

Calls for proposals to host the International Project Office (IPO) of the Earth System Modelling and Observations (ESMO) Core Project

This is a call for applications to host an International Project Office (IPO) in support of the Earth System Modelling and Observations (ESMO) Core Project of the World Climate Research Programme (WCRP).

The ESMO Core Project¹ was recently formed to coordinate all modelling, data and observations activities across WCRP and to work closely with our key partners. ESMO will bring together existing elements of the WCRP structure such as the modelling Working Groups (WGCM², WGENE³, WGSIP⁴), the modelling and data activities of the other Core Projects (CLIVAR, GEWEX, SPARC, CliC and RfS), strategic connections to the Global Climate Observing System (GCOS) and Earth System reanalysis including recent activities (TIRA⁵), Obs4MIPs⁶, and joint activities with our WMO Research Board partners such as the Subseasonal-to-Seasonal (S2S) Prediction Project⁷.

ESMO will take a seamless and value-chain model-data-observation approach across Earth system components, fundamental and applied disciplines, time and spatial scales and infrastructures. It aims to optimise model development, establish new prediction systems, innovate observing systems, improve climate data eco-systems and connectivity, and advance data assimilation and digital-twin frameworks. This approach will enable the formulation of WCRP modelling and observational requirements to observe, understand, and predict the climate system.

WCRP coordinates international research on the development and improvement of global climate and Earth system models, and amongst many other activities oversees the Coupled Model Intercomparison Project (CMIP) under the auspices of the WCRP Working Group on Coupled Modelling (WGCM). The newly established CMIP IPO, hosted by the European Space Agency (ESA) in the UK, will support the CMIP infrastructure, coordination and outreach and it is expected that the ESMO IPO and the CMIP IPO will work closely together within the wider ESMO framework.

ESMO is currently developing its science and implementation plans which will focus on four overarching themes: (a) Research; (b) Infrastructure; (c) Access and communication; and (d) Partnerships and organisation.

¹ ESMO was approved and initiated at the Joint Scientific Committee session in November 2020

² Working Group on Coupled Modelling (<https://www.wcrp-climate.org/wgcm-overview>)

³ Working Group on Numerical Experimentation (<http://wgne.meteoinfo.ru>)

⁴ Working Group on Subseasonal to Interdecadal Prediction (<https://www.wcrp-climate.org/wgsip-overview>)

⁵ WCRP Task Team for Intercomparison of ReAnalyses

⁶ Observations for Model Intercomparison Project

⁷ Subseasonal-to-Seasonal Prediction Project (<http://s2sprediction.net>)

The ESMO IPO's role will be to support this work on all related levels in close cooperation with the ESMO co-chairs and Scientific Steering Group, the WCRP leadership and the WCRP Secretariat in Geneva.

Hosting the ESMO International Project Office (IPO)

The ESMO IPO will consist of a Director and additional staff as needed. To support the vision, mission, and activities related to ESMO, the Host Institution is expected to provide the funds required to support and run the IPO from its inception. The Host institution will work jointly with WCRP's Joint Scientific Committee (JSC), the WCRP Secretariat and ESMO co-chairs to establish an administrative plan that will ensure that the appropriate governance is in place, including required IPO lines of authority, and management and reporting policies.

Benefits to the Host Institution

The Host Institution will significantly benefit from hosting the ESMO IPO by having a close interaction with this critical domain of research in support of climate information for society. In addition, the host institution will have the benefit of:

- Enhancing their international profile through clear identification with the WCRP international community
- Association and participation with a range of international meetings, workshops, and regional activities
- Collaboration with other networks including those of early career scientists

Further, development of an active scientific partnership between ESMO and scientists at the Host Institution is encouraged, with the aim of increased international exposure and scientific publications.

Expected qualifications of the Host Institution

Organizations submitting a Proposal to host a ESMO IPO must fulfil the requirements outlined below and have the qualifications to cover the Terms of Reference detailed in ANNEX 1:

- Willingness and ability to host an IPO of WCRP, providing secretariat, administrative, financial, technical, and scientific support to ESMO.
- Commitment to financially support the IPO for at least 5 (five) years, and demonstrable ability to secure funding to support additional operations and activities.
- Ability to attract high level candidates for the post of Director through open, international recruitment, in consultation and mutual approval with the WCRP Joint Scientific Committee, the WCRP Secretariat and the ESMO co-chairs. The recruitment of other professional office staff will be delegated to the Project Office once the Director is appointed to the role.
- Ability to provide office space and IT resources for an operational secretariat.

- Technical capacity to organize virtual and physical meetings and make travel arrangements for participants from nations and agencies all around the world.

Minimum requirements of a Proposal

All proposals must be backed by a commitment for at least 5 (five) years to include the following:

- Salaries for a Director, one Programme Officer and one Science/Communication Officer positions (3 full-time equivalent)
- Dedicated administrative support for the office
- Associated office space and necessary facilities
- Operating costs for communication and outreach
- Provision of IT resources for IPO staff
- Annual activity budget to support travel and subsistence expenses of ESMO IPO staff

Equivalent combinations of personnel and financial resources are allowed to a certain extent. Offers beyond the above requirements, such as additional staffing, particularly for website design and development, additional activity funds, and longer commitments will enhance the chances of final selection.

We will also give full consideration to proposals which partially meet the above requirements or which have not yet received a complete funding commitment by the deadline, but this must be clearly stated in the proposal and will be evaluated accordingly. We recommend proposers provide regular updates on progress of pending funding commitments after the submission.

All financial amounts shall be expressed in local currencies and in US dollars (USD) with a clear indication of exchange rates applied at the time of submission and include all applicable overheads.

Selection Process

WCRP will establish a Selection Committee to assess the Proposals with due consideration of any potential conflicts of interest. The Selection Committee will be chaired by the WCRP JSC Chair and will include the WCRP JSC Vice-Chair, ESMO Co-chairs and a WCRP Secretariat representative.

The Selection Committee might come back to individual proponents for clarification, questions and/or confirmations of commitments during the selection process. If a proposal is ultimately accepted, detailed terms of the contract will be negotiated with the selected host institution and will be established through a Memorandum of Understanding between the host institution and the World Meteorological Organization.

Timeline

Call for Proposals - **October 2021**

Submission deadline **EXTENSION** - **31st July 2022**

Enquiries, negotiation, and notification selection - **October 2022**

Expected start of the ESMO Project Office – **Early 2023**

Proposals that cannot meet the submission deadline may still be accepted after the deadline if there are justifiable reasons (such as delays in institutional approval) but the intent to submit and reasons for delay should be provided in advance. Late bids will only be considered if no other suitable bid is identified and will be treated on a case-by-case basis at the sole discretion of the Selection Committee.

Proposals must remain valid for a period of at least 180 days after the submission deadline. However, a submitting organization may withdraw its proposal by sending a written notification.

Content of Proposals

Proposals shall address all points in ANNEX 2 and be forwarded by email to Nico Caltabiano (avazcaltabiano@wmo.int) in the WCRP Secretariat as a single pdf document. The size of the document shall not exceed 15 Mb nor 20 pages.

Additional supporting materials, brochures, letters of endorsement, *etc.* may be forwarded in separate emails in the same way.

Communication and enquiries related to this call

All communication, material and enquiries regarding this call shall be directed in English to Nico Caltabiano (avazcaltabiano@wmo.int) in the WCRP Secretariat. Unless stated otherwise, enquiries and replies will be posted publicly on the call web page for the benefit of all interested parties.

Thank you for your interest in WCRP!

ANNEX 1 - Terms of Reference - ESMO International Project Office

1. *The ESMO IPO consists of a Director, qualified professionals and support staff. The ESMO IPO will work closely and under the direction of the ESMO Scientific Steering Group, with oversight from the WCRP Joint Scientific Committee (JSC) and the support of the WCRP Secretariat in Geneva.*
2. *The ESMO IPO is located in ##### (city, country) and hosted by ##### (institution).*
3. *The Director of the ESMO IPO shall report to the ESMO SSG for the overall activities to be developed.*
4. *The Director of the ESMO IPO shall report to its host institution for administrative matters.*
5. *The primary function of the ESMO IPO is to provide overall support to planning and implementation of ESMO priorities, infrastructure and overall governance, to ensure appropriate international coordination and communication between ESMO and the other WCRP Core Projects and Lighthouse Activities (LHAs), and other international programmes.*
6. *In close consultation with the ESMO SSG, the ESMO IPO will take due consideration of the outcomes of ESMO meetings to develop and coordinate the implementation of ESMO activities, in close collaboration with the CMIP IPO.*
7. *The ESMO IPO supports the work of ESMO in the coordination, organizational, communication, and dissemination aspects of ESMO. This includes the following responsibilities:*
 - a. *To provide secretariat, administrative, financial, technical and scientific support to the ESMO SSG, and WGs and projects under ESMO;*
 - b. *To work with the ESMO SSG on the coordination and planning of ESMO activities, in close liaison with the CMIP IPO;*
 - c. *To lead the logistical organization of relevant sessions, meetings, workshops, conferences, training sessions, teleconferences and other activities relevant to ESMO;*
 - d. *To prepare corresponding reports, correspondence and publications;*
 - e. *To coordinate associated communication and outreach, including newsletters;*
 - f. *To provide oversight, update maintenance of associated web pages;*
 - g. *To assist in mobilizing funds for ESMO activities;*
 - h. *To secure resources for ESMO IPO staff and operations;*
 - i. *To promote recruiting secondments to join the ESMO IPO;*

ANNEX 2 - Expressions of Interest template (selection criteria weights in %)

1. Cover page with full name and contact details of legal representative of organization submitting the proposal (1 page)
2. Executive summary (max 1 page)
3. Vision and strategy for the ESMO Project Office (max 1 page) – 10%
4. Host institution (max 3 pages) – 20%
 - a) Full address
 - b) Duration of commitment
 - c) Employees benefits (work permits for foreigners, taxation, wages, health coverage, etc)
 - d) Administrative capacity to run the office
 - e) Area and number of offices
 - f) Meeting rooms (area, capacity, teleconference)
 - g) Catering service and/or nearby restaurants
 - h) Visitor's support (travel, accommodation, visa, local transport, help-desk)
 - i) IT (hardware, software, internet bandwidth, web site, conference call tools)
 - j) Accommodation options nearby (location, rooms, average cost and negotiated rates)
 - k) Transport (International access, local transports)
5. ESMO relevance of the host institution (max 2 pages) - 10%
 - a) Experience of current ESMO-related activities
 - b) Experience in hosting and managing large science programmes
 - c) Local ecosystem relevance
 - d) Potential to contribute to ESMO outreach
6. Benefits for the host institution (max 2 pages) - 10%
 - a) International exposure
 - b) Scientific added-value
 - c) Financial leveraging potential
 - d) Partnerships
7. Staffing plan commitment (max 3 pages) - 30%
 - a) Director, programme officer, science communication officer and any other staff
 - b) Dedicated or in-kind administrative support
 - c) Seconded experts (full-time equivalent, expertise, role)
 - d) Fluency in English and other WMO languages (well, moderate, poor)
8. Operating funding commitment (max 3 pages) - 20%
 - a) Annual budget for office facilities and operations
 - b) Annual budget for ESMO activities (meetings and travel - including office staff)
9. Free section with relevant material (max 4 pages)