



## GEO Mountains Small Grants Programme 2023

[GEO Mountains](#) is an Initiative of the Group on Earth Observations that aims to bring together research institutions and mountain observation networks to enhance the discoverability, accessibility, and usability of a wide range of relevant data and information pertaining to environmental and socio-economic systems – both in situ and remotely sensed – across global mountain regions. In doing so, it hopes to help facilitate scientific advancements and support practitioners and decision makers at local, national, and regional levels.

In this context, and thanks to support from the Swiss Agency for Development & Cooperation (SDC) via the [Adaptation at Altitude Programme](#), we are launching a small grants call for projects that explicitly explore mountain monitoring, data, and information, with priority given to projects focused on the following mountain regions: *Andes, Central Asia, East Africa, the Caucasus, and Hindu Kush Himalaya*. Depending on the quality and merit of the proposed projects, we expect to support up to two projects per region, with up to CHF 10'000 per project available on a competitive basis. Typical project duration should be up to 6 months, and conclude no later than 15 January 2023. Below, a (non-exhaustive) list of the types of projects that could be supported:

- The development of databases and other infrastructure or tools to describe, visualise, access, and/or apply geospatial datasets corresponding to mountain regions
- Mountain data rescue or digitisation projects
- The curation and preparation of novel mountain datasets for publication or sharing online and/or in peer-reviewed data journals (e.g. [ESSD](#), [Scientific Data](#) etc.)
- Mountain data evaluation or inter-comparison projects
- The integration of various types of mountain data with data-driven or physics-based numerical models to answer key scientific, practical, or policy-relevant questions
- Education, training, or capacity development activities related to the data lifecycle (including campaign planning, infrastructure installation, data collection, data transmission, quality assurance, documentation, storage, and sharing), potentially as a contribution from GEO Mountains to the MRI's [Mountain Observatory](#) and [UHOP](#) concepts.

Some potentially useful existing resources are listed in / accessible via the GEO Mountains [General](#) and [In Situ](#) Data Inventories. Others include the [GEO Knowledge Hub](#) and [GEOSS](#), and datasets and resources made available by [other GEO Work Programme Activities](#). All projects should follow the principles of [Open Science](#) to the greatest extent possible. Further details on the call's scope, general eligibility, and associated funding conditions are provided in the Annex.

Proposals must be submitted via [this online submission form](#). Please ensure all the requested information is provided. Incomplete submissions will not be evaluated. **Extended deadline for proposals: 8 May 2023, midnight (23:59) CEST**

Key dates and milestones:

- Call for GEO Mountains Small Grants opens: 1 March 2023
- Deadline for proposals (extended): 8 May 2023, midnight CEST
- Confirmation of successful applications: By 8 June 2023
- Suggested period to conduct workshops and/or activities: July 2023 – January 2024

We look forward to receiving your applications!

### **Annex: General Eligibility and Funding Conditions**

1. The GEO Mountains Small Grants Programme 2023 intends to bring people together to collaborate to improve the data and information situation across the world's mountain regions, and generate practical outputs, thereby supporting [the Initiative's objectives](#). Activities focused on the following mountain regions, are prioritised: *Andes, Central Asia, East Africa, the Caucasus, and Hindu Kush Himalaya*.
2. All project proponent(s) must have full and updated profiles in the [MRI Expert Database](#) at the time of proposal submission, including expertise and/or a track record of recent and/or key relevant publications that correspond to the proposed workshop theme or topic. They must also consent to becoming members of the GEO Mountains network, and being added to the GEO Mountains mailing list.
3. Project proponents should encourage the participation of early-career researchers (ECRs, generally up to 5 years after MSc or PhD) and researchers from developing countries. More generally, the [open and inclusive nature of the GEO Mountains network](#) should be respected.
4. Proponents are expected to generate at least matching funding and/or in-kind contributions that, combined with GEO Mountains' contribution, sufficiently resource the planned activity. Types of costs eligible for support from GEO Mountains' contribution to the activity's budget can include project meetings or workshops, researcher / database developer time, and open access publication costs (ideally in specialist data journals, where applicable). Priority for funding allocation is given to ECRs or those working in developing countries. GEO Mountains excludes the use of its funds for overheads incurred by the host institution or institution of affiliation of the proponents.
5. In keeping to the GEO Mountains' focus on global change in integrated social-ecological mountain systems, we encourage inter- and/or transdisciplinary projects, collaborations, and co-production of knowledge that take into account both natural and social sciences and humanities, different types of data (e.g. in situ, remotely sensed, modelled). Where possible and/or relevant, projects should also 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 GEO Mountains Secretariat throughout the scheduled activity to publicise it and all resultant outputs. Once details of the activity are confirmed, the project will be showcased as a [Community Project](#) on the GEO Mountains website and promoted via social media. After the project's conclusion, a contribution to the GEO Mountains website (e.g. in the form of a [news article or a blog](#)), and a presentation at a GEO Mountains General Meeting, are expected.
7. A full activity report is also required within six weeks of the project's conclusion. This report should describe key outcomes and datasets developed. The GEO Mountains Secretariat will provide reporting templates.
8. All outputs that ensue as a result of the supported project, including oral or poster presentations at conferences as well as reports or scientific papers, must include the GEO Mountains logo and/or acknowledge the GEO Mountains funding contribution, with a copy of all products provided to the GEO Mountains Secretariat as they become available. If the activity generates new datasets, they must be shared under an open data licence such as [CC BY 4.0](#).
9. Proposals will be evaluated by the GEO Mountains Co-Leads and the network Coordinator, in addition to external experts. As such, these individuals are ineligible to apply. The applicable evaluation criteria include the following aspects:
  - a. High degree of scientific merit and quality in terms of design, methods and analyses.
  - b. Adheres to the [MRI guiding principles](#) and GEO Mountains' Open Science principles

- c. Includes the participation of early career researchers, as well as ensures genuine steps are taken to achieve inclusivity and diversity in project activities.
- d. Scope of the activity addresses and targets key data and information needs in at least one of the 5 mountain regions targeted by this call.
- e. The main proponent(s) demonstrate expertise and a scientific track record in the chosen topics, including full profile entries in the [MRI's Experts Database](#).

10. Proposals must be submitted online via the specific call's submission form (not via email). All requested information must be provided by the specified deadline. Incomplete applications will not be considered.

Should you have any questions, please contact the GEO Mountains Secretariat at: [geomountains@mountainresearchinitiative.org](mailto:geomountains@mountainresearchinitiative.org)

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