

SCAR Plans for Capacity Building, Education and Training (CBET)

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1. Introduction

SCAR is committed to helping scientists in all of its Member countries to participate in understanding scientifically the physical, biological, chemical and geological processes at work in the Antarctic region, to use that understanding to predict change both there and elsewhere in the world, and to provide objective and independent advice to policy makers, especially the Antarctic Treaty System. To achieve that goal requires that efforts be made to raise national scientific capacities, especially in countries with less well-developed Antarctic programmes. SCAR is also committed to promoting the incorporation of Antarctic science in education at all levels.

This paper updates EXCOM on progress since the XXX Delegates meeting in Moscow, 2008 and highlights future opportunities.

2. The SCAR Website and Social Networking Groups

Much of SCAR's contact with the general public, educators etc. is through the SCAR website and various social networking groups (FaceBook, LinkedIn, SciSpace). The capacity building pages (<http://www.scar.org/about/capacitybuilding/>) have recently been updated to include a large number of Antarctic Education Websites separated into different categories and languages. Feedback on the usefulness of the new webpages has been very positive. Updating the SCAR website (see IP 6) will also help to build and sustain a number of network nodes on specific scientific issues through the use of blogs and other media.

EXCOM is requested to let the Administrative Assistant know of any additional Antarctic Education links that should be added.

3. The SCAR Fellowships

The fellowships have continued to be popular, with a record thirty-two applicants for the 2009-10 fellowships - see WP 15 for further details. Two distinct types of fellowship were offered: (i) the standard SCAR fellowships,

and (ii) fellowships under the International Polar Year's Sixth Continent Initiative, which are offered in association with the International Polar Foundation (IPF), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the International Antarctic Institute (IAI). Since the IPY is now at an end the Executive Officer is under discussion with the partners as to whether the scheme should be continued. For the 2008/09 Fellowships the IPF supported one of the 6CI Fellows to the sum of \$10,000.

Currently \$30,000 is available for fellowships from the SCAR budget. For 2009-10 this was generously supplemented by additional payments of \$5000 each from Italy and India. The SCAR Executive is investigating how to further expand the fellowship scheme, for example by looking for partners or sponsors (such as is done with the SCOR/Nippon fellowship scheme).

For further information on the Fellowship scheme see <http://www.scar.org/awards/fellowships/>.

4. Early Career Scientists

SCAR has been working closely with the Association of Polar Early Career Scientists (APECS) in order to reach out to and encourage the next generation of Polar scientists. For example, since the XXX Delegates meeting SCAR has supported several workshops (an APECS Mentors Workshop in the US and the IMPETUS workshop in Russia on polar ocean observing techniques), worked with APECS and IASC on a 'Polar Brochure' for early career scientists and ensured that APECS representatives are being invited to SCAR Science and business meetings as appropriate. APECS are very active and are working on several capacity building initiatives, for example a Polar Literature discussion website has just been launched (http://apecs.arcticportal.org/index.php?option=com_jreviews&Itemid=131). The Executive Officer is currently in discussions with the Executive Director of APECS about possible future opportunities for collaboration.

SCAR and IASC together financially supported an IPY Early Career Scientists one-day meeting as part of SCAR's science business week in St Petersburg the day prior to the OSC in 2008. This meeting was a great success, attracting XXXX attendees.

We now have an opportunity to attract a number of Early Career scientists to attend the OSC in Buenos Aires as part of XXXI SCAR. No budget has been set aside for this purpose, although clearly some of the \$5k for CBET activities could be used for it. We have deliberately encouraged SSG COs and SRP leaders to consider spending some of their unspent funds in 2010 on getting early career scientists to that meeting.

EXCOM is asked to recommend that COs (and possible also SRP Leaders) allocate a proportion of their unspent funds for this purpose by end January 2010, so that an announcement can be made in the

literature for the meeting, about funds being available and the mechanism to be used to acquire them.

5. A SCAR Visiting Scholar Scheme

The SCAR CBET plan states that “efforts be made to (i) raise national scientific capacities and (ii) to promoting the incorporation of Antarctic science in education at all levels.”

Through the fellowship scheme and working with APECS the latter is being well covered. However, progress with the former has been more ad-hoc (e.g. we have been involved with seminars in Malaysia and the SCAR President and Secretariat have visited various national members). At the last Delegates meeting the point was made that it would be useful to have well respected scientists come to countries with less well developed Antarctic programmes to give talks and interact with the local scientists. This resonates with the CBET strategy: “Encourage development of Distinguished Visiting Researchers programme to bring top scientists to countries with less well-developed Antarctic programmes for short periods to teach or spend sabbaticals.” This initially might involve no more than sending one person to a particular country for 4 or 5 days, the cost of which should not be prohibitive. Obviously the ideal would be to expand this further in parallel with the fellowships to involve more scientists and for longer visits.

Budget implications -

Currently we have \$5k budgeted towards CBET activities. We suggest in order to start the visiting scholar scheme in 2010 the budget be increased to \$8k (roughly \$4-5k for the visiting professor scheme and \$3-4k for other activities e.g. APECS related events). The SCAR Donors committee and CBET committee can be charged with finding additional funding e.g. EU support for supporting EU researchers to undertake activities in other countries (though SCAR’s role here would be more as a facilitator). Hopefully by starting up a small visiting scholars programme it’ll make it easier to find additional funding.

EXCOM is asked to approve the formation of a visiting professor scheme.

6. The Capacity Building, Education and Training (CBET) Committee

The CBET strategy recommended the formation of a CBET committee, which was formed in 2006. However this has been moribund and needs to be revived. This could be a group that does most of its work on-line but EXCOM may wish to consider providing a small budget to assist with possible meetings of opportunity (e.g. SCAR OSCs). The TORs of the group (from the CBET strategy) are as follows:

- initiate, plan, and oversee the implementation of SCAR capacity building, education and training;
- work with the SCAR Donors group to identify potential sources of funding and develop appropriate proposals
- promote educational activities highlighting the importance and value of Antarctic science;
- evaluate the performance of the programme and suggest changes as appropriate

As far as could be surmised the previous members of CBET consisted of:

Zhanhai Zhang (China)

Brian Storey (NZ)

Azizan Abu Sameh (Malaysia)

Andrew McMinn (International Antarctic Institute, Hobart)

José Xavier (Portugal)

Krivtsov Volodymyr (Ukraine)

Viviana Alder (Argentina)

Susanne Gatti? (Germany)

The new CBET committee should also include members of APECS and the IPF. All countries should be encouraged to provide representatives.

EXCOM is asked to make recommendations on the membership of the CBET Committee and potential financial implications.

7. Other Opportunities

In 2008 SCAR won 30,000 Euros from ICSU in a joint bid with IASC, IACS and WCRP to fund a summer school on ice sheet modelling. The summer school, which caters for early career scientists, takes place in Portland, Oregon, on 3-14 August 2009 with co-funding from ICSU, SCAR, IASC, IACS NSF and WCRP (for details see http://websrv.cs.umat.edu/isis/index.php/Summer_Modeling_School).

Participants are from the USA, Canada, Nepal, France, UK, China, Switzerland, and New Zealand.

The International Antarctic Institute (IAI), based in Hobart, continues to make progress, with SCAR being an Associate Member (<http://www.iai.utas.edu.au/>). The International Antarctic Institute offers international opportunities in Antarctic undergraduate and postgraduate multi-disciplinary education by sharing teaching resources between international partner universities.

SCAR now administers the Martha T. Muse Prize (see www.museprize.org). The “Martha T. Muse Prize for Science and Policy in Antarctica” is a US\$ 100,000 unrestricted award presented to an individual in the fields of Antarctic science or policy that has demonstrated potential for sustained and significant contributions that will enhance the understanding and/or

preservation of Antarctica.

The prize-winner can be from any country and work in any field of Antarctic science or policy. The goal is to provide recognition of the important work being done by the individual and to call attention to the significance of understanding Antarctica in a time of change

The SCAR President has been exploring the possibility of a joint venture with Earth & Sky (<http://www.earthsky.org/>). This would involve conducting short interviews with SCAR Scientists that would then be broadcast by Earth and Sky's extensive network (Podcasts, social networking sites and other online media). There would be cost implications of such a venture so this would likely involve putting together a joint proposal for funds.

A Spanish Internet TV company (INDIGANDO TV - www.indagando.tv) focussing on science and innovation have recently asked for permission to use SCAR material for some collaboration efforts in the future.

The French Delegate, Roland Schlich, has asked if SCAR wishes to purchase additional copies of the DVD SCAR co-sponsored (365 days Under Antarctic Ice) at a cost of around 12 Euros per film (excluding taxes).