Support to Improve Climate Research and Information Services in South Asia

23 January 2012

Looking for project mentors

Through fellowships and residential writing workshops, a new project 'Support to Improve Climate Change and Information Services in South Asia' (SICRISA) is providing training and support to South Asian scientists and social scientists. We are now **looking for mentors** who will be able to help the participants to:

- Publish in peer reviewed journals

And where possible and relevant:
- Write for different types of publication aimed at a range of audiences
- Increase their influence on policy
- Raise the profile of their research through the media.

We are looking for experienced academics, writing specialists and media specialists to
- work with and provide mentoring for fellows and / or workshop participants before and after the workshops.
An honorarium will be paid for each person who is mentored.

If you have relevant skills and a commitment to capacity building for young researchers in South Asia, please apply for one of the mentoring roles by sending a brief CV and a statement of interest (no more than three pages) to s.schirmer@ids.ac.uk. You should include information about:
- your own publications in peer-reviewed journals,
- your experience with refereeing for journals
- your experience in mentoring with students or peers
- your key topics and areas of research in which you could provide support to other researchers
Please do NOT send any other documents.

Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis, so please apply as soon as possible.

To find out more about the project, visit www.sicrisa.org . If you would like to receive more information or have specific questions about the mentoring roles, please contact s.schirmer@ids.ac.uk .

Please forward this to colleagues that might be interested and to other relevant networks and mailing lists.

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Mentors' Terms of Reference: Distance Mentoring
SICRISA is a two-year project that aims to increase the quality and quantity of climate change research from South Asia. This will be achieved by training and mentoring South Asian scientists through fellowships and four residential writing workshops (writeshops), and by publishing two special editions of journals.

The fellowships will allow up to 20 people to have up to a month released from normal work duties in order to write a paper for submission to a journal. The participants in the writeshops (15 in each of the four) will be mentored during the writeshop, but will likely require specialist subject mentoring after the writeshop (and possibly before as well).

Many key climate change journals feature little research generated locally from countries in the global South. Future Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Assessment Reports will be important in understanding climate change, yet there is a danger that there will be inadequate representation of climate science (including social science) from the global South. This project aims to address this issue by supporting the production of quality research from South Asia to feed into IPCC processes.

SICRISA is funded by the UK Department for International Development (DFID) and managed by the Institute of Development Studies (Sussex) in collaboration with the Stockholm Environment Institute (SEI), The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) and International Centre for Climate Change and Development (ICCCAD) (hereafter referred to as the Project Management Team – PMT).

These Terms of Reference describe the roles and responsibilities of Distance Mentors and are valid through to the end of the project in September 2013.

Definition of a Distance Mentor
Mentors are experienced researchers who are familiar with the peer-review writing process, have a strong list of publications and have substantial experience mentoring and working with students. Distance Mentors will work exclusively with the recipients of the SICRISA Fellowships and may also be recruited to mentor participants from the writeshops, but will not attend the writeshops. Mentors must be aware that they are role models for the Fellows, and should be encouraging and helpful, rather than overly critical. They will have the following responsibilities:

General
- Support Fellows and writeshop participants to complete and submit a paper to a peer-review journal;
- Have a strong commitment to capacity building for young researchers in South Asia;
- Work closely with the project to ensure that preparations and follow-up are carried out consistently;
- Be committed to helping see the process of completing and submitting the paper through with each participant.

During selection process:
- Evaluate applications and provide input to PMT to assist them in selecting Fellows and writeshop participants, based on subject knowledge;

Support to Fellows

Ideally, the mentor will support their participant through to the stage when reviewer's comments are responded to and the revised paper submitted to the journal. Specific tasks include:

- Read drafts of the paper, providing written comments each time in a constructive, polite but thorough manner. Comments are expected on the following aspects of the paper:
  - o Suitability of paper topic and conclusions (is the work a valuable contribution to climate change knowledge?)
  - o Overall quality of paper, emphasising contribution to appropriate field of research
  - o Title and all other elements of the paper: Abstract, Introduction, Methods, Data, Discussion and Conclusion (as appropriate)
  - o References, including choice of references and style of presenting them
  - o Coherence of argument and evidence, structure and flow of writing
  - o Guidance on the peer-review process (including submitting papers, dealing with comments, revising)
  - o Ensure understanding of how to select 'target journals' and help select at least 3 and prepare their draft according to the style of the first 'target journal'

Payment:

Mentors will be paid an honorarium for each person they work with, payment to be made at the end of the process.