

**Terms of Reference**  
**2023 Evaluation of Lincoln Institute of Land Policy**  
**Strategies on Climate Resilience and Sustainable Land and Water Management**

The Lincoln Institute of Land Policy is seeking subject matter experts to evaluate its work on low-carbon, climate-resilient communities and sustainably managed land and water resources. The Lincoln Institute invites proposals from teams or individuals with expertise to execute the full scope of this evaluation, or individuals with expertise in one portion of this scope willing to be partnered with others. We are open to a team created by the applicant or to the applicant's willingness to join a team created by the Lincoln Institute.

### **Background**

The Lincoln Institute of Land Policy seeks to improve quality of life through the effective use, taxation, and stewardship of land. A nonprofit private operating foundation whose origins date to 1946, the Lincoln Institute researches and recommends creative approaches to land as a solution to economic, social, and environmental challenges. Through education, training, publications, and events, the Lincoln Institute integrates theory and practice to inform public policy decisions worldwide.

The Lincoln Institute organizes its work around six [goals](#): low-carbon, climate-resilient communities; efficient and equitable tax systems; reduced poverty and spatial inequality; fiscally healthy communities and regions; sustainably managed land and water resources; and functional land markets and reduced informality. The Institute's work to advance these goals is defined in a strategic document created by the Board of Directors called the "Pathways to Impact." The Lincoln Institute also supports a number of topically-focused centers and initiatives.

Programs that advance the Institute's goals on [low-carbon, climate-resilient communities](#) and [sustainably managed land and water resources](#) are among the Institute's newest. The Institute's work on sustainably managed land and water resources primarily takes place through the [International Land Conservation Network](#), established in 2014, and the [Babbitt Center for Land and Water Policy](#), launched in 2017. Focus on how land policy can prepare communities to address the climate crisis gained momentum in 2019 with a programmatic reorganization that created a team to advance the Institute's climate resilience goal.

### **Evaluation Objectives**

This evaluation will assist the Board of Directors of the Lincoln Institute in its review of the Lincoln Institute's work on Climate, Land and Water. This evaluation will include both the goal-based strategies focused on climate resilience and land and water policy, as well as the Babbitt Center for Land and Water Policy. The evaluation consultant will interview appropriate Lincoln Institute and Babbitt Center staff, external partners, and review selected program reports, publications, and related materials.

The Board will benefit from the evaluation through the assessment of the relevance, quality, impact, and appropriateness of the research, convening, training, network development, and other activities that comprise the Institute's Climate, Land and Water strategies. The primary questions on which the Board seeks insight include:

- 1. What is the Lincoln Institute's unique contribution to Climate, Land and Water?**
  - a. How does the Lincoln Institute's work on Climate, Land and Water advance the broader mission of the Institute as illustrated in the Pathways to Impact?
  - b. Is the Lincoln Institute's expertise well matched with the approach it takes to Climate, Land and Water issues?
  - c. How does the work of the Lincoln Institute on Climate, Land and Water contribute to the field?
  - d. What makes the Lincoln Institute's work on Climate, Land and Water different from that of other organizations addressing these issues?
  
- 2. Does the Lincoln Institute organize its work around the right questions related to climate resilience and the land policy/water nexus and with the right approach?**
  - a. Does the Lincoln Institute have a clearly defined strategy and statement of objectives for its work on Climate, Land and Water?
  - b. How well is the Lincoln Institute achieving the mission, vision, and goals it has defined for its work on Climate, Land and Water?
  - c. Does the Lincoln Institute have adequate mechanisms (metrics) to measure success of its programmatic work in Climate, Land and Water?
  - d. Are the units working on Climate, Land and Water structured and organized in ways that maximize the Lincoln Institute's resources and help produce desired outcomes?
  - e. Is the Institute engaged with the right partners? For example, are those partners well-positioned to support and/or influence the direction of the decision-making that is most relevant to the Lincoln Institute's goals?
  - f. Is the work of the Lincoln Institute on Climate, Land and Water sufficiently geographically focused and locally nuanced?
  - g. Are there high impact areas and questions the Institute is not pursuing but would be well equipped to pursue? Is the Institute's approach potentially missing high impact opportunities? How can the Institute position itself to address these opportunities?
  - h. How has the work of the Lincoln Institute on Climate, Land and Water evolved to meet developing needs in the broader community?
  
- 3. To the extent not addressed above, what new actions should the Institute take moving forward to achieve its goals on Climate, Land and Water?**
  - a. What questions or priorities should the Lincoln Institute be tackling given its focus and expertise?
  - b. Which partners should the Lincoln Institute engage with to advance its work in Climate, Land and Water?
  - c. How should the Lincoln Institute be measuring success moving forward?
  - d. Is there any activity that the Lincoln Institute should stop doing or turn over to another entity?

### **Anticipated Activities**

The major elements of the evaluation are expected to be:

1. Review of background materials on Climate, Land and Water programs as provided, including self-study documentation and other key program activity reports.

2. Interview Lincoln Institute leadership, including the Board committee overseeing the evaluation, to clarify the Institute's expectations and views on the Institute's work on climate resilience and land and water policy.
3. Interview program staff, including in-depth briefings with program leads for Climate, Land and Water, and the Director of the Babbitt Center.
4. Interview key external partners and participants in Climate, Land and Water programs.
5. Provide a final report responding to the evaluation questions posed that summarizes the Institute's performance and recent trends, including any suggestions for future changes to the organization's work on Climate, Land and Water to improve impact.
6. Attend a Board Program and Budget Committee Meeting as well as a Lincoln Board meeting to present and discuss the evaluation.

**Timeline.** The evaluation will begin in July 2023. A draft evaluation report will be due in December 2023. The Board discussion is scheduled to take place in Phoenix in January 2024. A final evaluation report will be due in April 2024.

**Lincoln Institute Roles.** The Lincoln Board is the primary audience for this evaluation. A Board committee will work directly with the evaluator(s) to answer questions and provide additional guidance. Lincoln Institute staff will provide a self-study and assist in providing materials, reports, background data, contact information, and logistical support as needed.

**Proposal Requirements and Evaluator Qualifications.** The Lincoln Institute is open to proposals from individual evaluators or evaluation teams. Individual evaluators with expertise in one aspect of this evaluation scope are welcome to apply and be placed in a team by the Institute. It is expected that successful evaluators will have subject matter expertise in climate resilience and/or land and water policy, as well as administrative experience overseeing significant research or policy related to these subject matters and/or experience in program evaluation.

The majority of this work will be done remotely. The Lincoln Institute will provide support for travel required for the evaluation.

Proposals should include:

- Your approach to answering the evaluation questions
- Proposed evaluation stages, activities, and timeline
- Your background and the background of your team members, if applicable, including content expertise
- Examples of related work/deliverables, if available
- Proposed budget

Please submit all proposals via email to Katie Grace Deane at [kgdeane@lincolninst.edu](mailto:kgdeane@lincolninst.edu) by **May 19, 2023**.