

APN Proposal Development Training Workshop (PDTW) Jeju Island, Republic of Korea, 2-6 May 2025

Call for Participation of Early Career Professionals in the Temperate East Asia

Main theme of the workshop

**Innovative Knowledge and Climate-Resilient Solutions for Sustainable
Resource Management and Plastic Pollution Mitigation in Marine and
Freshwater Ecosystems**

Introduction

The Asia-Pacific Network for Global Change Research (APN) Proposal Development Training Workshops (PDTW) offer a unique opportunity for early career professionals (ECPs) in Temperate East Asia (TEA) to develop skills for crafting competitive scientific research proposals. This strategic initiative provides a robust platform to build capacity for securing regional grant opportunities while fostering collaboration on shared research interests. A key strength of the PDTW is its valuable role as a networking space, enabling ECPs to collaborate on regional research proposals, build lasting relationships across countries and disciplines, and address global change sustainability challenges in the region and beyond. Since 2008, APN has empowered almost 400 professionals through 21 workshops, enhancing participation in regional research.

Coinciding with Jeju Island's hosting of [World Environment Day \(WED\) 2025](#) —the first in Korea since 1997— it aligns with global efforts to end plastic pollution, bolstered by Jeju's pioneering '2040 Plastic Zero Island' vision and disposable cup deposit system. The TEA PDTW advances APN's strategic research interests and mission to address global change, with a spotlight on the sustainable management of marine and freshwater ecosystems amid rising plastic pollution and climate challenges, which falls under one of the Temperate East Asia subregional priority topics as outlined in the APN Call for Proposals.

The TEA PDTW also supports commitments aligned with international frameworks such as the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development ([UNDOS](#)), the [Paris Agreement on Climate Change](#), and the Sustainable Development Goals ([SDGs](#)) notably those concerning climate action and ecosystem protection.

In addition to building technical expertise in research proposal development, the TEA PDTW will explore strategies to integrate climate adaptation, policy innovation, and circular economy principles into sustainable resource management. Participants will engage in critical topics, such as the combined impacts of climate change and plastic pollution on marine and freshwater ecosystems, through a combination of presentations, group discussions, and practical exercises.

Facilitated by experienced APN project leaders and fellow researchers with regional expertise, participants will navigate the full proposal development process, gaining expertise in identifying research gaps, designing methodologies, and crafting persuasive proposal narratives. By the end of the workshop, participants will have the knowledge, experience, and confidence to submit competitive, high-impact proposals, positioning them for future success in securing funding for their research. With additional mentoring post-PDTW, participants will continue to refine their proposals, ensuring they are well-positioned for success in APN’s 2025 Call for Proposals, which will be launched in November 2025.

Regional Relevance and Global Impact

The Asia-Pacific region faces a range of significant environmental challenges, particularly in managing coastal and freshwater ecosystems that are increasingly impacted by climate change and plastic pollution. These challenges threaten biodiversity, ecosystem services, and the livelihoods of local communities. Furthermore, the region is home to some of the world’s most biodiverse marine ecosystems, which are under growing threat from pollution, habitat degradation, and climate-related stressors. Addressing these challenges requires integrated solutions—both local and regional—that leverage scientific research, technological innovation, and effective governance.

Held in the Temperate East Asia region, the TEA PDTW is strategically positioned to address these critical issues. The region’s ecosystems, increasingly vulnerable to the dual pressures of climate change and plastic pollution, demand urgent attention. By combining scientific advancements with local, indigenous, and traditional knowledge, the PDTW empowers ECPs to develop solutions that foster climate resilience and promote sustainable resource management. This initiative not only builds participants’ capacity to address local environmental challenges, but also contributes to global efforts in ocean conservation, climate action, and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Temperate East Asia is home to key marine ecosystems, including the Yellow Sea, which faces severe environmental threats. As one of the largest contributors to global marine plastic waste, the region is also grappling with the widespread presence of microplastics in coastal waters. Additionally, climate change is exacerbating habitat loss, with rising sea levels, warming waters, and more frequent storms further stressing ecosystems. The resulting impacts on fisheries, biodiversity, and local livelihoods are profound and demand urgent action.

Jeju Island’s hosting of World Environment Day 2025 adds further relevance to these challenges. Known for its pristine natural beauty, Jeju is an ideal setting for a global event focused on environmental protection. The island’s proactive environmental strategies, including its initiatives to preserve biodiversity and combat plastic pollution, reflect the importance of local action in addressing global environmental issues. By aligning the TEA PDTW with the anti-plastic theme of World Environment Day, the workshop supports SDG 14 (Life Below Water) and climate adaptation strategies, contributing to solutions that integrate scientific research with local knowledge for more effective, sustainable resource management.

Through the TEA PDTW, ECPs will gain the skills and experience needed to navigate these complex environmental challenges. The workshop fosters collaborative research efforts, builds technical expertise, and empowers participants to lead the development of solutions that combine scientific knowledge with practical, community-driven approaches. These efforts contribute to advancing sustainable resource management practices and supporting the global movement to reduce plastic pollution, protect marine and freshwater ecosystems, and address the pressing impacts of climate change.

A. MAIN THEME

The workshop's main theme is **Innovative Knowledge and Climate-Resilient Solutions for Sustainable Resource Management and Plastic Pollution Mitigation in Marine and Freshwater Ecosystems**.

This theme emphasises the integration of scientific innovation, adaptive strategies, and governance frameworks to address plastic pollution and ensure the sustainable management of marine and freshwater ecosystems. It aligns with global commitments under the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development ([UNDOS](#)), the [Paris Agreement on Climate Change](#), and the Sustainable Development Goals ([SDGs](#)) by fostering collaboration, advancing technology, and promoting climate adaptation strategies to enhance ecosystem resilience and responsible resource use.

The following sub-themes will be addressed in the proposal development activities:

1. Plastic and Microplastic Pollution: Impacts and Solutions for Aquatic Ecosystems

Examples for proposal development include:

- Assessing the ecological and human health risks of plastic and microplastic pollution
- Circular economy approaches for reducing plastic waste in marine and freshwater systems
- Policy innovations and governance strategies for controlling plastic pollution
- Community-led initiatives and behavioural change strategies to reduce plastic leakage into aquatic environments

2. Climate Adaptation and Plastic Pollution Mitigation in Marine and Freshwater Ecosystems

Examples for proposal development include:

- Understanding the compounding effects of climate change and plastic pollution on water resources
- Strengthening ecosystem resilience against climate-induced water stress and pollution
- Adaptive management approaches for conserving marine biodiversity and freshwater habitats
- Key strategies for mitigating plastic pollution through improved waste management, policy enforcement, and behavioural shifts
- Integrating indigenous, traditional and local knowledge (ITLK) in climate-resilient and plastic-free water resource management
- Case studies of successful climate adaptation and plastic pollution mitigation strategies in riverine, coastal, and marine ecosystems

B. STRUCTURE OF THE WORKSHOP

The training workshop and other networking activities will take place over five full days, with the tentative schedule outlined in the table below.

Timetable

Day 1: Monday, 2 June 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Official opening of TEA PDTW ● Introduction to APN, the PDTW, and the APN Call for Proposals ● Discussion session and presentation on the key thematic areas
Day 2: Tuesday, 3 June 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Experience-sharing on proposal development and project implementation in the Temperate East Asia region ● Project management essentials and proposal writing launch ● Group Presentations, review and APNIS proposal submission
Day 3: Wednesday, 4 June 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Science-Policy Dialogue with APN members and invited experts ● Attendance at the Future Generations Forum 2025
Day 4: Thursday, 5 June 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Proposal review process and presentations ● Way forward in proposal development and submission ● Attendance at the World Environment Day 2025 events
Day 5: Friday, 6 June 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Early career professional networking session ● Workshop evaluation, award ceremony and closing ● Field Trip <p><i>PDTW concludes after the field trip.</i></p>

C. PARTICIPATION

The PDTW is open to early career professionals from Temperate East Asia and working in the areas related to the workshop's main theme. For this reason, applicants requiring funding support will ONLY be accepted from early career professionals who are from, living, and working in APN Temperate East Asia member countries.

D. ELIGIBILITY and PROCEDURES

1. Applicants must be early career scientists/practitioners of 40 years of age and under as of the application deadline. Applicants must be one of the following:
 - a. An undergraduate degree holder with five years of related working experience;
 - b. A postgraduate student working towards a PhD or Master's degree (final year);
 - c. A Master's degree holder with three years of related work experience;
 - d. A PhD degree holder with at least one year of working experience, or received their highest postgraduate degree within the previous ten years.
2. Applicants should be working in areas of, or have academic experience related to, the workshop's main theme.
3. Applicants must have a good working knowledge of the English language.
4. Successful applicants will be selected on a **first-come, first-served** basis.

5. Applicants **seeking funding support** will only be accepted from early career professionals who are from, residing in, or working in the APN [Temperate East Asia member countries](#). Limited funds are available for participants from APN TEA member countries that are considered as developed: Japan and Republic of Korea.
6. Applicants applying on a **self-funded** basis may be from within or outside the subregion, but their area of work must be related to the theme of the workshop, and their project activities must be conducted within the Temperate East Asia region. The applicant must also be from one of APN's member or approved countries

E. APPLICATION PROCESS

Interested persons should complete the **mandatory** four steps outlined below.

1. Complete and submit the application form provided with this announcement for the TEA PDTW on the [Asia-Pacific Network Information System \(APNIS\)](#).
2. Submit resume/CV (maximum 2 pages) with minimum details: Full name, Nationality Date of Birth, Gender, Current Affiliation, Education/Employment History.
3. Submit a **short motivation essay (300-400 words)**. The best essay will address the following questions in a narrative style:
 - a) How will this training workshop be important in your career development and what are the expected impacts?
 - b) What is your research interest(s)?
 - c) What is your motivation for undertaking regional-based Global Change research?
 - d) Indicate which of the 2 sub-themes you are interested in (place in order of preference).
4. Submit a **letter of recommendation** from your supervisor indicating:
 - a. Endorsement to attend the workshop.
 - b. How will the training workshop benefit the trainee's research career?
 - c. Commitment and consent as the supervisor of the trainee to encourage the trainee to submit regional-based proposals (to APN or other funding bodies) and/or become engaged in regional-based Global Change research.

F. SPONSORSHIP

1. A maximum of 15 early career professionals will be selected for the training workshop. Financial support for sponsorship is available from APN, contingent on funding availability.
2. From each sub-regional member country, a minimum of two early-career professionals will be selected as recipients of APN financial support.
3. Sponsorship for successful applicants will cover the cost of an economy-class air ticket, accommodation, meals and local transportation.
4. There is no registration fee to participate in this workshop.

G. APPLICATION DEADLINE: 28 March 2025, 23:59 (JST) on the APNIS interface.

Additional information

- Participants of the workshop will be provided with breakfast and lunch during the event.

- Participants who have previously attended APN PDTWs are ineligible to apply for this training workshop.
- Participants are required to commit to attending the full five days of events to gain the maximum benefit from the programme.

For additional queries, please contact the APN Secretariat via email to Dr Nafesa Ismail (nismail@apn-gcr.org) and Ms Naomi Young (nyoung@apn-gcr.org).