



Paper Number	22
Agenda Item	12
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## **SCAR Executive Committee Meeting 2019**

**Plovdiv, Bulgaria, 29-31 July 2019**

# **Capacity Building, Education and Training (CBET) Report**

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### **Summary**

The CBET Committee continues to work on building capacity across all of SCAR activities. The Committee played a key role in the reconstitution of the Visiting Professor scheme as the Visiting Scholar scheme, resulting in dramatic increases in applications and representation.

Significant additional funding has been secured for the Fellowship and Visiting Scholar schemes in 2019, both from SCAR member countries and through a new partnership with the World Meteorological Organisation (WMO).

In partnership with Polar Educators International (PEI) and others, the Committee is helping update the Polar Resource Book published as part of the International Polar Year (IPY).

The Tinker Foundation has decided to close the Tinker-Muse Prize after the tenth award, presented in 2018.

## CBET Committee Activities 2018-2019

### Update on the activity and membership of the CBET Committee

- Following intensive discussion at the Polar2018 meeting, the Committee played a key role in the reconstitution of the Visiting Professor scheme as the Visiting Scholar scheme. Recommendations on streamlining and restructuring the scheme were all accepted by the SCAR Executive Committee. This resulted in a significant increase in applications from 9 in 2017 to 27 in 2018. These 27 applications included 9 from female applicants, a marked change from 2017 when there were no female applicants. The process resulted in a delay to the launch of the scheme in 2018 and the first Visiting Scholar awards were made in early 2019. The reviewing process also required revision and is now more closely aligned to process used for the Fellowships scheme with 3 reviewers sought for each application.
- Significant additional funding has been secured for the Fellowship and Visiting Scholar schemes in 2019, both from SCAR member countries and through a new partnership with the World Meteorological Organisation (WMO). India has supported both an extra Fellowship (USD\$15,000) and a Visiting Scholarship (USD\$5000). Switzerland has supported an extra Visiting Scholarship and France has provided USD\$3,000 towards the Fellowship scheme. Korea has provided USD\$10,000 towards the Fellowship scheme with the condition that the funds be directed to applicants from countries who have under-represented in previous Fellowship awards. The practical implementation of this condition will be decided in consultation with Korea once the reviewing has been concluded. The WMO contribution of USD\$10,000 to a joint SCAR-WMO Fellowship is restricted by both applicant origin (a developing economy) and discipline (weather, climate and hydrology). A matching contribution of USD\$5,000 from SCAR contingency funds has been made to the SCAR-WMO Fellowship.
- Following the Polar2018 meetings in Davos, a legacy project was established to work with Polar Educators International, and in partnership with the International Arctic Science Committee (IASC) and the Association of Polar Early Career Scientists (APECS), on updating and publishing online the Polar Resource Book – “Polar Science and Global Change Resource” which was itself a legacy of the IPY. A contractor has been hired and is currently producing a scoping paper which will include timelines and budget options for the full project. This will be used to present the project as a fully costed and detailed proposal to potential funders.
- The Tinker Foundation has decided to close the Tinker-Muse Prize after the tenth award, made in 2018, in order to concentrate on its core mission of promoting development of an equitable, sustainable and productive society in Latin America.
- Online Meetings were held on 10<sup>th</sup> December 2018 and 17<sup>th</sup> May 2019 with information on all SCAR CBET schemes shared and progress noted. Following the May meeting a webinar was organised in partnership with COMNAP and APECS on June 3<sup>rd</sup> to explain the additional opportunities available in 2019 through both the SCAR and schemes COMNAP. Details of the various requirements and restrictions were provided long with testimony from previous Fellows and an open Q and A session. Over 100 individuals registered interested in the webinar and participation peaked at over 50 during the webinar. A recording will be made available and hosted on the APECS mentoring webpages, linked to from the SCAR Fellowship webpages.

- The APECS representatives implemented an online form to provide an anonymous question posting and answering service which is available for both the Fellowships and Visiting Scholar schemes and has been actively used by potential applicants for both schemes in both 2018 and 2019. The Secretariat actively monitors submissions from the form and replies can be used as the basis for updates to the FAQ pages available on the SCAR website.
- Karin Lochte stood down as SCAR Delegate for Germany and Chair of the CBET Committee at the Polar2018 meeting and was replaced by the incoming Vice President for CBET, Prof M Ravichandran.
- Dr Louise Huffmann also formally replaced Liz Pasteur, representing the PEI liaison role on the Committee, at Polar2018. The 3 APECS representatives were appointed in 2017, Hanne Neilsen, Gabriela Roldan and Alex Thornton, and have all agreed to remain working with the Committee through to at least the Hobart 2020 meetings.

## **Overview of the Capacity Building Schemes**

### The SCAR Fellowship Scheme

- A dedicated session was held at Polar2018 to support applicants to both the SCAR Fellowships and Visiting Scholar schemes.
- In 2018 a total of 5 Fellowships were awarded, including the last full funding of a full Prince Albert II of Monaco Biodiversity Fellowship, although funds remain for a contribution to a Fellowship in 2019.
- In 2019, 37 applications have been received (closed July 17<sup>th</sup>) with 5 jointly applying to SCAR-WMO Fellowship (49 in 2018, 38 in 2017). This appears to indicate the record number of applications in 2018 was in part related to the exposure and promotion of the scheme at the Polar2018 meeting and the timing of the closing of applications.
- Joint SCAR-COMNAP-APECS Fellowships webinar was provided on June 3<sup>rd</sup> 2019.

### The SCAR Visiting Scholar Scheme (formerly Visiting Professor)

- In 2018 there were 27 applications, compared to 9 in 2017 (and 8 in 2016), the increase in funding level available (from USD\$2,500 to USD\$5,000) appeared to be a factor.
- There were 9 female applicants in 2018 compared to none in 2017 (and 1 in 2016), an encouraging change given the stark lack of applications in previous years.
- A number of applicants were from mid rather than late career researchers, reflecting the specific guidance on eligibility added to the webpages.
- The clarification of the purpose of the scheme and simplification of the process of application appeared to help address the issue of applications each year paying little or no attention to the basic mission of the scheme.

### The SCAR Medals 2020

- Nominations for the SCAR Medals to be awarded at the Hobart 2020 meetings will be launched in Autumn 2019.

- Active encouragement of nominations either from or motivated by SCAR senior leadership will be sought in light of the lack of new nominations for the 2018 Medals.

#### The Tinker-Muse Prize

- Closed in 2018 and final narrative and financial reports submitted in April 2019.
- Several celebratory events were held during the Polar2018 meetings, including the SCAR 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration where the partnership with the Tinker Foundation was highlighted. A Nature sponsored panel session also took place which highlighted a Nature paper, co-authored by the first 9 Prize winners, addressing the impacts of current societal choices on Antarctica and the Southern Ocean for the rest of this century.
- Retained funds representing unspent administration expenses (USD\$184,074) over the course of the Prize have been returned to the Tinker Foundation in July 2019.

#### Future Plans – Outstanding issues for the Committee

- Action and Expert Group reports prepared for EXCOM 2019 will be used to add information to the list of examples of Outreach and Capacity Building activities. There will hopefully also be a broadening of the pool of reviewers for Fellowships.
- General presentation on SCAR website to be available as a series of slides that a suitable subset can be drawn from.
- Develop a plan for improved capacity building for developing programmes.
- Integrating the mentoring support provided by APECS and SCAR to support not just Fellowship applications, but follow-ups to the opportunities for collaboration identified through the application process and other areas of complementary opportunities to provide support.

### Antarctic research in Africa

South Africa is the only SCAR member country in Africa and the only one with a National Antarctic Research Programme. A number of efforts are underway to investigate how SCAR might support researchers in other African countries to gain exposure to Antarctic research. SCAR's President visited South Africa in January 2019 to explore opportunities, and the SCAR ED is working with the African Academy of Sciences to investigate collaborative opportunities such as awareness raising at high profile meetings like the South African Science Forum.

### Budget

#### Planned use of funds for 2019 and 2020

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. To date in 2019 the funds have supported a small contribution (1,000 euros) to the costs of developing the scoping document for the Polar Resources Book project.