

WISER Africa Co-Production Fellowships CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

1. Introduction

Are you an early career researcher/professional based in Southern Africa with a strong interest in transdisciplinary co-production of weather/climate services? We are seeking talented and emerging experts in transdisciplinary co-production to serve as *co-production champions*. We invite you to apply to the Weather and Climate Information Services (WISER) Africa Co-production Fellowship funded by the UK government's Foreign, Commonwealth and Development's (FCDO) Africa Regional Climate and Nature (ARCAN) programme.

WISER Southern Africa works in **Angola, Botswana, the Comoros, Democratic Republic of Congo, Eswatini, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe**. The fellowship will be based in one of the Southern African countries listed above (eligible countries) and is expected to begin before the end of 2025 and run through to 31 March 2028.

Applicants must be nationals of one of the Southern African countries specified in this call and meet the essential criteria outlined in the call document. They must also provide all required supporting documentation, including a formal commitment from their host institution to support the fellowship for its full duration.

The deadline for applications is **Tuesday 26 August 2025, 11am UTC**. Information on how to apply is provided in section 4. Applications will be assessed by a panel comprising representatives of the Met Office (UK) WISER programme and international experts. We anticipate that interviews will take place in the weeks of 22 and 29 September and successful candidates will be notified by early-October.

2. Background to WISER

The Met Office has been commissioned by the UK government's Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) to manage the Weather and Climate Information Services ([WISER](#)) programme. WISER seeks to support communities and individuals in Africa who are disproportionately affected by extreme weather, seasonal variations, and the impacts of climate change. To achieve this vision, WISER Africa aims to increase the uptake and use of co-produced weather and climate information services, to support decision making at local, national, and regional levels.

Since 2015, the WISER programme has supported transformational improvements in the quality, accessibility, and use of weather and climate information services. WISER works in partnership to build capacity, promote sustainability, and maximise the impact of climate

services, particularly for communities most affected by extreme weather and climate change across Africa, the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), and Asia Pacific. Guided by the principles of co-production, equity, innovation, transformation and actionable science, WISER ensures that weather and climate services are not only useful, but usable and used, enabling informed decision-making that protects lives and supports sustainable development. With a strong focus on enabling action, it prioritises consideration of how and where weather/climate information can inform decisions that can ultimately protect lives and livelihoods, and compliment ongoing partner activities.

Where does WISER Africa work?

WISER Africa has expanded from previously working in East Africa and the Sahel, to now operating across East, West and Southern Africa. The adoption of the regional approach will maximise regional cross-learning and collaboration, whilst supporting concepts that are locally relevant.

East Africa

The focus in East Africa is building on the success of the activities that were [undertaken previously in WISER](#) and covers countries across the [Intergovernmental Authority on Development \(IGAD\)/East African Community \(EAC\)](#). WISER East Africa works in **Burundi, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Somalia, Tanzania and Uganda**.

Southern Africa

In Southern Africa, WISER's focus has been to introduce regional activities and raise the profile of WISER projects with key stakeholders. WISER Southern Africa works in **Angola, Botswana, the Comoros, Democratic Republic of Congo, Eswatini, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe**.

West Africa

Activities in West Africa are focused on improving seasonal forecasting processes and products for food security, and creating an improved environment for their future development, uptake and use. WISER West Africa works in **Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, Niger and Senegal**

[Click here for more details about the WISER Africa work.](#)

3. Purpose of the Fellowship

Three fellowships are being offered through this call, one in each of the following regions: East, West, and Southern Africa. Each fellow will play a key role in advancing co-production practices, working in collaboration with local and regional organisations to enhance climate services and support the goals of the WISER programme. This opportunity aligns with WISER's overarching commitment to actionable science by enabling fellows to bridge gaps between scientific research and tangible, community-driven outcomes. Through this fellowship,

WISER aims to cultivate a cohort of experts who can champion and grow innovative co-production practices, enriching climate resilience efforts across Africa.

While each fellow will have the scope to design activities in a way that suits the region, the purpose of the role is to:

- i. Provide essential co-production skills and expertise in the Southern Africa region. This will include working with established regional organisations and/or NMHSs to support co-production activities, such as Climate Outlook Forums.
- ii. Work with regional stakeholders to investigate and co-design priorities to inform future climate-focused development funding under WISER and beyond
- iii. Conduct research on climate services topics related to co-production, risk communication, stakeholder engagement, science-policy interaction or local knowledge systems.
- iv. Contribute expertise and experience to learning on co-production within the WISER programme.

The champion will receive comprehensive support from co-production experts in the region as well as international experts. Additionally, the network of three champions across the regions will provide a valuable peer network. The Met Office WISER technical assistance facility will offer continuous support and training (as needed). There will be at least one formal planning/training session, as a cohort of fellows, at the beginning of the fellowship.

4. Key Information

Scope and Timeline

Please read this document before starting your application

The maximum funding available to projects is **up to £150 000(GBP)** over 2.5 years, but we encourage applicants to take a needs-based approach to their bid.

Process

- Applicants are invited to submit their applications electronically via email to Grant.Defrayment@metoffice.gov.uk before the deadline.
- Submissions must be received by no later than Tuesday 26 August and 11am UTC (12 noon UK time) Applications received after the deadline will not be considered.
- The nominated fellowship host institution must be able to contract and receive payment in British Pounds Sterling.
- Applications should be submitted using the Application Form and Host Institute Endorsement Form.
- Proposals must be submitted in English.
- An acknowledgement of receipt of your submission will be sent to all applicants whose application is received before the deadline.

Indicative Timetable:

Activity	Date(s)
Application documents issued	2 July 2025. Revised documents with updated guidance on host institutes 7th August 2025
Application submission deadline	Tuesday 26 August 2025 (11am UTC)
Met Office evaluation process.	w/c 26 August and 1 September 2025
Invitation to interview	w/c 8 September 2025
Interviews	w/c 22 and 29 September 2025
Outcome Notification	w/c 6 October 2025
Project plan finalisation and Grant Agreement signature	27 October 2025 (with latest start date up to end of 2025)
Fellowship Grant Agreement ends	31 March 2028

Fellowship Arrangements

Successful candidates may undertake the fellowship at their current Southern African institution (Host Institution), provided that the country of the institution is listed above as a WISER-supported country and meets the due diligence requirements during contracting. Eligible host institutions must have a primary focus on conducting fundamental and/or applied research and on disseminating results through teaching, publication, or practical application. This includes universities and recognised research institutes. Privately funded entities and limited companies are not eligible, nor are organisations whose core mission is not research (e.g. those with only a small research unit as part of a broader non-research agenda).

Fellows are expected to be full-time until 31 March 2028, subject to satisfactory performance. Part-time arrangements or teaching responsibilities will not be permitted. However, post-graduate supervision (within reason) can be allowed on a case-by-case basis. The fellow will remain an affiliated staff member of the host institution throughout the fellowship, enabling the host institution to accrue any benefits (such as journal papers) that may arise from the fellowship.

Contractual arrangements will be made between the Met Office and the host institution. The host institution will employ the fellow and pay their salary, with employment costs funded directly by the Met Office.

Travel and subsistence allowance will be provided by WISER (in a draw-down fund) for travel within the region for the purposes of the fellowship. There is also an allocated budget for convening stakeholder meetings / workshops when/if appropriate. Travel, subsistence and workshop costs do not need to be included in the budget at proposal stage.

Essential Criteria

1. A Masters degree in a field relevant to climate, environmental or sustainability science.

2. Evidence of academic interest in co-production relevant to climate services, with a good knowledge of approaches, theories and participatory methodologies applicable to climate services co-development.
3. Evidence of a good understanding of the climate services landscape, including opportunities and challenges for developing climate services.
4. Evidence of a good understanding of the physical science behind climate variability and climate change.
5. Demonstrated ability to communicate effectively using a range of methods (e.g., written reports, presentations) to explain complex scientific information to different audiences.
6. Ability to work effectively with a range of actors across the science-society interface with knowledge of equity, diversity and inclusion considerations required to incorporate different expertise and knowledge in producing decision-relevant outcomes.
7. Demonstrated capacity to contribute original ideas and approaches, with the initiative and independence to pursue self-directed research or creative work.
8. Fluency in spoken and written English.

Desirable Qualifications, Skills & Abilities

1. Ability to fluently speak a second language (particularly a language that is widely spoken in the region applicable to the application).
2. Experience and knowledge of policy development and/or sector expertise e.g. energy, water, health, agriculture and food security, disaster risk reduction.
3. Experience in social science and/or qualitative research.
4. A well-established network in the region amongst the academic, policy and climate service actor communities.

Reporting expectations

1. Monthly virtual check-in meetings with the WISER fellowship coordinator.
2. Monthly template reporting on progress, highlights, risks, upcoming travel etc.
3. Quarterly virtual project meetings with WISER project management team.
4. Monitoring, evaluation and learning activities, including stories of change, feedback from workshops, feedback from stakeholder engagement activities etc.

Expected deliverables

1. Learning outputs including, where appropriate, journal publications.
2. Documented support to co-production activities in the region.
3. Co-designed priorities to inform future climate-focused development funding.
4. Contribution to WISER learning.

Restrictions

Candidates must have nationality of an eligible Southern African country and the right to reside in the country of their desired host institution. The host institution must be situated in an eligible (WISER-supported) Southern African country.

Some travel (mostly) within the region is essential to undertake in-country engagement with a wide range of stakeholders from other areas of Southern Africa.

How to apply

Closing date: Tuesday 26 August 2025, 11am UTC

Email application to grant.defrayment@metoffice.gov.uk with the subject line “Application for Southern Africa WISER Fellowship”

1. Completed application form making clear how you meet the criteria for the fellowship, this includes a ‘Statement of Suitability’ (max 1000 words) and a Research Proposal (max 500 words).

- a. **Statement of Suitability**

Please provide a statement that clearly demonstrates how you meet the essential criteria for the role outlined above. Highlight your relevant skills, experiences, and achievements, providing specific examples where possible. We encourage you to reflect on how your background aligns with the objectives of the role, and to show how your expertise and interests make you a strong candidate. You may also include how the role aligns with your career goals.

- b. **Research Proposal**

Provide a brief research plan or vision outlining your proposed self-directed research during the fellowship. This should focus one or more of the following areas related to climate services, including: **co-production, risk communication, stakeholder engagement, science-policy interaction or local knowledge systems.**

2. ‘Host Institution Endorsement Form’, including cost of employment at the host institution and any expected salary rises linked to inflation over the period of the fellowship.
3. A ‘Letter of Mentorship Support’ from a relevant academic or supervisor at the host institution who has an interest/expertise in transdisciplinary, climate services or co-production. This does not necessarily need to be the designated supervisor/sponsor/Head of Department or manager specified in the Host Institution Form.
4. An optional 2-page CV may be uploaded

Application evaluation

Applications will be evaluated against the criteria set out below (“Evaluation Criteria”). All applications will be reviewed and scored by a panel of subject matter experts with applications scored based on their demonstration of the essential and desired criteria.

The Commercial team will manage each element of the evaluation to ensure appropriate and consistent scoring against the Evaluation Criteria, transparency, and equal treatment.

Criteria	Scoring	Maximum Points	Weighting %	Component of Application
Demonstration of essential criteria	0 – 5	40 (up to 5 points for each of 8 essential criteria)	60%	Statement of Suitability Optional CV
Demonstration of desirable criteria	0 – 5	20 (up to 5 points for each of the 4 desirable criteria)	20%	Statement of Suitability Optional CV
Demonstration of proposed self-directed research during fellowship This should focus one or more of the following areas related to climate services, including: co-production, risk communication, stakeholder engagement, science-policy interaction or local knowledge systems.	0 - 5	5	20%	Research Proposal
Completed Host Institution Endorsement Form	Pass/Fail	N/A	-	Host Endorsement Form
Completed Letter of Mentorship Support	Pass/Fail	N/A	-	Letter of Mentorship Support

Short-listed candidates will be invited to a virtual interview. Interviews are expected to take place during the weeks of 22 and 29 September 2025.

Checklist before submission

1. Be a resident national of an eligible Southern African country and have the right to work in their chosen country (proof of residency and right to work will be required at point of grant award).
2. Submit all required application documents (application form, host institution endorsement form and letter of mentorship support) on or before the application deadline.
3. Have application endorsed by the Host Institution

4. Satisfy the **essential criteria** for the role (proof of qualification will be required at point of grant award).

Contact for further information:

The Met Office grants commercial team at grant.defrayment@metoffice.gov.uk