

COP26 Mini-Fellowships in Climate Risk (x7) Call for proposals

August 2021

The COP26 Universities Network is sponsoring **seven Mini-Fellowships as part of the Climate Risk project**, which aims to:

- Bring climate risk information to key influencers in advance of COP26
- Build the academic community's capacity to communicate climate risk effectively to policy makers, negotiators, and the third sector

To deliver these objectives, we are running a series of virtual events as a climate risk conference over three half days. The provisional dates are **29 September to 1 October 2021**. A Steering committee has been set up to oversee the Climate Risk project and these activities in particular.

The current planning includes:

Days 1 and 2 (half days) focus on **climate risk topics**, 3 topics / session per day (chosen from the list below, or a new suggestion). The audience will include national and international influencers, and can be invitation only to create the right environment for discussion. We expect these sessions to involve the sharing of the latest evidence about climate risks with key influencers, and discussing with them which formats and ways of sharing climate risk information are most useful to encourage and support climate action in their sector (e.g. public policy, private sector etc.)

Day 3 (afternoon) focuses on **communicating climate risk**. This will take the form of a workshop with more than one session. The audience for these sessions are other academics and climate experts. and will also draw lessons from the sessions on Day 1 and Day 2.

The preliminary topic list is below, and if you wish to propose a different topic, or a combination of these topics, we will consider those for inclusion.

- Risk and attribution of extremes
- Cascading and compounding risk
 - History of climate risk (both ancient and modern)
 - Maladaptive responses (e.g. conflict)
- Risk of tipping points
 - High risk, low probability events
- Disaster risk, including compound hazards
- Sectoral risk (for example: human health, ecosystem loss, species extinction, international security, global financial system) switch to critical systems (e.g. food)
- **Communicating climate risk (1 fellowship available – 3rd afternoon only)**
 - Including e.g. risk decision making under uncertainty

We invite early career and experienced researchers or practitioners with expertise in climate risk topics, and / or climate risk communication to apply to design and deliver a virtual conference session focused on a climate risk topic and create related outputs.

Deliverables and length of project

We expect work to take place from late August for at least 2.5 months. We are not asking fellows to commit a specific amount of time / FTE to the project, but fellows will be expected to contribute time-sensitive deliverables, agreed in advance with the Steering Committee.

Each fellow will receive funding to:

- design a virtual session on the topic they applied for (this could be a panel with Q&A, a workshop etc.) to be agreed with the Steering Committee
- identify content, scope and key target audiences
- identify and secure speakers and participants
- session and Q&A facilitation
- produce key messages for related communications activity; a blog on the day of the session; a short technical report; a podcast related to the session (in collaboration with Planet Pod)

NB: The fellow working on Climate Risk Communication will be required to produce additional outputs, in the form of a small toolkit, and arrange a longer conference session (a full afternoon), which is reflected in the budget allocated to that fellowship (see 'Budget').

All fellows are encouraged to identify more impactful ways of sharing content and continuing the conversation (for example: chairing a social media live session and managing related communications).

Training and expert advice may be available to help the Fellows deliver their session. Communications activity will be delivered in conjunction with the COP26 UK Universities Network Communications team sub-group.

Budget

Funds may be used to cover salaries, travel and other expenses. You will be asked to estimate a budget allocation as part of your proposal.

The budget will be assigned as follows:

- **£15,000** to the fellow working on climate risk communication (x1 available)
- **£7,500** to each of the 6 climate risk fellowships

Organisation

The fellowships are awarded through the **COP26 Universities Network**. The network will ensure strong connectivity across the UK academic community and take advantage of its existing connections with the COP26 Presidency, and other key stakeholders in civil society and business. We have a cabinet office representative on the Steering Committee and we hope that outputs can form part of the programme for the COP26 Presidency. The fellowships will be part of a broader programme of coordinated outputs and events by UK universities ahead of COP26.

Eligibility

Successful applicants are in an existing employment contract with a UK Higher Education Institution and enjoy the support of their employer. Applications are welcome from both junior and senior researchers or from engagement and impact professionals in an academic setting. All academic or research fellows must have completed their PhDs, or demonstrate equivalent experience.

Timeline

The Fellowships will be awarded during the academic year 2021/22, covering the pre-COP26 process. We expect work to take place from late August for at least 2.5 months.

This implies the following timeline:

- **Deadline for applications:** 15 August 2021
- Notification of awards: 18 August 2021
- Start of the fellowships: 19 August 2021

NB: We are conscious that this is a very tight timeline for submissions during a holiday period. Therefore, **we are holding one £7,500 fellowship open for applications until 30 August.**

To apply after 15 August, please seek information on the climate risk topics available from anna.bishop@admin.cam.ac.uk.

The timeline for that fellowship will be as follows:

- **Deadline for applications: 30 August 2021**
- Notification of awards: 31 August 2021
- Start of the fellowship: 1 September 2021

Criteria for assessment

Proposals will be assessed according to the following criteria:

1. Track record: A solid track record in the relevant topic area and on research and engagement, commensurate with the candidate's level of experience and with the proposed tasks.
2. Excellence: Demonstrates an understanding of climate risk (for the specific sub-topic chosen) and plans an ambitious, rigorous and well-thought through approach to this activity that will deliver the project aims in a relevant and effective way.
3. Impact and Communications: Show the communication skills necessary and understanding required to deliver impact with the target audience.
4. Relevance: A topic scoping that is relevant, timely, and appropriate to the climate risk project.

How to submit your proposal

Please send the [Application Form](#) and your [CV](#) to anna.bishop@admin.cam.ac.uk by **15 August 2021**.

The fellowship will be awarded solely on the basis of the first submission. There will be no rebuttal, interview or second stage submission.

For further questions about the COP26 Fellowships or the submission process please contact a.gilbert@imperial.ac.uk.