

MRI Call for Synthesis Workshops 2020

Background

The MRI synthesis workshops are community-led activities that bring people together for collaboration, and generate outcomes and outputs that connect and synthesise existing data, information, publications, and/or other forms of knowledge and that have the potential to provide new insights on the state of mountains in a global context, thereby supporting [MRI's mission](#). Activities that support and/or contribute to the work of the [MRI Working Groups](#) or the Group on Earth Observations - Global Network on Observations and Information in Mountain Environments ([GEO-GNOME](#)), are particularly encouraged.

Since 2012, MRI has funded and supported eight [synthesis workshops](#), covering a multitude of topics and synthesis of knowledge that are relevant as key inputs to address challenges and opportunities of global change in mountain social-ecological systems. Explore and learn more about previous MRI Synthesis Workshops [here](#).

Call for MRI Synthesis Workshops 2020

This call invites the MRI community to submit proposals under either of the following two categories:

- 1) **Open thematic category**: under the thematically open category, synthesis workshops and related activities are defined by the proponents and fall within the general scope of synthesis of global change research in mountains regions, covering topics that require an analysis of biophysical and/or socio-economic processes of global change.
- 2) **Science in support of global policy processes and UN conventions**: Under this category, synthesis workshops explore and provide a mountains-specific 'state of the art' review and offer a critical scientific perspective on monitoring and reporting of evidence in support of global policy processes (e.g. on targets or indicators). Relevant global policy processes and UN conventions can include the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals ([SDGs](#)); the UNDRR [Sendai Framework](#) for Disaster Risk Reduction; the UNFCCC [Paris Agreement](#) and the [Global Stocktake](#); the UN [New Urban Agenda](#); the UNCCD framework for [Land Degradation Neutrality](#); or the UN Convention on Biological Diversity ([CBD](#)).

Under this category, we especially invite proposals that explore a "systems" approach to monitor and/or assess systemic risks in mountains (hazards, exposure and vulnerability), including risk perception, which are key themes under consideration for the upcoming **UNDRR Global Assessment Report (GAR) in 2022**. Proposals that align with this theme, as a joint contribution with the MRI to the GAR process, are especially welcomed.

In both categories, output products can include, but are not limited to, systematic reviews or synthesis articles for publication in peer-reviewed scientific journals and/or compilation of relevant/existing data into publishable datasets or databases that can facilitate further research activities, or contribute to the work of MRI Working Groups and/or GEO-GNOME. Workshops and related activities and outcomes/outputs should aim at inter-relating or comparing at least two or more different mountain locations or regions, and/or demonstrate the relevance of the topic/region investigated in a global context.

Given the especially challenging conditions in 2020 as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, and given the many restrictions still in place for regional and international travel and limited prospects for face-to-face meetings, proponents are encouraged to also include and demonstrate innovative means for collaboration and exchange, including virtual meetings and activities to support the planned synthesis work. For this reason, and pending a successful grant application, the suggested period in which to plan and schedule proposed activities under this call is from October 2020 to June 2021.

Depending on the scientific merit and calibre of the proposals received, we expect to be able to contribute to two synthesis workshops in 2020. Under this call, a total **contribution from MRI of up to 8'000 CHF per workshop** is the current budget under consideration, depending on the location and scope of the proposed activities.

Evaluation criteria

- Proposal demonstrates high levels of scientific merit and quality in terms of its design, methods and analyses, including integration between natural and social sciences and humanities; and consideration for inter- and/or transdisciplinary collaboration, if applicable;
- Proposal addresses at least one of the categories of interest for the call, and contributes to the [MRI mission](#);
- Proposal details measures to ensure inclusion and participation of ECRs, as well as considerations for gender and geographic balance among workshop participants, thereby aligning with the [MRI principles](#) for exchange and collaboration;
- Proposal provides information on the mountain regions in question for the synthesis activities, and demonstrates relevance of the synthesis in a global context;
- Main proponent(s) demonstrate expertise and a track record in the chosen topics, including full profile entries in [MRI's Experts Database](#).

Application process, key dates and milestones

Proposals must adhere to the General Eligibility and Funding Conditions for MRI Synthesis Workshops (see Annex A) and be submitted via the designated [online submission form](#) (not via email). Please ensure you provide all the requested information, incomplete proposals by the due date will not be forwarded for evaluation. Deadline: Friday 3 July 2020, midnight CEST.

Key dates and milestones:

Call for MRI Synthesis Workshops 2020 opens:	1 May 2020
Deadline for proposals:	3 July 2020
Confirmation of successful applications:	By 17 July 2020
Suggested period to conduct workshops and/or activities:	October 2020 - June 2021

For questions, please contact the MRI Coordination Office at mri@mountainresearchinitiative.org

MRI's financial support for synthesis workshops awarded in 2020 is made available thanks to the Swiss Academy of Sciences ([SCNAT](#)) and the Office of Foreign Affairs of the Principality of Liechtenstein.



MRI Synthesis Workshops

- Annex A - General Eligibility and Funding Conditions -

1. The MRI synthesis workshops are community-led activities that bring people together for collaboration, and generate outcomes and outputs that connect and synthesise existing data, information, publications, and/or other forms of knowledge that have the potential to provide new insights on the state of mountains in a global context, thereby supporting [MRI's mission](#). Activities that support and/or contribute to the work of the [MRI Working Groups](#) or the GEO-Global Network on Observations and Information in Mountain Environments ([GEO-GNOME](#)), are particularly encouraged. Other activities such as individual or project-related primary research, proposal preparation or conference attendance are not eligible under this funding call.
2. The workshop's main proponent(s) must have full and updated profiles in the [MRI Experts Database](#) at the time of proposal submission, including a track record of recent and/or key relevant publications that correspond to the proposed workshop theme or topic. If the proposed activity supports and/or contributes to the work of a specific MRI Working Group, a letter of support from the MRI Working Group lead(s) is required.
3. Workshops must be open and international in participation, following [MRI's core principles](#) for engagement and collaboration. Proponents should open and encourage the participation of early-career researchers (ECRs, generally up to 5 years after PhD) and researchers from developing countries.
4. Proponents are expected to generate most of the funding and/or in-kind contributions necessary to resource the activity. Types of costs eligible for support from MRI's contribution to the activity's budget can include: contributions to travel and accommodation expenses for keynote speakers and/or workshop participants, where **priority for funding allocation is given to ECRs or those coming from developing countries**; other direct meeting costs incurred by the hosts; and/or contributions to open access publication fees of workshop products. MRI excludes the use of its funds for overheads incurred by the host institution.
5. In keeping to MRI's focus on global change in mountains as integrated social-ecological systems, MRI encourages inter- and/or transdisciplinary synthesis collaborations and co-production of knowledge that take into account both natural and social sciences and humanities, and where possible and/or relevant, include other stakeholders outside of academia, such as practitioners, NGOs, or other community members.
6. Successful applicants will be required to sign a grant transfer agreement and will need to liaise with the MRI Communications Manager well before the scheduled activity to ensure the workshop/meeting and any deadlines for registrations are publicised as widely and as early as possible. Once details of the activity are known, an event entry will be created on the MRI website and shared on social media. After the event, a contribution to the [MRI Global Newsletter](#) in the form of a newsletter article on workshop outcomes, and/or an entry in the [MRI Mountains Blogs](#), are also expected. All communication guidelines, logos and templates will be provided upon confirmation of the grant.
7. After the event, a full activity report is required within six (6) weeks of the event taking place, describing key outcomes and products to be developed, including a participant list and financial accounting outlining how the funding was used. MRI will provide reporting templates.
8. All products that ensue as a result of the supported workshop or activity, including oral or poster presentations at conferences, must include the MRI logo and/or acknowledge the MRI funding contribution, with a copy of all products provided to the MRI Coordination Office as they become available.
9. Proposals are evaluated by the MRI Governing Body – [MRI Chair and Co-Principle Investigators \(Co-PIs\)](#), members of the [MRI Science Leadership Council](#) and MRI Executive Director. Consequently, MRI Co-PIs and members of the MRI SLC are not personally eligible to apply for funds under this call.
10. A call for synthesis workshops is generally published in the first half of every year. Workshop proposals are to be submitted online via the specific call's submission form (not via email), ensuring to provide all requested information by the specified deadline. Incomplete applications will not be considered.

For questions, please contact the MRI at mri@mountainresearchinitiative.org

- MRI, 28 April 2020