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* SCAR is an Interdisciplinary Body of the International Council for Science (ICSU)

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SCAR Circular 778

Supplemental Support for the SCAR Fellowship Programme

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To: SCAR National Committees, Delegates and Alternate Delegates

5 December 2008

Dear Colleagues,

One of SCAR's most important goals is to ensure that a new generation of polar researchers is continually being developed. In recent years SCAR has increased its efforts in this arena, setting a strategic target of developing scientific capacity in all SCAR Member nations. SCAR has specifically targeted early career scientists and promoted incorporation of Antarctic science in education at all levels. A strategy to achieve these objectives is laid out in the SCAR Strategy for Capacity Building, Education and Training (SCAR Report 27 - see <http://www.scar.org/publications/reports/>).

At present the primary activity in this area is the SCAR Fellowship Programme. These Fellowships were originally funded with the Prince of Asturias Award of \$50,000 in October 2002. Subsequently \$30,000 per year (sometimes more) has been allocated to the SCAR Fellowship Programme. At the current level of funding the Fellowships fund 3 to 5 early career PhD or Post-doc researchers each year to spend time in a top science laboratory in a SCAR Member country other than their own. The reports and testimonials of these students, on the SCAR web site at <http://www.scar.org/awards/fellowships/testimonials.html>, show that exciting research is being done by our young colleagues, and life-time networks are being developed. Many of these early career researchers have already presented papers at SCAR conferences and elsewhere. These Fellowships have a high profile in the Antarctic science community, and there is significant competition for awards (with around 20-25 applicants a year we are able to fund 3-5 fellowships). Each year many excellent applications are declined due to limited funds.

That brings me to the reason for this letter. At the XXIX SCAR meeting, Delegates indicated a wish to expand the Fellowship Programme so that it would be able to assist as many as 10 young scientists per year. The desire to enhance the Fellowship Programme was once again agreed at the XXX SCAR Meeting. In order to achieve this goal, additional resources are

needed beyond those provided by SCAR income from annual membership fees. The SCAR Secretariat is actively soliciting funds from foundations and other sources for this programme (e.g. The Packard Foundation).

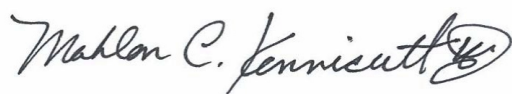
In addition we can make a difference ourselves. I ask that you consider a voluntary donation above your annual membership fee to enable an expansion of the Fellowship Programme. If the task is shared among SCAR countries, the burden on any one nation is small. For example, we would achieve the target if all Members donated \$2000, or if just five Members donated \$10,000 each year. In recent years the Fellowship Programme was supplemented by donations from South Africa (\$2000) and India (\$5000). While we have set a rather ambitious goal of doubling the programme's awards, donations at all levels are appreciated and welcomed.

If you have any questions about the programme, I suggest that you examine the SCAR Fellowship Programme web page (<http://www.scar.org/awards/fellowships/>). On that page you will also find reports on the activities of past Fellows, as examples of what can be achieved, as well as testimonials to how useful the awards have been to the Fellows. Although few papers emerge immediately as the result of the rather short time involved in any one fellowship, several Fellows have presented at SCAR Open Science Conferences and elsewhere papers or posters based on their fellowship work. In addition I or the Secretariat would be pleased to address any questions you might have.

I fully realize that you have many budgetary demands but this is undoubtedly an excellent investment that has long lasting effects. This will enhance the reputation of SCAR and serve as an investment in the future of Antarctic science at a critical time.

Thank you for considering this request and I look forward to a positive response.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mahlon C. Kennicutt II". The signature is written in dark ink and includes a stylized flourish at the end.

Professor Mahlon "Chuck" Kennicutt II
President of SCAR

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