Title page

Table of contents (provide a list of tables and figures as appropriate)

1.0 Introduction and problem context (1-2 pages): Outline the scholarly and practical/social relevance of your project. Explain the core sustainability challenge or problem, and indicate how your work can address this challenge (i.e., the ‘so what’).

2.0 Research questions/objectives or hypothesis (1 page): Outline your core research questions and/or objectives or hypothesis. Align questions/objectives/hypothesis with the core problem articulated above. Ensure subsequent sections of the proposal (literature review, methodology) refer back to and address these questions/objectives/hypothesis.

3.0 Literature review and conceptual framework (3-5 pages): Situate your research within the relevant scholarly literature; identify key gaps and limitations and set the foundation to justify your topic and your methodological approach. Work to develop of a clear theoretical or conceptual framework for your research.

4.0 Methodology and methods (i.e., research design) (3-5 pages): Establish the philosophical and epistemological foundations for your work and situate your choices about methods and tools for data collection, analysis and synthesis. Clearly outline specific methods, highlighting their strengths and limitations with regard to your research specifically. Indicate the relationship among your data collection and analysis plans and your research objectives/hypotheses, and any assumptions you are making in the process.

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5.0 Expected outcomes and contributions (1-2 pages): Identify and discuss the expected outcomes and novel contributions you hope to make – these can be theoretical, empirical and/or focused on applied or policy contexts. If you are planning to follow a dissertation by manuscript format (see guidelines below), tentatively outline the expected focus of the three main manuscripts.

6.0 Schedule of activities (1 page): Provide an expected schedule of tasks and activities starting with proposal approval and ethics clearance, through to expected timelines for first drafts and proposed defense date.

7.0 Budget (as necessary) (1 page)

8.0 References (as required)

Appendices (as necessary): Consider including as needed such information as interview questionnaire/questions or other protocols and information as appropriate; details on methods or analytical tools that don’t need to be in the main body of the proposal, etc.