



CALL FOR APPLICATION: CLIMATE AND HEALTH CATALYST AWARDS PROGRAM FOR EARLY CAREER RESEARCHERS IN EASTERN AND SOUTHERN AFRICA

1. Background and Rationale

Climate change is among the greatest threats to public health in the twenty-first century. Rising temperatures, extreme weather, shifting patterns of infectious disease, food and water insecurity, air pollution, displacement, and worsening mental health are already affecting millions of people, and Africa carries a disproportionate share of this burden despite contributing least to global greenhouse-gas emissions (IPCC, 2023; Romanello et al., 2024). In Eastern and Southern Africa the impacts are acute: recurrent droughts, floods, and heatwaves, climate-sensitive disease outbreaks, malnutrition, and climate-induced displacement are eroding population health, livelihoods, and development gains, while placing mounting pressure on health systems already constrained by limited resources, weak infrastructure, and high disease burdens (WHO, 2023).

Governments across the region are responding through National Adaptation Plans (NAPs), Health National Adaptation Plans (HNAPs), Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), and climate-resilient health strategies. Translating these commitments into action depends on robust, locally generated evidence and on a new generation of climate-health leaders able to produce it – and that foundation remains thin. Limited research funding, inadequate data systems, weak research-to-policy translation, and a shortage of trained climate-health researchers continue to constrain the region’s ability to design, implement, and scale effective interventions.

Early Career Researchers (ECRs), including Master’s students, PhD candidates, and emerging policy professionals, are central to closing this gap, yet they face the steepest barriers to contributing. Across Eastern and Southern Africa, they encounter limited research funding, inadequate mentorship, few opportunities for interdisciplinary collaboration, and restricted access to publication and policy processes. These constraints bite hardest in the climate-health field, which demands expertise spanning environmental and climate science, epidemiology, public health, economics, governance, and the social sciences. As a result, promising ideas stall at the concept stage for want of catalytic funding, locally led evidence remains scarce, and young researchers stay underrepresented on the national, regional, and global platforms where climate-health agendas are set. Without deliberate investment in this next generation, the region risks stalling progress toward resilient health systems, evidence-informed policy, and effective climate action.

2. Rationale for the Climate and Health Catalyst Awards

The Advancing Research in Climate Change and Health (ARCH) Program Consortium and Amref Health Africa, through the Pan-African Center for Research and Policy in Climate Change and Health (CPRCCH), are committed to strengthening Africa’s capacity to meet these challenges through research, innovation, policy engagement, and leadership development. Meeting them requires more than conventional research grants: it requires catalytic investment that helps emerging researchers



generate evidence, sharpen their research and communication skills, and translate findings into policy and practice.

The Climate and Health Catalyst Awards Program is designed to provide exactly that. It recognizes that small, well-targeted investments can have outsized impact enabling awardees to produce new evidence, influence policy, build leadership and partnerships, and position themselves to leverage larger funding and scale what works. In doing so, the program aims not only to fund individual projects but to nurture a new generation of climate-health leaders and strengthen the wider evidence ecosystem across Eastern and Southern Africa, contributing to climate-resilient health systems and healthier, more resilient communities.

3. Program Goal

To strengthen the research, leadership, and policy engagement capacities of Early Career Researchers and practitioners in Eastern and Southern Africa to generate and translate climate and health evidence for informed decision-making.

4. Overall Objective

To support 10 Teams of Early Career Researchers in Eastern and Southern Africa, over the 12-month award period, to each produce at least one publishable climate and health research output, strengthen their research-writing and knowledge-translation skills, and join a sustained professional network contributing to evidence-informed climate and health policy and practice.

5. Specific Objectives

The Climate and Health Catalyst Awards seek to:

1. Provide structured mentorship and skills development to all 10 awardees by pairing each with a named senior mentor from the ARCH Consortium or partner institutions for at least two sessions per month, and delivering at least four scientific writing and knowledge-translation workshops across the award period.
2. Support each awardee to complete and submit at least one climate and health research output (secondary data analysis, scoping review, rapid evidence synthesis, manuscript, or policy brief) by the end of the award period, with at least 90% submitting a manuscript or policy brief for publication or dissemination.
3. Enable all 10 awardees to present their work at a program learning forum, and at least five to present at an external regional or global climate-health event during the award period.
4. Establish a community of practice connecting all 10 awardees and their mentors, convening at least quarterly, to support cross-awardee collaboration and continued engagement beyond the award.

6. Award Value and Funding Support

Each successful awardee selected under the Climate and Health Catalyst Awards Program will receive **USD 5,000** in catalytic funding to support the implementation of a climate and health research, policy, or evidence-to-action project. The funding will support activities such as



secondary data analysis (teams or individuals who have already collected data and need support to write and publish); Scoping reviews on climate and health; Rapid evidence syntheses; and Manuscript development and publication. Beyond financial support, awardees will benefit from mentorship, technical guidance, and access to regional climate-health networks facilitated by Amref Health Africa, ARCH Program Consortium, and the Pan-African Center for Research and Policy in Climate Change and Health (CPRCCH).

Award funds may not be used for expenses unrelated to the approved climate and health project. Ineligible costs include personal allowances, salary top-ups, large equipment or capital purchases, tuition or academic fees, unapproved travel or events, research without required ethical approval, political, religious or commercial activities, entertainment, gifts, alcohol, and institutional overheads or indirect costs unless specifically approved by the program.

7. Duration of the Climate and Health Catalyst Awards Program

The Climate and Health Catalyst Awards Program will be implemented over a period of **Twelve (12) months**, during which successful awardees will be expected to implement their proposed climate and health research, policy, or evidence-to-action projects. Throughout the implementation period, awardees will participate in mentorship, capacity-strengthening, networking, and knowledge-sharing activities organized by the Pan-African Center for Research and Policy in Climate Change and Health (CPRCCH). Awardees will be expected to engage with relevant stakeholders and deliver high-quality outputs, including research reports, policy briefs, innovation prototypes, technical papers, community engagement outputs, and other knowledge products aligned with their approved work plans. The twelve-month award period is designed to provide sufficient time for evidence generation, solution testing, policy engagement, and dissemination of findings, while creating pathways for future scale-up, investment, and sustained climate-health impact across Eastern and Southern Africa.

8. Eligibility Criteria

Applicants must meet the following eligibility requirements:

1. Be a citizen or legal resident of the following eligible countries in Eastern or Southern Africa: Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Malawi, Ethiopia, Mozambique, Botswana, Rwanda, South Africa
2. Belong to one of the following categories:
 - Undergraduates with unique Innovations that needs testing
 - Master's (MSc) student undertaking climate change and health-related research and completed their course work.
 - PhD candidate conducting research relevant to climate change and health.
 - Applicants must be within five years of completing their highest relevant degree by the application deadline; however, documented career breaks such as parental,



medical, caregiving, or other formally justified interruptions will be excluded from the five-year count

3. Small teams (3 to 5 researchers) that have already collected data, have ethical approval and need support to write and publish.”
4. Be affiliated with a recognized university, research institution, government agency, civil society organization, think tank, or relevant institution within the region.
5. Submit a 5-page Concept Note that clearly addresses a climate change and health challenge and demonstrates potential for generating evidence, informing policy, strengthening resilience, promoting innovation, or improving health outcomes.
6. Demonstrate the technical capacity, commitment, and availability to implement the proposed project within the twelve-month award period.
7. Demonstrate how the proposed work aligns with regional, national, or local climate and health priorities and contributes to evidence-informed decision-making and climate-resilient health systems.
8. Be willing to participate in program mentorship, learning activities, networking events, progress reviews, and knowledge-sharing platforms organized under the Climate and Health Catalyst Awards Program.
9. Commit to producing and disseminating at least one knowledge product, such as a research report, policy brief, technical paper, innovation prototype, communication product, or other agreed deliverable arising from the award.
10. Applications from women, youth, indigenous communities, persons with disabilities, and other underrepresented groups are strongly encouraged. Collaborative and interdisciplinary proposals involving partnerships across sectors will receive additional consideration.

9 Expected Outputs and Deliverables

Each awardee will be expected to focus on one primary technical output and one dissemination output within the award period. This is intended to ensure that the Catalyst Awards remain realistic, focused, and achievable within the available funding and implementation timeframe.

By the end of the award period, each awardee shall submit:

- a) **One primary technical output**, which may be either a manuscript submitted or prepared for submission to a peer-reviewed journal, a policy brief, an evidence brief, a policy analysis paper, or a publishable evidence synthesis.
- b) **One dissemination output**, consisting of a presentation of the project findings, lessons, or recommendations in a program webinar, policy dialogue, learning forum, conference, or other approved knowledge-sharing platform.
- c) **A short final reflection report** documenting the awardee's project experience, mentorship journey, key lessons from onboarding and implementation, challenges encountered, and how the award contributed to their climate and health research or policy career development.



Awardees will also be expected to actively participate in mentorship, peer-learning, networking, and capacity-strengthening activities organized under the Climate and Health Catalyst Awards Program.

10 How to Apply

Interested applicants are invited to submit a complete application package for consideration under the **Climate and Health Catalyst Awards Program** implemented under the Pan-African Center for Research and Policy in Climate Change and Health (CPRCCH).

Applicants must submit the following documents:

- i. *Motivation Letter (Maximum 1 Page)*: Outlining the applicant's interest in the program, relevant experience, and how the proposed project aligns with climate and health priorities.
- ii. *Curriculum Vitae (Maximum 4 Pages)*: Highlighting academic qualifications, professional experience, research, policy engagement, leadership, and relevant achievements.
- iii. *Concept Note (Maximum 5 Pages)*: Describing the proposed climate and health project, including the problem statement, objectives, approach, expected outputs, impact, and indicative budget (up to USD 5,000). Projects involving primary data collection must provide evidence of approved ethics clearance that allowed for data collection.
- iv. *One Letter of Support or Institutional Affiliation*: From a university, research institution, government agency, or relevant organization.
- v. *Two Reference Letters*: From academic, professional, or policy leaders familiar with the applicant's work and potential.

Applications will be evaluated based on innovation, relevance, feasibility, potential impact, and alignment with climate and health priorities in Eastern and Southern Africa.

Criterion	Score
Relevance of the proposed project to climate and health priorities in Eastern and Southern Africa	20
Scientific quality, innovation, and methodological soundness	20
Feasibility and likelihood of completion within the project timeline and budget	15
Potential for policy influence, knowledge translation, and real-world impact	15
Applicant's qualifications, research experience, and leadership potential	15
Quality and clarity of the motivation letter	5
Budget justification and value for money	5



Criterion	Score
Gender, equity, interdisciplinary collaboration, and regional relevance	5
Total	100

Application Deadline

The completed application package must be submitted no later than **31st July, 2026** at 11:59 PM East Africa Time (EAT, UTC+3). Applicants should submit all required documents as a single PDF file using the naming format: **Surname_FirstName_ClimateHealthCatalystAwards_2026**. The email subject line should read: **Application- Climate and Health Catalyst Awards Program – [Applicant Name]**. All applications and queries should be sent to esahub@amref.org and copying to: Humphrey.Agevi@amref.org by the stated deadline. Applicants are encouraged to use the same email address for clarification requests, with the subject line: **Query – Climate and Health Catalyst Awards Program**.

Late or incomplete applications will not be considered.

Applicants are encouraged to submit their applications well in advance of the deadline to avoid technical difficulties.

Only shortlisted applicants will be contacted.

Programme Timeline and Key Dates

Activity	Timeline
Call for Applications Opens	1 st July 2026
Information Webinar (Optional)	10 th July 2026
Application Deadline	31 st July 2026 (11:59 PM EAT)
Eligibility Screening	1–7 August 2026
Independent Technical Review of Applications	8–20 August 2026
Selection Committee Meeting and Final Approval	21–24 August 2026
Notification of Successful Applicants	25 th August 2026
Acceptance by Awardees	By 31 st August 2026
Fellowship Onboarding and Orientation	4 th September 2026
Signing of Grant Agreements	Early September 2026
First Disbursement of Award Funds	September 2026
Official Program Commencement	September 2026
Inception Workshop and Mentor Matching	September 2026
Implementation Period	September 2026 – August 2027 (12 Months)
Mid-Term Progress Review	January 2027
Submission of Final Outputs (Manuscript, Policy Brief, Technical Report)	April 2027



Activity	Timeline
Final Dissemination Symposium and Graduation	August 2027

References

- Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. (2023). *Climate change 2023: Synthesis report. Contribution of Working Groups I, II and III to the Sixth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change*. IPCC. <https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/syr/>
- Romanello, M., Walawender, M., Hsu, S.-C., et al. (2024). The 2024 report of the Lancet Countdown on health and climate change: Facing record-breaking threats from delayed action. *The Lancet*, 404(10465), 1847–1896. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(24\)01822-1](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(24)01822-1)
- World Health Organization. (2023). *2023 WHO review of health in nationally determined contributions and long-term strategies: Health at the heart of the Paris Agreement*. World Health Organization. <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240074729>