COSPAR

The COSPAR Capacity Building Fellowship Program and Alumni

15 avril 2026

The next Call for COSPAR Fellowships is now open. Deadline for applications: *31 March 2026*.

IMPORTANT: This program is only for young scientists who have participated at one of the COSPAR Capacity-Building Workshops.

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Goals:

The PCB Fellowship program is open to young scientists who have been participants at one of the COSPAR Capacity-Building workshops, to enable them to build on skills gained at the workshop. It provides for visits of 2-6 weeks duration for the purpose of discussing ideas for a future workshop or carrying out joint research with one of the previously agreed lecturers/advisors of the corresponding workshop.The areas of research will be broadly restricted to topics that have been covered at a COSPAR Capacity-Building Workshop and applicants must have been a participant in one of these workshops. A number of fellowships will be available each year.

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The Proposed Research Program:

These fellowships are intended to foster research collaborations between scientists in developing countries and those composing the Lecture Boards of the different workshops; they are not primarily intended for training purposes. For this reason, the quality of the proposed research will be an important criterion for success in selection.

The program must be presented jointly by the applicant for the fellowship and an identified scientist who has agreed to receive and work with the applicant in their laboratory. Confidence of success in setting up a collaboration which is likely to lead to continuing research by the applicant will be essential for selection. It is of course not in general envisaged that the proposed research will be started and completed within the term of the fellowship

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Conditions of the Fellowship:

The funds available through this programme are intended to cover (part of) the travel and/or board and lodging costs during the visit of the fellow to the host laboratory, and are not intended as a salary, payment or remuneration.

Normally, the costs of board and lodging for between 2 and 6 weeks at the host institute, which may be in university student accommodation or its equivalent, are covered by the institute or host supervisors themselves, making the willingness of the supervisor to host a student a critical part of the application.

If they have been selected, successful applicants will be expected to apply for travel funds in their home country. Some developing-country governments have agreed to support this scheme, and COSPAR will in these cases help applicants to make appropriate contacts. If this application is not successful, fellows will also be able to apply for travel from a COSPAR fund, but this will be restricted to the highest priority applicants.

Although the total available COSPAR funding is limited and cannot cover the full cost of a trip, potential fellows or hosts in unusual situations are encouraged to contact the chair about how to maximise the benefit of any COSPAR funding. However, under no circumstances is COSPAR able to fund any costs except for those directly related to the visit itself.

Fellows will be required to submit a report on their visit within 6 weeks of their return to their home country.

There is no formal bar to holding these fellowships more than once, though an interval of at least one year between successive occasions will normally apply.

Successful applicants will be responsible for obtaining any necessary visas for their visit to the receiving laboratory.

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Applications:

Applications can be made by submitting the following to Prof. Mariano Mendez, the PCB Chair for Fellowships:

- The application form. (The form can be filled in using the free Adobe Acrobat Reader software; if there is a problem, a text version is also available.)
- A letter of support from the applicant's home institute. This letter should indicate why this fellowship would be beneficial to the applicant and the institution upon return, and what the level of financial support, if any, offered by the applicant's institute towards the costs of the ticket/travel costs is.
- A letter of acceptance of the receiving scientist or institute. This letter should indicate the kind of financial support, if any, offered by the host scientist or institute towards the board/lodging costs.
- The description of the proposed research, which should be kept to less than 4000 characters, or approximately 1 page of text.
- An estimate of the total costs for your visit, and the fraction of that amount that you would need from COSPAR in case you get the fellowship.

Submission by e-mail is preferred.

Further information about the scheme can be obtained from Prof. Mariano Mendez, from the University of Groningen in The Netherlands (email address available from the link above).

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Contacts for collaborating institutions:

Help and advice in finding a host should first be addressed to the organizers or to the lecturers of the workshop yo attended or, if that is not possible, to one of the following persons:

Name	Institution	E-mail
Dr. Diego Altamirano	Astronomy Group, University of Southampton, UK	d.altamirano at soton.ac.uk
Dr. Denise Perrone	ASI – Italian Space Agency, Italy	denise.perrone at asi.it
Dr. Carlos Gabriel	European Space Astronomy Centre, Spain	juan.carlos.gabriel at gmail.com
Dr. Mpho Tshisaphungo	South African National Space Agency (SANSA), South Africa	mtshisaphungo at sansa.org.za

Dr. Randall K Smith	Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory, USA	rsmith-pcbfp at head.cfa.harvard.edu	
Dr. Antonio Geraldo Ferreira	Sea Sciences Institute, Federal University of Ceara, Brazil	antonio.ferreira at ufc.br	E
Prof Mariano Mendez	Kapteyn Astronomical Institute, University of Groningen, The Netherlands	mariano at astro.rug.nl	
Prof Dieter Bilitza	Dept of Physics and Astronomy, George Mason University, USA	dbilitza at gmu.edu	Io
Prof Bob Su	Faculty of Geo-Information Science & Earth Observation, University of Twente, The Netherlands	zu at utwente.nl	E

Applications can be made at any time, but they will be processed once a year, after 31 March. Applications that arrive after this date will be held to the next round.

Because of the time needed to process and rank the applications, allow for about 3 months from the application deadline to the expected start date of the proposed visit.

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Criteria for Selection:

The selection criteria will include:

- The performance of the applicant in the workshop project.
- Evidence for continuing research in the topics of the workshop up to the time of the application.
- The quality of the research program.
- Letters of support from both the applicant’s home institute and the receiving scientist.
- Evidence of a supportive scientific research environment in the applicant’s home institute.

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Useful links:

Panel on Capacity Building

List of Capacity-Building Workshops

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