

A multi-million dollar climate research programme launched for Africa through the CR4D initiative

Nairobi, Kenya, June 3, 2019 (ECA) - The Climate Research for Development (CR4D) in Africa initiative today announced the first cohort of 21 young African scientists who will receive up to £100,000 each to carry out demand-driven research in the areas of foundational climate science, application and engagement with policy, development and decision communities.

The grantees from Benin, Cameroon, Cote D'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Ghana, Madagascar, Namibia, Uganda, Senegal and Zimbabwe were selected through a highly competitive research commissioning process.

The CR4D is an African-led initiative created through a partnership of the African Climate Policy Center (ACPC) of United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), the African Ministerial Conference on Meteorology (AMCOMET), World Meteorological Organization (WMO), the Global Framework for Climate Services (GFCS) and the World Climate Research Programme (WCRP).

The initiative is an outcome of the African Climate Conference 2013 (ACC-2013), which was held in Arusha, Tanzania, and seeks to strengthen the links between climate science research and climate information needs in support of development planning in the continent's key development sectors.

Following the establishment of the CR4D governing bodies, the Oversight Board (OB), the Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC), the Institutional Collaboration Platform (ICP) and the Secretariat hosted at ACPC, the ECA partnered with the African Academy of Sciences (AAS) to implement and manage the CR4D research grants.

ECA, as one of the founding members and main implementers of the CR4D initiative, is delighted to see the launch of the research grants. This comes after several years of investment in building partnerships with other institutions, eminent scientists and scholars, through which the CR4D collaborative governance structure and a five-year strategy were developed to guide the research agenda.

Ms. Vera Songwe, the Executive Secretary of the ECA, sees today's awards as "the beginning of a programme that will grow and enable Africa to develop a large pool of young scientists who are able to conduct research that can provide evidence to support development policy and planning for climate smart economy to ensure sustainable development in Africa".

Professor Nelson Torto, the Executive Director of the AAS noted "the AAS has a long-term investment in scientific excellence in Africa and ensures that early career research leaders are mentored to achieve and maintain excellence in their respective fields"

In keeping with this mandate, he said, the AAS will invest in the career development of the 21 researchers by inducting them into their postdoctoral fellowship programmes under the AAS Accelerating Excellence in Science in Africa (AESA) platform. Through AESA they will have access to bi-annual international networking and collaborative meetings, informal review from AAS's network of senior fellows in diverse STEM areas, conferences relevant to early career scientists and support to their host institutions to achieve good financial grant practice (GFGP).

They will also have access to free publication of their research results and other data on AAS OpenResearch and have full time access to AAS programmes staff for any research support they may require during and after the period of their grant."

The importance of CR4D initiative was underscored by the United Kingdom's Minister for Africa, Harriett Baldwin statement that "as climate extremes worsen, it is the world's poorest countries and communities which will be most affected, with Africa particularly vulnerable to climate shocks. Projects like this show

how the UK is taking action and leading the way in helping African communities adapt to climate shocks, by investing in research and technical expertise”.

Ms. Charlotte Watts, the UK’s Department for International Development (DFID) Chief Scientific Adviser also noted that, “if we are to fight the effects of climate change, we need strong scientific evidence to help us understand its dynamics and how this will affect Africa. These grants will help to fill important research gaps and we, as DFID, are thrilled to be the first to support this exciting opportunity”.

Mr. James Murombedzi, Chief of the ACPC and representative of the CR4D OB noted that “understanding of African climate and use of climate information for decision-making are restricted by a number of factors, including inadequate research infrastructure, gaps in Africa’s climate observation systems, inadequate data to assess the past and current states of the climate as well as communication gaps between climate scientists and decision-makers, vulnerable communities, development practitioners. The launching of the CR4D research grant is a step towards addressing these challenges.”

Professor Amadou Gaye, the co-chair of the Scientific Advisory Committee of the CR4D, says “there is an increasing need for tailored weather and climate services, adaptation strategies and sustained policy support that will reduce Africa’s vulnerability to the vagaries of severe weather and extreme climate events”.

“The launching of the CR4D research grants is a move towards a positive direction to promote participatory climate research and strengthening networking capacities of young African scientists, institutions and other stakeholders to co-design, co-produce and co-communicate demand-driven climate research in Africa,” he added.

The WISER-funded CR4D research grant will help improve the capacities and competencies of young African researchers and contributes to the development of more science-based reliable and useful climate information in Africa.

The CR4D initiative partners thanked the Government of the United Kingdom for providing the multimillion-dollar funding that has enabled the launch of the first 21 research fellowship grants.

The Climate Research for Development in Africa (CR4D)



Founding Partners



WISER-funded CR4D research grant manager institute



Development Partner

