Education and Outreach Activities of the World Climate Research Programme

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## Introduction

The co-sponsored[[1]](#footnote-1) World Climate Research Programme (WCRP) relies on a strong international research community with expertise in all aspects of climate science and in all regions of the world. Training, capacity building, higher education, and facilitated collaboration are of paramount importance to sustain and grow this community, particularly through opportunities for early career, underrepresented, and developing country researchers (WCRP, 2019). As such, WCRP takes seriously its responsibility to ensure that the next generation of climate science leaders are ready to take on important roles in guiding the climate research agenda and that all scientists are equipped to engage with society in the context of climate change. While education and outreach activities take place across all WCRP Core Projects and activities, it is particularly useful in this report to highlight two new WCRP initiatives: the *WCRP Academy Lighthouse Activity*[[2]](#footnote-2) and the *Climate and Cryosphere (CliC)[[3]](#footnote-3) Fellowships and Grants*.

## WCRP Academy

In 2020 five key areas were identified by WCRP where rapid advancement is required to manage climate risk and meet society’s urgent need for robust and actionable climate information more effectively. These were developed into five “Lighthouse Activities.”[[4]](#footnote-4) One of these Lighthouse Activities was built on the realization that we need to ensure that climate science education and training not just keeps pace with, but anticipates, the knowledge and tools that will be required in the future to meet the challenges and take advantage of the opportunities of a changing climate.

In 2021, the WCRP Academy initiated its inaugural Climate Training Stocktake Survey. It received over 400 complete responses, the results of which are currently being analyzed. The survey asked respondents about climate science education and training that they were currently undertaking, or had undertaken in the past, and asked them to identify any training they would like to do in the future. It also asked about training availability in the country in which the respondents lived and about any perceived barriers to accessing education and training. A publication on the findings of the survey is planned towards the end of 2022.

The preliminary results of the Climate Training Stocktake Survey have identified that one of the highest barriers to education and training is ‘limited knowledge of available options.’[[5]](#footnote-5) There are now many different training opportunities offered both online and in person, from universities, technical institutes, online training providers (including Massive Open Online Courses or MOOCs), and from many other sources (including WCRP). Ascertaining the quality and even content of all these courses can be difficult.

The WCRP Academy is planning to build an online portal that links climate science training providers with those seeking training, to make the various options available clearer. The Academy will not itself act as a training provider (although other parts of WCRP will do so) but will help to build a global community of climate researchers at all career stages to facilitate lifelong learning and skills matching for current and future research projects across the globe. The Academy would very much like to partner with the ATCM ICG on Education and Outreach, where appropriate, and with climate science training providers with a focus on the Antarctic continent and Southern Ocean.

## Climate and Cryosphere (CliC) Fellowships and Grants

In 2021, the WCRP Climate and Cryosphere (CliC) Core Project developed a new Strategic Plan. One of the objectives of the Plan is to “Establishing CliC fellowships and grants aimed at engaging early career scientists and scientists from under-represented regions and groups in CliC activities” (CliC, 2021). The first round of CliC Fellowship and Grants were launched in late 2021and received 48 applications. From the applications, two fellowships and two grants were awarded to early career recipients from Uzbekistan, Pakistan, Germany and Argentina, totalling CHF 48,500. Of all applications received, only five were focused on Antarctic research and none of these were successful in this round. It is hoped that future CliC fellowship and grant calls will attract more applications from early career researchers focused on Antarctica. It is expected that another round of CliC Fellowships will be launched in late 2022.

For further questions or details please contact *Dr Narelle Van de Wel (*[*nvanderwel@wmo.int*](mailto:nvanderwel@wmo.int)*)* in the first instance.

## References

CliC, 2021. Climate and Cryosphere (CliC) Strategic Plan 2022–2031. World Climate Research Programme (WCRP) Publication 8/2021 [F. Straneo, J. Renwick, T. Naish, A. Lovecraft, L. H. Smedsrud, E. Hanna, H. Christiansen, C. Lique, H. Seroussi, S. Sugiyama, M. Vancoppenolle, T. Zhang, B. M. Balino, N. van der Wel, eds.)][[6]](#footnote-6)

WCRP, 2019. World Climate Research Programme Strategic Plan 2019–2028. WCRP Publication 1/2019.[[7]](#footnote-7)

1. WCRP is co-sponsored by the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), the International Science Council (ISC) and the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO (IOC-UNESCO) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. https://www.wcrp-climate.org/academy [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. https://climate-cryosphere.org [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. https://www.wcrp-climate.org/lha-overview [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Financial barriers, a local lack of expertise, and training limited to formal studies were also all ranked high as barriers to climate science education and training [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. <https://www.wcrp-climate.org/WCRP-publications/2021/CliC_StrategicPlan_2022-2031-c.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. https://www.wcrp-climate.org/images/documents/WCRP\_Strategic\_Plan\_2019/WCRP-Strategic-Plan-2019-2028-FINAL-c.pdf [↑](#footnote-ref-7)