



LABEX DRIIHM 2026 CALL FOR PROPOSALS

OHMI Pima County

1 – CONTEXT

The Pima County Human-Environment observatory (OHMi Pima County) was created January 1st, 2014 by the CNRS Institutes for Ecology and the Environment and Human and Social Science. It is one of the 14 “Human-Environment observatories” of the LabEx DRIIHM program (<https://www.driihm.fr/>) funded by CNRS and the French National Research Agency (ANR). The observatories’ mission is to promote and organize scientific research around specific places characterized by long-established socio-environmental systems which are undergoing significant change that results in ecological, social and spatial reconfigurations.

In this context, the OHMi Pima County supports emerging interdisciplinary projects that can analyze and document new challenges in these human-environment interactions. The OHMi also seeks to highlight research results that offer insights to the general public about the interactions between research and civil society. OHMi Pima County serves as a catalyst to sponsor research on environmental and social change that helps communities better understand and address the changes taking place in their societies.

Situated administratively within the iGLOBES international research laboratory, a joint CNRS-University of Arizona research unit located in Tucson, Arizona, the OHMi Pima County is focused on the upper valley of the Santa Cruz river, corresponding mainly to Pima and Santa Cruz Counties. The region is characterized by extreme climatic conditions with significant ecosystem diversity, from the semi-arid Sonoran Desert and grasslands to conifer forests at higher elevations. Historically, the region has been developed through a series of economic cycles characterized by reliance on resource extraction: extensive cattle grazing, mining, water use for irrigated agriculture and, more recently, space for urban development. These dynamics have however been increasingly challenged by a paradigm shift in which landscape and resources protection have become increasingly important. This change has prompted the adoption of new policies, regarding water management, for example, and the questioning of proposed activities such as the Rosemont mine project.

The OHMi Pima County was created to chronicle and assess the impact of environmental conflict and its influence on social change that began in the 1970s. Throughout this period, Pima County has a place where ecosystems and landscapes are increasingly valued for broader and longer-term values. As with any societal change, however, the transformation is not abrupt or complete, but an ongoing process, and many aspects of the resource-extractive system are still in place, prompting continued conflict and discourse, and revealing complex feedback loops.

The OHMi Pima County looks at the effects of these countervailing dynamics on the current socio-ecosystem of the upper Santa Cruz valley. It also analyzes the effects of human behavior and activities on local ecosystems and supports local initiatives measuring change and raising awareness among stakeholders about the long-term decisions about environmental management.

2 - OBJECTIVES OF THE OHMi PIMA COUNTY

- To develop a multidisciplinary analysis framework.
- To contribute to the production of knowledge about the human/environment relationship in the upper Santa Cruz valley.
- To engage local stakeholders and foster education and constructive discourse about environmental decision making.
- To establish connections with other observatories of the DRIIHM network about environmental management issues such as resource extraction, mining, water management, Indigenous populations, land use and land management, etc.

3 – ELIGIBLE TOPICS

The OHMi Pima County seeks to select projects covering the following topics:

- Hydrologic modeling about the Santa Cruz River in general and the Rosemont/Santa Rita mountains in particular.
- Potential contaminants linked with mining and industrial development that pose risks for the local population.
- The role of science in informing stakeholders about the risks and trade-offs related to environmental management, and their consequences in terms of public policy.
- The history of land use and land management, and environmental conflicts in Southeastern Arizona, particularly within the broader context of the historical transformations occurring in the Western United States.
- Exploration of the environment/health relationship in the Pima county area: emergence of new pathogens, epidemiologic risks, population diversity in relation to risks, effect of the international border in relation to epidemiologic risks, adaptation of human behaviors in relation to specific risks, links between epidemiologic risks and climate change, etc.
- Explorations of specific aspects of the Human/environment relationship in the upper Santa Cruz valley such as: the response of animal and plant populations to disturbance and change, using innovative monitoring and assessment techniques and indicators (e.g., soundscapes).
- Explorations of the practices, knowledge, and experience of nature lived by individuals and communities in the Santa Cruz socio-ecosystems using mixed arts and sciences approaches.

4 – PROPOSALS' FUNDING

Funding allocated for proposals will be between 4,000 and 5000 € per organization, and will be available for one year of project implementation. Proposals will be evaluated on the following criteria:

- RELEVANCE to the OHMi Pima County mission and project framework
- POTENTIAL IMPACT for furthering understanding and civic discourse over environmental decision making
- INNOVATION – in terms of conceptual approach, methods, and stakeholder engagement
- INVESTMENT in capacity building and long-term project sustainability
- EFFICIENCY in terms of management of project funding

Funding should be principally allocated to support field studies, development of educational materials, or other related products, and may include travel costs for US or French researchers or students. Acquisition of equipment should be limited to that which is absolutely indispensable for project implementation.

Funding will be managed by iGLOBES/CNRS from its accounts at the University of Arizona, and will be disbursed directly to project recipients based on approved expenses.

Proposals will be evaluated and ranked by the OHM Pima County coordinators using the criteria outlined above. Candidates will be notified soon after the deadline for submission (see below).

5 – SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS

Proponents must register and submit proposals through the DRIIHM program website: <https://www.driihm.fr/en/log-in>

Details on procedures for proposal submission can be found on paragraph 3.2 of the general announcement for the call.

Proponents are encouraged to inform the OHMi directors of their intention to submit a proposal (see below). Questions about proposal content and submission procedures are highly encouraged.

6 - TIMELINE

Call deadline: **December 15, 2025** (midnight Paris time)

Announcement of awards: **January 2026**

Funding availability: **February-March, 2026**

CONTACTS

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