

# ***APECS Project Groups 2022-2023***

## **FULL-YEAR PROJECT GROUPS**

### **Alpine Cryosphere**

**PGL(s): Gayathri R.**

An increasing number of APECS members work in the mid-latitude and high-altitude environments: the alpine cryosphere. This project group focuses on improving APECS resources and networking for non-polar researchers.

### **APECS Art**

**PGL(s): Anastasia Deyko**

APECS Art is focused on polar art and promoting links between art and science. APECS Art is not limited by specific disciplines of art, areas of science or territorial belonging of its members or collaborators. The main thing that unites APECS Art is a passion for polar areas, and curiosity about how modern art or cultural heritage reflect changes in polar regions. We want to enable more precise and targeted collaboration between polar artists and scientists as well as enhance visibility of art as a tool for scientific outreach. Our group has organized several polar art & science webinars, collaborated with the APECS International Online Conference, and provided polar art related content for Polar Weeks. Additionally, our group aims to create an online database of polar artists to provide collaboration opportunities between artists and scientists. The group also hosts an art blog on the APECS website to showcase artwork and more detailed interviews with artists. We let art contemplate science and we let science form art.

### **APECS Community Development**

**PGL(s): Deniz Vural**

Despite the wide range of activities organized and attended by APECS members throughout the year, there is limited time for members to get to know one another and engage in community-building activities. The APECS Community Development Project Group (CDPG) aims to realize the potential of social gatherings for our community to get to know each other better and have fun in a collective way! The group will be organizing not only online social events to form, for example, regular gatherings of a polar bear-lovers society, contests with particular themes, and language exchanges, but also social gatherings at conferences to help introduce APECS to other organizations. Additionally, CDPG will collaborate with other APECS Project Groups (e.g. Antarctica Day, Polar Weeks) to enhance membership involvement and community learning. Please join us if you want to take part in these engagements that will improve not only our relationship with our colleagues but also our motivation in our professional life.

### **APECS Podcast (Polar Times)**

**PGL(s): Damien Ringeisen**

Polar Times is the APECS Podcast! We aim to produce episodes that will appeal to academics and the general public alike by chatting to people from all walks of polar/cryosphere life. Whether you live at the poles, have been to the poles, are researching the poles, or generally just love the poles we'd love to have you on Polar Times! We can give PG members the opportunity to learn how to host and edit episodes, the chance to collaborate with lots of other APECS Project Groups, the chance to widen your polar network, and the chance to have a lot of fun and learn something new. We welcome new ideas and new members at all times and are keen to celebrate and champion the spirit and diversity of

polar life. These are eventful times that we live in, but even though they're out of sight and often out of mind, these are also Polar Times!

### **Communication of climate change impacts in the Arctic**

**PGL(s): Ugo Nanni**

In the wake of the latest IPCC report, the AR6, the topic of climate change can be seen as very complicated and inaccessible, especially to the non-scientific population and likely to many scientists too. The goal of this project group is to inform about the consequences of climate change in the Arctic and its environments and how it impacts other regions. We have chosen social media to communicate with our target audience; we will use APECS social media accounts, mainly Instagram, to appeal to young adults, educators and policy-makers. So far, we have three main subjects, Ice and Ocean, Terrestrial Arctic, and Human Impacts, in which we will develop a series of posts to describe the effects of climate change on these specific environments. We hope to post once a week during some months, using storytelling to keep the attention of our audience sparked. As this is a cross-disciplinary project, not only scientists from different fields are encouraged to join the group, but also proficient communicators, designers and others. The project will evolve according to the group and the co-leader's aspirations.

### **Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI)**

**PGL(s): Jennifer Arthur**

The APECS Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Project Group aims to ensure that one's identity is not a barrier to success in polar science. Our specific goals are to 1) Facilitate international and interdisciplinary dialogue around diversity, inclusion, and equity in the polar science community; 2) Provide resources for APECS members facing identity-related challenges, as well as bystanders, allies, and leaders in our communities; 3) Ensure that the values of diversity, inclusion, and equity remain embedded in APECS and related communities now and in the future. This project group emphasizes that diverse, inclusive, and equitable environments benefit polar research overall, which is strengthened by contributions from diverse participants (diversity), especially when participants are welcomed and not subject to discrimination (e.g., through harassment, assault, or bias) (inclusion), and when all participants have sufficient resources and access to contribute at all levels of polar research (equity).

### **Mental Health Resources**

Mental Health is an issue that affects all of us in some way or another (good mental health included), but poor mental health is widely documented in academia and particularly impacts early-career researchers (ECRs). Polar researchers are faced with a unique set of challenges and potential stressors including remote, dangerous and/or lengthy field work, long lengths of days/nights, overwintering, isolation, lack of diversity and inclusion, and funding. The covid-19 pandemic may have increased the level of these stressors and added further challenges such as decreased contact with peers and supervisors, as well as a higher uncertainty in field (and lab) work planning. The Mental Health Resources PG aims to (1) raise awareness and (2) provide resources surrounding the theme of mental health for ECRs.

The main goal of this PG is to establish resources for mental health concerns and make them easily accessible for the APECS community through the APECS webpage. In order to do so, a mental health database for resources has been created during the past terms. Resources span from (scientific) articles to blog posts, videos, and online-courses, and will be continuously updated with the option for APECS members to submit their own resources. Database maintenance is one big task of the project group alongside various other ways to

raise awareness of the topic of mental health. For the coming term, we would like to distribute the established resources through webinars and social media as well as create short videos, blog articles (including personal stories of APECS members), a podcast episode in collaboration with the APECS podcast Polar Times, and many other creative ways in raising awareness of all kinds of mental health issues (in academia and polar research).

### **Overcoming Barriers to Indigenous ECRs**

#### **PGL(s): William Alger**

This project group aims at addressing language barriers that Indigenous researchers and other marginalized communities face in polar research. This PG provides a platform to communicate about these issues and strives to raise awareness about and overcome barriers in various research settings, including but not limited to publications, presentations, and career development. Additionally, this group promotes knowledge exchange across barriers posed by language, culture, and world views.

### **Polar Earth Observation Database**

#### **PGL(s): William Harcourt**

This project (now into its 3rd year) aims to build a resource that can be used by Early Career Researchers (ECRs) and the wider polar community to help understand the availability of satellite remote sensing data sets over the polar regions. There are three key goals to the project: 1. To generate a central database and website that summarizes the key specifications of past, present and future remote sensing instruments and how to access their data sets. 2. Review applications of satellite remote sensing in key areas of polar science (e.g. glaciology, ecology and climate sciences) and incorporate them into the online resource. 3. To help improve the understanding of Remote Sensing instruments, their capabilities and limitations, and the suite of data sets available for polar research. Anticipated Project Outputs: 1. An online database which contains the key specifications of satellite remote sensing instruments and their applications. 2. An accompanying website that summarizes this information more succinctly. 3. A journal publication that will summarize the creation of this resource and help advertise it to the wider polar community. A journal such as Earth System Science Data may be suitable for this purpose.

### **Responsible SciEnce initiative (RISE)**

#### **PGL(s): Amy Macfarlane**

RISE was born from a group of participants in the [2019-2020 MOSAiC research expedition](#) to consider how to minimize the environmental impacts of their research while maximizing the scientific impact. The scientific community widely agrees that polar research is essential for understanding and protecting sensitive environments, but considering and weighing the consequences has been largely undiscussed. In large part, this stems from a fear that recognising the negative impacts of scientific research on the environment will harm the image of the scientific community; we counter that as stewards of the science and the environment. Leading the charge in this way is necessary to set a precedent for the wider community.

This group:

- Creates a network of environmentally responsible fieldwork researchers
- Provides education and awareness to the scientific community
- Provides ECRs with a framework and support to establish new methods for conducting responsible science within their institutes and projects (which is not easy as a 'newcomer' in an established project)

- Provides opportunities to influence and contribute to the current shift in fieldwork sustainability

## **Science and Diplomacy**

**PGL(s): Nicholas Parlato and Zia Madani**

For decades, scientific and Indigenous diplomacy have made the Arctic and Antarctic unparalleled spaces of international peacebuilding and collaboration. As we grapple with new geopolitical and Anthropocene realities, it is incumbent for early career researchers working at the planetary poles to understand the changing landscape and help forge positive, holistic paths forward. The Science & Diplomacy Project Group undertakes this task to explore and press against borders of all kinds, wade into troubled waters, and carry the spirit of a diverse and interrelated global society across our professional and personal lives. We understand the cold, its physical manifestations, and the peoples it nurtures as a source of connection across alpine regions and between the two poles. Our aim is to highlight scholarship and activism by early career researchers, youth, and aspiring leaders, as well as address from our diverse perspectives the complex of issues facing the contemporary cryosphere. The Science & Diplomacy Project Group serves as a home base for APECS members interested in interdisciplinarity, planetary social thought, ways of knowing, political science, and everything in between. Among the events we have held are a panel on science and diplomacy in Greenland-US relations, a workshop on language hegemony, two ASSW webinars, and a collaboration with APECS Art titled “There is no Must in Art Because Art is Free: Artistic Diplomacy in the Euro-Barents Region”.

## **T-MOSAIC Vlogs**

The awareness of the alpine and cryosphere regions (Arctic and Antarctic) and their relevance to climate and ecosystems is increasing. While there is broad knowledge of Arctic and Antarctic science, few people have experienced first-hand cryosphere environments and scientific research. Bringing the public on a journey into alpine and cryosphere field research will foster a deeper appreciation for alpine and cryosphere environments and science. Terrestrial Multidisciplinary Distributed Observatories for the Study of Arctic Connections (T-MOSAIC) provides a great channel with APECS to coordinate a series of vlogs by alpine, Arctic, and Antarctic researchers that explore their fieldwork environment, science, and its relevance. Be a part of this great journey and help us share your science with the world, and help others to do so as well!

## **UN Climate Change Conference**

**PGL(s): Ryan O’Hara and Alexandra Filippova**

Every year, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) hosts an international summit during which world leaders, NGOs, and other influential actors come together and discuss both the current state of climate change and steps that must be taken to mitigate future environmental damage. This project group aims to give APECS members the opportunity to participate in these landmark conferences. We will spend most of the term organizing and developing APECS-run booths, workshops, and/or panels to be held at the conference. Then, in November, members of the project group will have the chance to attend the UNFCCC’s summit as part of an APECS delegation, giving them the opportunity to meet other climate professionals and take part in the world’s largest climate summit. This project group is an exciting way for ECRs to make connections and get directly involved in the fight against climate change.

## **EVENT-BASED AND TEMPORARY PROJECT GROUPS**

### **Antarctica Day**

#### **PGL(s): Aakriti Srivastava**

Each year on 1 December, the international polar community celebrates Antarctica Day to commemorate the signing of the Antarctic Treaty in 1959, which is considered to be one of the most successful international agreements. APECS contributes to these celebrations with a series of events and activities that are organized by the APECS Antarctica Day Project Group, consisting of a number of early career researchers that are enthusiastic about and interested in all things Antarctic. The project work is limited to a short, intensive time period from the start of the APECS term to 1 December. PG members need to plan, organize and advertise an entire event comprising several activities and reach out to collaborators during a short, two-month period. Nevertheless, the rewards of the outcome of the project always outweigh the stresses manifold. The overarching purpose of the group is to promote the worldwide celebration of the beauty of the frozen continent and the importance it has in the global climate and ocean, thereby urging people to understand that whatever happens in Antarctica doesn't stay in Antarctica, but influences each and every one of us in one way or another.

### **APECS International Mentorship Award**

#### **PGL(s): Vinod Kumar**

The APECS International Mentorship Award is designed to recognize the time and energy that mentors devote to Early Career Researchers each year, and their efforts to build a community of support. This Project Group will prepare the call for the APECS International Mentorship Award 2023, collect nominations, and organize the evaluation and announcement of the new recipient. You can find more information on the selection process and past recipients on the APECS Website.

### **APECS International Online Conference 2023**

#### **PGL(s): Divyesh Varade**

The APECS International Online Conference is held to promote outreach and exchange of knowledge and skills in polar science. The conference has been held annually in the summertime since 2015, and is organized by a group of multi-disciplinary members that comprise the APECS International Online Conference PG. The various tasks involved are related to the organization and management of the conference at various levels. Some of the tasks include, for example, preparing and promoting the call for abstracts, shortlisting submissions, planning and executing the event and associated logistics. The conference is held online with a conventional session structure. The previous edition of the conference also explored incorporation of artwork detailing the various aspects of polar studies. For more details, please visit the [webpage of the 8th APECS International Online Conference](#).

### **APECS International Polar Weeks**

#### **PGL(s): Erika Varik**

International Polar Week seeks to celebrate our North and South Poles and their stakeholders. The event showcases the importance of polar regions through diverse voices from local, scientific, and entrepreneurial communities. In this interdisciplinary project group, we critically raise awareness of matters vital to the governance of the North and South Poles. As part of this discussion, we also try to understand the significance of scientific missions to various stakeholders and poles' governance in general. We engage in a series of activities around the world that stimulate a discussion about the poles and the importance of ongoing communication between the different stakeholders. This includes webinars, storytelling, and

social media. The Polar Weeks project group welcomes people from across the scientific spectrum to contribute with curiosity, perspectives, and questions about the Poles.