



# The World Academy of Sciences

## Climate Women

Location: Low- and middle-income countries.



Target group: Women researchers; communities where the projects take place.

Budget: \$100,000 (2021-2023).



### Primary outcome

Provide research grants for projects led by women scientists that address concrete problems in climate change through collaboration and interdisciplinary research.

### Overview

Knowledge deriving from scientific research often suffers from not being applicable to real-life scenarios, especially in the global South – slowing down tangible improvements. Greater improvement in the livelihoods can be achieved when research is done in cooperation with local populations, and when scientific know-how is effectively shared by those living in the same communities. [UN Women reports](#) that globally, one fourth of all economically active women are engaged in agriculture, where they regularly contend with climate consequences such as crop failure and experience an unequal burden of care for collecting increasingly scarce water and fuel.

Launched in 2021, the partnership with [The World Academy of Sciences](#) focuses on women researchers working in climate action and builds off of an earlier 4-year partnership supporting the UN SDGs, the TWAS North South Collaboration in Sustainability (2015-2019) — which encompassed PhD travel grants, visiting professors, case study competitions and a sustainability symposium at the TWAS General conference. The Climate Women grants aims to empower women to lead concrete projects in climate action that take them outside the lab, deepening their scientific and soft skills such as project management and leadership. The project grants are awarded to teams of between 2-5 women for scientific projects with the potential to produce tangible strategies for addressing climate change. It is designed to be flexible and modular, with a total value of USD 25,000 over the course of 3 years.

### Goals

- Promote gender equality by creating opportunities for women in climate action projects.
- Respond to and tackle communities' needs in line with the principles of sustainable development and focusing on the brunt of climatic changes.
- Effectively transfer knowledge from scientific research to real-life scenarios for practical and tangible change under the umbrella of SDG 13: Climate Action.

### Activities and milestones

- TWAS hosted a skill-building inception workshop for the 2022 teams with high-level trainers, including the 2007 IPCC Nobel Peace Prize winner Prof. Lučka Bogataj and Dr. Anna Pirani, head of the Technical Support Unit for Working Group I of the IPCC. The workshop received extremely positive feedback from both participants, speakers and trainers.
- In 2022, the recently launched program had received a significant number of applications, among which 20-30 highly recommended proposals could not be funded in the first iteration of the selection. For the 2023 cohort, TWAS subsequently conducted a "re-selection" from the 2022 cohort, from which 6 winning proposals were identified.
- Additional funding was made available by Elsevier's Energy and Economics journal, which enabled TWAS to fund a 7<sup>th</sup> grant aimed at investigating women in leadership, gender-responsive climate change adaptation, and food security in Zimbabwe.
- The proposals were reviewed by a panel of expert scientists from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change including Prof. Joyashree Roy a member of Elsevier's Climate Board.
- The winning teams were announced at a special event in the UNESCO Pavillon at COP28 the 2023 United Nations Climate Change Conference, on December 4, 2023.

### Sustainability and future plans

- The 2023 and 2024 cohorts will convene in September 2024 in a special workshop in Beijing hosted by the Chinese Academy of Sciences-TWAS Centre of Excellence for Water and the Environment, International Centre for Climate and Environmental Studies (ICCES) and the TWAS East and South-East Asia and the Pacific Regional Partner (TWAS-SAPREP).
- The workshop will include presentations from senior climate and water researchers, science communication experts, monitoring and evaluation experts and policymakers.

### Spotlight on the 2024 grants recipients

- Mozambican environmental scientist **Albertina Alage** will lead a community-based reforestation project focused on mangrove and other coastal and river-based vegetation to reduce the impact of climate change.
- Zimbabwean industrial engineer **Zviemurwi Johnny Chihambakwe** (*right photo*) will build climate resilience through knowledge sharing and sustainable-energy systems for women transitioning between urban and rural areas.
- Beninese agricultural scientist **Gisele Koupamba Sinasson Sanni** will lead an environmental restoration project to create livelihoods through tree planting.
- Zimbabwean social scientist **Emelder M. Tagutanazvo** will guide women on driving permaculture to integrate land management and natural ecosystems in urban areas.
- Ghanaian chemist **Trinity Tagbor** will lead a project using biomass pellets as an alternative fuel source for the conservation and restoration of mangroves in Ghana.
- Bolivian ecologist **Vania Wendy Torrez Flores** will use participatory land-use planning and climate change adaptation training as a strategy to empower women in the Bolivian highlands.
- Zimbabwean disaster risk management specialist **Chipo Mudavanhu** (*left photo*) will lead a project on women in leadership and gender-responsive climate change adaptation and food security in Zimbabwe (supported by the Elsevier *Energy Economics* journal).