

CITIES OF TOMORROW (CoT) R&D PROGRAMME
GRANT CALL 5
FOR VERTICAL 5: CITY IN NATURE

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQS)

CALL TOPIC 11: EFFICACY OF NATURE-BASED INTERVENTIONS ON HUMAN WELL-BEING

Please note that the FAQs will be updated periodically. Please refer to the [CoT V5 5th Grant Call website](#) and [IGMS website](#) for the latest version of the FAQs.

STUDY POPULATION

1. What is the population profile that the study is targeting?

The study targets the general population residing in the community, specifically individuals aged 21 years and above. To ensure the safety and feasibility of participation, all participants must be able to ambulate independently without the use of personal assistance or mobility aids.

2. Are researchers at liberty to identify a specific population group? Example, persons living with dementia. Can the study sites be at nursing homes or dementia day care?

As this is a pilot study, the focus is on the general population. At this stage, we are not specifically including seniors living in nursing homes, nor are interventions being conducted within such facilities. However, findings from this pilot may inform future studies involving specific population groups or settings.

STUDY SITES

3. Is there a minimum number of sites that need to be profiled?

The minimum number of sites that must be investigated is three, and this should include at least one forest environment. For further details, please refer to slide 34 of the presentation deck.

4. To effectively explore the relationship between phytoncides and human health outcomes, will we be provided with metadata on the plant species present — including species identity, plant part, habitat or growth conditions, and any available chemical profiling data (e.g., VOCs or secondary metabolites)? If not, will there be a framework to collect or access this information?

Teams should plan for the expertise and approach to collect such data as required for the study, without relying on availability of existing data. However, where existing data is available, NParks can support and facilitate the request for access to such data.

5. Would the forest zone need to be protected zone (that require NParks permits), or publicly accessible forest areas would suffice?

The project will focus on publicly accessible forest areas, as this enhances the practical relevance and applicability of the study findings. By conducting research in locations that the general public can freely visit, the results are more directly translatable to real-world settings and can inform public health recommendations, urban planning, and recreational policies. This approach ensures that any benefits identified can be readily accessed and implemented by the broader community, maximizing the potential impact of the study on population health and well-being.

6. For the design of the experimental study, do you require the participants to visit the same forest or can they visit other forests for their 5 week sessions (similarly for urban and nature park)? If yes, do they have to visit the same areas in the same forest too? (17 June 2025)

We will leave it to the study teams to design the experimental study that will best meet the objectives of the call topic.

Do note that one of the key objectives of the call topic is to develop profiles of phytoncides and microbial composition at three test sites with distinct natural characteristics—such as forest, nature park, and urban park—and to determine how these profiles influence human health.

Should the experimental study involve varied test sites, we advise the study teams to describe in their proposal how potential confounding factors (e.g., site-specific variables) will be controlled and accounted for in the study design, as well as how environmental composition of each selected sites will be fully characterized and measured.

INTERVENTION

7. Given the focus on passive interventions effectiveness, would the grant be looking on comparing active vs passive interventions as part of the rigorous study design that the grant call is looking for?

The grant call does not explicitly require comparing active versus passive interventions as part of the study design. Teams may include an active nature engagement group for comparison if it is feasible to achieve the required sample size within the available budget. However, the team would need to determine a suitable and standardized form of active engagement for meaningful comparison, with justification.

8. The example of a passive nature intervention given is Relational Nature Therapy. Is this a facilitated session?

Yes, Relational Nature Therapy in this context is a facilitated session.

9. People engage in various activities in parks. Is facilitated relational nature therapy necessary?

While we have conducted other studies examining the effects of time spent in parks regardless of the activities involved, this project specifically aims to investigate the impact of mindful engagement with nature. Relational Nature\Forest Therapy is a structured program designed to facilitate intentional and mindful interaction with natural surroundings. This approach enables us to assess the unique benefits of mindful engagement with nature, as compared to general park use. Teams are also welcome to propose other passive nature interventions that can be standardized for the study design and are supported by existing literature.