

OUTREACH

The Global Partners Program

A New International Volunteer Opportunity for AMS Members

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A distinctive feature of the American Meteorological Society (AMS) is the wide array of volunteer opportunities it provides for members to meaningfully contribute to the society's diverse endeavors and missions and to support the atmospheric and related sciences community and its stakeholders. A large proportion of the AMS membership serves on the numerous AMS committees and/or participates in AMS local chapters, contributing to the transfer and communication of scientific developments, the preparation of a diverse, well-trained, and qualified workforce, the delivery of high-quality public and informal education and outreach, and the formation of best practices for applications, decision-making, and policy related to weather, water, and climate. The impact of these volunteer activities, both for the atmospheric and related sciences community and for the public, has been substantial—see examples in For Further Readings below.

While some volunteer efforts have a global reach (e.g., editorships), the geographical focus of many others has primarily been limited to the communities of the majority of AMS members, with residents of the United States benefitting the most from AMS volunteer activities. Yet considerable potential exists for AMS members to contribute beyond this domestic volunteerism toward global capacity building in the atmospheric and related sciences. The AMS Global Partners Program, an initiative of the AMS Board on Community Service and the Education and Engagement Commission, was recently established to

help realize this potential and facilitate global volunteerism.

The overall mission of the AMS Global Partners Program (GPP) is to promote equity, goodwill, and service to the extended atmospheric and related sciences communities for the benefit of society internationally. More specifically, the GPP seeks to enhance opportunities for AMS members to engage in global volunteerism and, through the AMS umbrella, provide authenticity and credibility to global volunteer efforts and interactions related to the atmospheric and related sciences.

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Potential volunteer collaborations

The GPP is directed toward connecting AMS member-volunteers to **international**

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**Volunteer with the AMS
Global Partners Program**

professionals in academia, government, and other nonprofit organizations (“international scholars”) who are seeking assistance in the atmospheric and related sciences. The nature of these collaborations will reflect the needs of the international scholars and the background, skills, and availability of the AMS member–volunteers. Potential activities may include, but are not limited to, assistance with curriculum development, mentoring of students and young professionals, research assistance and participation in field studies, data sharing and processing, modeling and engineering support, and help with outreach, communication, and product development.

Expertise and assistance from AMS member–volunteers typically will be provided to international scholars on a pro bono basis, although international scholars may arrange for a volunteer’s travel, per diem, communication, and other support costs to be covered by the international scholars themselves, their institutions, or other non-AMS parties. Also, in some cases, the international host institution may provide an honorarium to the AMS member–volunteer. Confidentiality and intellectual property rights will be determined jointly by the international scholar and the AMS member–volunteer, or their respective institutions, prior to the outset of the collaboration. AMS member–volunteers and international scholars must agree to abide by the AMS Code of Conduct (www.ametsoc.org/index.cfm/ams/about-ams/ams-organization-and-administration/ams-code-of-conduct/).

The GPP does not supplant traditional international research, educational, and outreach collaborations. Rather, it is intended to assist international scholars who have limited access to expertise and resources needed to further their and their institution’s missions and to provide globally equitable access to the knowledge and products of the atmospheric and related

sciences. Furthermore, the GPP cannot be used to establish collaborations undertaken on a contractual or cost-reimbursement basis. Should such opportunities arise out of an initial volunteer collaboration, they must be undertaken outside of the GPP. In addition, the GPP cannot be used to create collaborations that support for-profit and other commercial entities, nor can there be involvement of the GPP in political activism or religious activities.

Matching AMS member–volunteers with international scholars

One barrier to greater involvement in volunteerism in general is the challenge of identifying volunteer opportunities that align with the potential volunteer’s skills, experience, and interests. A goal of the GPP is to minimize this barrier through the establishment of a matching process and the designation of a program matching coordinator who (somewhat like a journal editor) will assist in matching specific international requests for assistance with the relevant expertise and availability of interested AMS member–volunteers.

The AMS has implemented a GPP volunteer database that is searchable only by the program matching coordinator. An enrollment form for AMS members can be found at <https://community.ametsoc.org/volunteer-with-ams/international-volunteering>, or alternatively by using the QR code, *left*. Requested information includes academic degrees, a short curriculum vita or biosketch, and a description of areas, types, and levels of expertise, oral language proficiencies, experience with international collaboration, availability, and preferred method of collaboration.

The matching process is initiated when an international scholar completes an application for volunteer support. The program matching coordinator reviews the application and checks if the application is complete and if the request is appropriate

under the guidelines of the GPP. Keywords from the international scholar's application are then used to search the volunteer database to identify volunteer profiles that best match the international scholar's request. The AMS member–volunteer whose profile best matches the request reviews the application and informs the program matching coordinator if they are interested in the volunteer opportunity and would like to engage with the international scholar to arrange a collaboration. If the initial best-matched AMS member–volunteer declines to proceed, the program matching coordinator shares the application with the next-best volunteer match, and so on.

Once an interested AMS member–volunteer has been identified, their profile and contact information are shared with the international scholar, and the international scholar and AMS member–volunteer work together to coordinate a collaboration.

Spreading the word

All AMS members are asked to help inform potentially interested international scholars of the availability of the GPP. As mentioned above, the GPP is intended for international professionals in academia, government, and other nonprofit organizations, although independent scientists are also encouraged to apply. The GPP is likely to be especially beneficial to early- and midcareer professionals who have not yet had an opportunity to network with the global community of atmospheric and related scientists concerned with weather, water, and climate. A companion article published in 2022 by Dabberdt and Baumgardner in the journal *Atmósfera* describes the potential advantages of the GPP for international scholars.

Why volunteer?

A global capacity in the atmospheric and related sciences requires worldwide contributions to ensure equitable opportunities for the extended atmospheric and related sciences communities for the benefit of society internationally. The AMS, through its volunteer structure and its deep reservoir of member expertise and experience, is in an excellent position to contribute to enhanced global capacity in the atmospheric and related sciences. The AMS Global Partners Program provides an opportunity for AMS members interested in global volunteerism to connect with international scholars seeking additional opportunities and expertise and to establish fruitful collaborations for both AMS member–volunteers and international scholars. ●

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FOR FURTHER READING

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