

**Owls4Earth:
Participant Observers of the United Nations Framework
Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)**

2022 Call for Applicants

Overview:

For nearly three decades, the United Nations has been bringing together almost every country on Earth for global climate summits – called COPs, or “Conference of the Parties.” In what is known as the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). In that time, climate change has gone from being a fringe issue to a global priority. As a social justice university, Southern Connecticut State University is dedicated to taking action to address this climate crisis, and has taken steps to provide unique opportunities to get students, administrators and faculty involved in this mission at the international scale.

In 2021 The Connecticut State Colleges and Universities were awarded Observer status by the UN Secretariat to attend and participate in annual UNFCCC events. Participating in these global negotiations is key to providing leadership opportunities for our students, and for connecting our communities here in Connecticut to the bigger global context of climate change.

Following our acceptance as an official Observer organization at COP26 in Glasgow Scotland, we have established a new program titled “Owls4Earth: Participant Observers of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change”. This program will engage CSCU students, faculty, and staff in the UNFCCC process, and will use SCSU’s official Observer organization status as a foundation for climate change research, education, and outreach in our state and beyond.

**This is a program of the SCSU International Education Office and Dr. Erin Heidkamp, in collaboration with Dr. Miriah Russo Kelly of SCSU Department of the Environment, Geography, and Marine Sciences who serves as the designated contact point for our UNFCCC delegation.*

Those interested in attending COP 27 in [Sharm el-Sheikh Egypt](#) with the Owls4 Earth Project should complete the following **by September 1, 2022**. Please send your application as one .pdf to Owls4Earth@southernct.edu

Participant Observer Responsibilities if Selected:

1. Agree to a final interview selection process (30 minutes online)
2. Complete a pre-training program (4 hours in-person)
3. Submit daily blogs/field notes for their time in attendance.
4. All participants are expected to have a research question and a plan of work that should be accomplished within six months of the event occurring.
5. Seek to develop relationships with other event participants.
6. Present at and attend relevant research work-plan related negotiations and side events.
7. Participate in constituency meetings and events.

Participant Eligibility Criteria:

- 18 years of age or older
- Graduate or undergraduate student matriculated at Southern Connecticut State University during Fall 2022
- Minimum 3.0 GPA
- In good disciplinary standing
- Demonstrated commitment to global international climate policy, or interest/experience in climate change issues
- The committee will also look for evidence of the following in your application:

- Maturity and independence
- Cultural awareness and sensitivity
- Demonstrated desire to learn and work collaboratively in the service of accomplishing collective goals
- Additionally, the committee expects all selected participants to be able to do the following:
 - Manage all personal care and mobility independently
 - Navigate airports, train stations, and other forms of transport independently
 - Endure sustained periods of activity (daily steps may exceed 20,000)
 - Manage any food restrictions independently, and find alternatives as needed
 - Maintain an international phone plan (with data) and monitor WhatsApp for the duration of the trip

How To Apply:

1. Cover letter (max two pages double spaced) indicating:
 1. Why you would like to attend COP27
 2. The benefit that would be gained through your participation
 3. What you plan to research and why
 4. The outcomes associated with your work
2. Resumé:
 1. Provide a two-page C.V. or resumé with relevant research, work or life experience.
3. Work plan with timeline (Max four pages double spaced):
 All applicants are asked to establish a research agenda and a plan of work that will accompany your application. Your work plan and timeline proposal should include a specific research question and should indicate what you will do in the time leading up to, during, and following the event in November 2022. Your proposal should include 1) research overview including the importance of your inquiry, 2) basic explanation of the methodological approach, and 3) discussion of the expected impact of the study 4) project timeline.
4. Two letters of recommendation from individuals who can speak to your interest and/or commitment to climate change related topics. At least one letter must be from a faculty member in the student's major department who is willing to oversee the research initiative.

Provide all materials as one .pdf document and send it to Owls4Earth@southernct.edu

Diversity and Inclusion

SCSU is committed to identifying and addressing systemic barriers to equity, access, and success for all members of our community. The university strives to create and maintain working and learning environments that are inclusive, equitable and welcoming.

The appointment of the CSU System (led by SCSU) as an official observer organization by the UNFCCC is significant because it adds to the growing number of public institutions of higher education that now have a seat at the table around which political decisions about the climate crisis are being made that will impact the future of our planet. Perhaps most importantly, it is an unprecedented opportunity for our diverse and underrepresented students to participate in meaningful dialogue and action around climate change at the international scale.

The intention of the UNFCCC COP 27 application review committee is to send a small group of students who reflect the diversity of our campus communities to participate in this extraordinary opportunity in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt this November. We encourage you to allow your application to showcase your experiences, perspectives and unique identity.

Estimated 2022 Cost Per Participant:

Selected participants will be asked to provide a \$250 refundable deposit. All other costs will be provided by grant funded initiatives.