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Person Responsible:	M Ravichandran

XXXVII SCAR Delegates Meeting

India, September 2022

Capacity Building, Education and Training Report

Report Author(s)

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Summary

The CBET Committee has worked to advance SCAR activities in building capacity where possible, and in particular in working with the newly-established EDI Action Group to coordinate advice on those activities. The annual Fellowships and Visiting Scholar schemes have been reviewed and new proposals for the process of nominations for SCAR Medals have been proposed and implemented.

Recommendations

Delegates are asked to consider making additional voluntary contributions to the Fellowships and Visiting Scholar schemes to allow extra awards.

Delegates are also asked to note the establishment and development of an Action Group to tackle Equality, Diversity and Inclusion issues, which works with the CBET Committee and reports to the Vice President for CBET.

Update on the activity of the CBET Committee

The CBET Committee has met online three times since the last Delegates Meeting and a broad range of topics have been discussed and reviewed:

- The issue of timing for the Fellowships awards was raised after feedback received that it would be beneficial to have two calls per year. There would be a number of logistical issues with the idea, and there was no consensus on the benefits, however it will be retained as a question which could be passed to the EDI Action Group for consideration too.
- All of the support activities for applicants across the capacity-building schemes were reviewed, and previously there had been an online facility to allow applicants to ask questions anonymously, to be answered and posted by the Secretariat. This would be additional to the existing FAQ web resource, and implementation is being considered by the Secretariat
- The Committee followed up with the APECS (Association of Polar Early Career Scientists) Executive to investigate further opportunities to prepare for support webinars and to share requests with national committees to organise language-specific webinars where possible.
- Coordination of meeting plans with both APECS and Polar Educators International (PEI) was identified as highly desirable, and interaction during the OSC and other SCAR meetings encouraged.
- In partnership with PEI, APECS and the International Arctic Science Committee (IASC), the Polar Resource Book project has been advanced with analysis of those downloading materials and their feedback being key to informing the next stage of the project.
- A social media initiative was initiated with Johanna Grabow, SCAR Project Officer, in which on every last Thursday of the month a post is published about educational materials (links, text, activities, etc.). These started in January 2022, and it is branded as a SCAR and PEI collaboration but it could include APECS in the future.
- Many Committee members participated in the UN Decade of Ocean Science Southern Ocean Action Plan project (SOdecade.org). Considerable efforts were made to ensure wide participation in the Working Groups but the Committee was asked for advice and assistance on specific areas. It is likely there will also be opportunities for outreach activities and new partnerships as a result of the SO-Decade collaboration, which the Committee can monitor as the plans come together.
- The Committee provided early feedback in 2021 on the development of the Capacity Building and Communications sections of the new SCAR Strategic Plan. This formed part of the core materials passed to the sub-committee dealing with the drafting of these sections of the Plan.
- The Committee also provided feedback following the proposal from the SCAR Executive Committee for an intern programme that would provide support to individual ECRs assigned to each of our Science Groups along with the Standing Committee on the Antarctic Treaty System (SCATS). As a way to have closer integration of ECRs with these Groups, the proposal was strongly endorsed and an outline of the programme is attached to the end of this report.

Overview of the Capacity Building Schemes

The SCAR Fellowship Scheme

In 2021, we received 30 applications and 5 SCAR Fellowships were awarded, with a further 2 applicants being awarded Fellowships by COMNAP.

Full details are in the SCAR Fellowship Programme paper – [Paper 30]

The SCAR Visiting Scholar Scheme (formerly Visiting Professor)

For 2021, 14 applications were received and 3 awards were made to Dr Faradina Merican (Malaysia), Prof Hongjie Xie (USA) and Dr Jeronimo Lopez-Martinez (Spain).

Full details are in the SCAR Visiting Scholars Programme paper – [Paper 31]

The SCAR Medals – 2020 Awards and review of nominations for 2022

The EDI Action Group and CBET Committee worked together on recommending and implementing changes for the 2022 round of Medal nominations. The revised process involved a simpler initial nomination stage, with a short one-page online form required for each nomination. The reviewing panel then produced a shortlist of three candidates for each Medal. Fuller support material was then sought from each of the nominators and sent to the reviewers along with a detailed marking sheet with evaluation against several categories. Following collation of this final marking stage, the results were sent to the Executive Committee for approval.

The 2022 Medal recipients were announced on August 2nd 2022. The SCAR Medal for Excellence in Antarctic Research was jointly awarded to Prof Pippa Whitehouse of Durham University, UK and Prof Elisabeth Sikes of Rutgers University, USA. The SCAR Medal for International Scientific Coordination was awarded to Prof Stephen Ackley of the University of Texas at San Antonio, USA. The SCAR Medal for Education and Communication was awarded to Dr Bethan Davies of Royal Holloway University and Newcastle University, UK.

Active encouragement of nominations either from or motivated by SCAR senior leadership will be sought in light of the generally low level of nominations overall and specifically lack of diversity within those nominations.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Group

SCAR's newly-established Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Action Group is tasked with broadly looking at how EDI issues can be effectively dealt with within SCAR and what practical actions are relevant for the organisation. Following an open call for volunteers initiated in 2021, over 150 responses were received and allowed the leadership structure of the Action Group to be established and responsibilities are being assigned. Work has already begun on auditing existing information about diversity in leadership positions, applications to award schemes, and attendance at meetings and conferences. Priorities for the coming year have been identified and include building a baseline of relevant SCAR and community data to guide the work of the group, reviewing existing codes of conduct and how to promote best practice, providing feedback and guidance on the SCAR Capacity Building activities, and engaging the many existing volunteers in support of these and other activities. More details are available at https://www.scar.org/capacity-building/edi/home/.

The Action Group has submitted a report to Delegates available as [Paper 33]

Future Plans – Outstanding issues for the Committee

Work with the APECS Executive Council will continue. Integrating the mentoring support provided by APECS and SCAR to the Fellowship scheme is crucial. Additional opportunities for collaboration have been identified through the Fellowship application process, as have other areas of complementary opportunities to provide support.

The Polar Resource Book project has moved to the next phase, looking to source and fund the development of new and updated resources.

Following the successful introduction of the revised nominations process for SCAR Medals in 2022, the results will be reviewed, along with the regular reviews of the Fellowships and Visiting Scholar schemes.

The Committee is encouraged by the initiatives from the three SRPs to introduce SRP-specific Fellowships to early-career researchers. The Committee will also support the SRPs in broadening membership and including ECRs in their strategy.

On the proposal to establish an Expert Lecture series , there has been no progress to date beyond discussion of the benefits, but it is a goal for the Committee to suggest the best way to implement this initiative.

Membership of the CBET Committee

The current members of the Committee are:

M. Ravichandran (SCAR Vice President, Chair, stepping down 2022)
Eoghan Griffin (Secretariat support)
Inga Beck
Daniela Liggett
Hugo Guimares (APECS)
Hanne Nielsen
Alexander Thornton
Gabriela Roldan
Sophie Weeks (PEI)
Rahul Mohan
Jose Xavier

Budget

Planned use of funds for 2022 and 2023

The small (USD$3,000 annually) central CBET budget is used strategically to support relevant activities identified by the CBET Committee and authorized by the VP CBET.

Proposed SCAR Intern Programme

Purpose: Early-career interns will assist Chief Officers in facilitating communication between Science Groups and the SCAR Secretariat while fostering and mentoring potential future SCAR leaders.

Role and Support:

1. Support the administrative work of Chief Officers and improve linkages between Science Groups and the SCAR Secretariat.
2. Foster and mentor potential future leaders of SCAR Science Groups.
3. Provide a modicum of continuity across changes in Science Group leadership.
4. Participate in Science Group activities and assist Chief Officers in report and meeting preparations.
5. Solicit, gather, and provide news items about the group's activities for the SCAR Newsletter and website.
6. Interns to be assigned to Geosciences, Life Sciences and Physical Sciences Science Groups and Standing Committee on the Antarctic Treaty System.
7. Duration: up to 3 years.
8. Internships are for early-career researchers that are less than 5 years past their Ph.D.
9. SCAR will provide support up to US$10,000 per annum (USD$15,000 for SCATS) that can be used to cover the costs of travel for the intern to attend workshops, symposia, and business meetings as directed by the Chief Officer.
10. The application and selection process will be managed by CBET. Chief Officers are to be included as members of the selection committee.
11. SCAR Members will be solicited for funds to support the internship programme.