references accessible to the public on its website.

5. Submission of a package

Interested researchers must submit a duly completed package, including acceptance of the explanation of the conditions regarding intellectual property by the principal investigator. All the requested documentation must be attached with the form and the entire package must be sent to the email address indicated below.

To access the confirmation of interest form and the list of documents to be attached, [click here](#).

Send your duly completed package (form and attachments in PDF format) to
concours@kheops.ca
By 5 december 2021, 5 p.m.

6. Evaluation of packages

Packages will be evaluated in part 1 by a peer review committee on the basis of the following criteria:

- The quality of the proposed project and its fit with the objectives and conditions of the call;

- The quality and complementarity of the scientific team;
- The involvement of students and/or postdoctoral researchers in the project;
- The project's fit with the objectives of the SSHRC Partnership Engage Grant competition or any other competition by a Quebec or Canadian granting agency targeted for submission of a grant application.

7. Payments of financial assistance

The financial assistance will be paid at two points:

- Part 1: \$2,000 to the principal researcher when the project is accepted;
- Part 2: \$15,000 to MITACS when the project is funded by a granting agency.

8. Mention of financial assistance received

Any report, article, publication or communication resulting from the financial assistance granted must mention the financial support from KHEOPS – International Research Consortium on the Governance of Large Infrastructure Projects.

For more information

Please contact Alexandra Prohet
prohet.alexandra@kheops.ca

