

BELMONT FORUM

*Providing knowledge for
understanding,
mitigating,*



*and adapting to
global environmental change*

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For more information about the contents of this publication, please visit the Belmont Forum website at belmontforum.org or contact us at info@belmontforum.org.

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What is the Belmont Forum?

The Belmont Forum is a partnership of funding organizations, international science councils, and regional consortia committed to the advancement of interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary science. Forum operations are guided by the Belmont Challenge, a vision document that encourages:

International transdisciplinary research providing knowledge for understanding, mitigating, and adapting to global environmental change.

Forum members and partner organizations work collaboratively to meet the Belmont Challenge by:

- issuing international calls for proposals
- committing to best practices for open data access
- providing transdisciplinary training
- building capacity
- conducting transnational environmental change research
- implementing a global open data policy
- improving data management
- promoting data planning and stewardship



AFGROLAND Project in Madagascar.

The Forum supports multi-national and transdisciplinary collaborative research, bringing together natural sciences, social sciences, and the humanities, as well as stakeholders in co-creating the knowledge and solutions for sustainable development that benefit society. The Forum aims for its global efforts to be truly solutions-oriented, thereby contributing to the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals in the context of Global Change.

Belmont Forum facts

26+ Funding agencies

55+ Countries represented

48+ Different projects funded

450+ Scientists and stakeholders involved

Work featured in:

National Geographic

Nature

PLOS ONE

Global Change Biology

Sustainability Science

The Belmont Challenge

There are a lot of problems in the world and we want to help solve them. It may be a challenge, but by working together we can overcome obstacles. Belmont Forum aims to succeed by establishing the Belmont Challenge:

To support international transdisciplinary research providing knowledge for understanding, mitigating, and adapting to global environmental change.

The Belmont Forum supports interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary research encompassing natural, social, and economic systems, to promote and enhance:

- Information on the **state of the environment**
- Assessments of **risks, impacts, and vulnerabilities**
- Evaluation of policies that lead to **low-carbon societies**
- Promotion of **global well-being**
- Studies on **sustainable use** and **restoration of natural resources**
- Protection of **earth's biodiversity** and endangered ecosystems
- Examination of **global urbanization** management
- Analysis of **global integration and coordination** mechanisms

The priorities of the Belmont Forum are transdisciplinary research questions that address societal needs to manage the planet sustainably and to respond effectively to global environmental change. The Forum aims for its global efforts to be focused on creating solutions.

History of the Belmont Forum

1990

The International Group of Funding Agencies (IGFA) forms as an informal group of representatives from agencies that support Global Change Research.

2013

The first Collaborative Research Actions are released with a focus on Coastal Vulnerability and Freshwater Security.

2009

The National Science Foundation and Natural Environment Research Council host a conference of key environmental and geoscience funding agencies at the Belmont Conference Center in Elkridge, Maryland, USA.

The Belmont Forum becomes the Council of Principals for the IGFA.

Response to the Belmont Challenge

To address the Belmont Challenge, we need to change the way we support and undertake global environmental change research, by being comprehensive. In coordinating across communities and allowing for a broad scope, research can serve the needs of development cooperation actors, end-users, beneficiaries, private sector stakeholders, civil societies, policy makers, and others. We advocate an overarching framework to identify, integrate, and catalyze priority actions into an environmental decision-support system.

The framework includes:

- A **transdisciplinary approach** that enables inputs and scoping across scientific and non-scientific stakeholder communities
- Initiatives that support the **capacity building** required for the successful implementation of research actions
- Systematic targeting and integration of observations, research, and knowledge at **local and global scales**
- Strategic, geographically and gender balanced, governance to **establish key priorities** among competing demands and to promote cooperation
- A **greater voice for users** in informing research priorities
- An **increase in collaboration** across scientific disciplines
- A sustained increased collaboration across geographical regions with emphasis on **enhancing scientific capacity in developing countries**
- Improved mechanisms for **transnational funding** that overcome current constraints while respecting national requirements and statutes

2014

IGFA and the Belmont Forum merge under the name Belmont Forum. A new governance structure is adopted, with an elected Steering Committee and two Co-Chairs.

2016

The Communication, Collaboration, and Coordination Office or C3O for the Forum's e-Infrastructures and Data Management Project is opened.

First Belmont Forum Valorization Workshop in San Francisco, California, USA.

2015

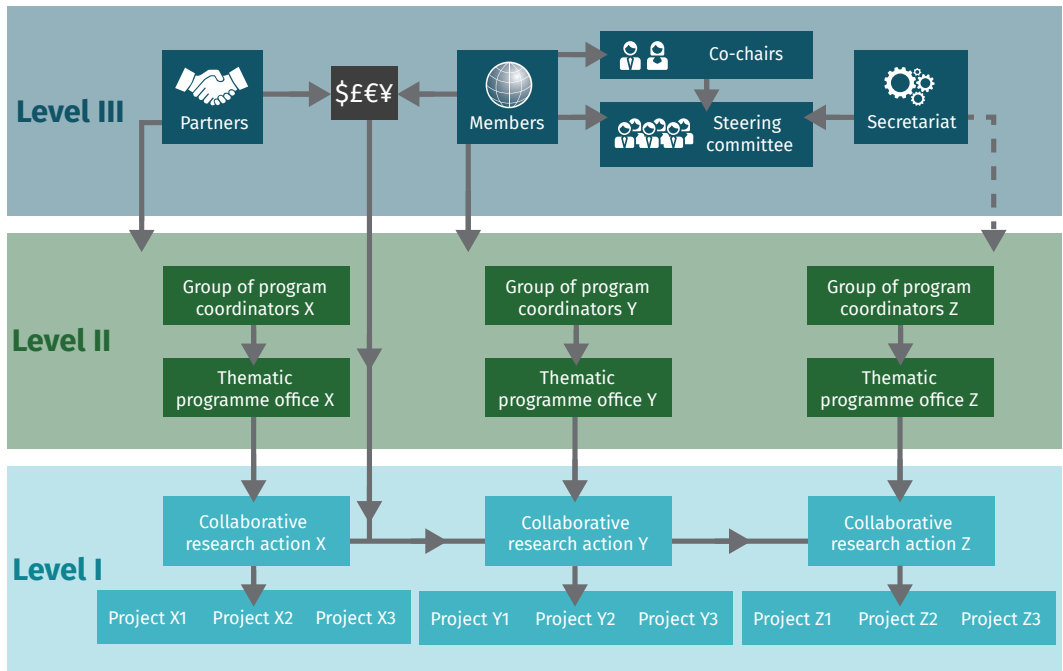
A permanent Secretariat is established. The Forum members vote in favor of Open Data Policy and Principles. The Community Strategy and Implementation Plan, are being implemented as the e-Infrastructures and Data Management Project.

2017

Belmont Forum Meetings in São Paulo, Brazil.

Structure of the Belmont Forum

The Belmont Forum is structured in three levels. The top level (III) shows the overarching governance of the Forum. The middle level (II) illustrates the organizational structure of Collaborative Research Actions (CRAs). At the base level (I) are multiple projects that have been funded through CRAs.



Level I

Collaborative Research Actions (CRAs) are the primary mechanism by which the Belmont Forum institutes joint international calls for proposals in partnership with interested organizations to fund **projects**.

CRAs address the Belmont Challenge priorities, leverage Belmont Forum members' existing investments, and bring together new partnerships. Scientist and stakeholder support is made possible through the CRAs, which are the Forum equivalent of a call for proposals.

Each proposal submitted must consist of a project **co-developed** by natural scientists, social scientists, and stakeholders that hail from at least three countries. **Stakeholders** include communities, policy makers, business and industry, unionized bodies, tribal organizations, non-governmental organizations, and many others.

Level II

Multiple projects are funded under **Collaborative Research Actions** (CRAs). CRAs are the primary mechanism by which the Belmont Forum institutes joint international calls for proposals in partnership with interested organizations.

Each CRA is developed and administered by a Group of Program Coordinators and the Thematic Programme Office.

The **Group of Program Coordinators** is responsible for implementation of the call. It is composed of one representative from each partner organization participating in the call.

The **Thematic Programme Office** is composed of one or two funding organizations that lead the development and administration of the call. It is responsible for organizing a mid-project and an end-project meeting, and any other community meetings it deems necessary.

Level III

The governance of the Belmont Forum is made up of partners, members, the Steering Committee, and the Secretariat.

Partners are organizations that subscribe to the Belmont Challenge but do not fund research and/or do not have a vocation to meet the criteria for membership in the Belmont Forum.

Members are organizations that are legally allowed to mobilize resources from local, state, provincial, national, or international research funds, either public or private, and are engaged in activities that address the Belmont Challenge.

The **Steering Committee** is elected by Belmont Forum members to support and advise Belmont Forum activities between plenary meetings. The committee consists of several members headed by the **Co-Chairs**.

The **Secretariat** serves as the administrative arm of the Belmont Forum and is tasked with carrying out decisions made during the annual plenary.

If you want to...



Become a member

New organizations are elected to Belmont Forum membership each year at the Forum's plenary meeting. Members are funding organizations that can provide resources to Collaborative Research Actions. Steps to become a member are:



Interested organizations must satisfy three requirements:

- Participation in a collaborative research action
- Monetary or in-kind contribution to Secretariat
- Identification of a principal representative to correspond on Forum business



Become a partner

For organizations that are not principally funding institutions, you can join the Forum by becoming a partner. As a partner you can give input to the Forum as it develops its funding, training, and data agendas. Partners are invited to all plenary meetings and may participate in closed plenary sessions. Steps to become a partner are:



Letter of intent should indicate areas of mutual benefit between the Forum and the organization applying to become a partner.

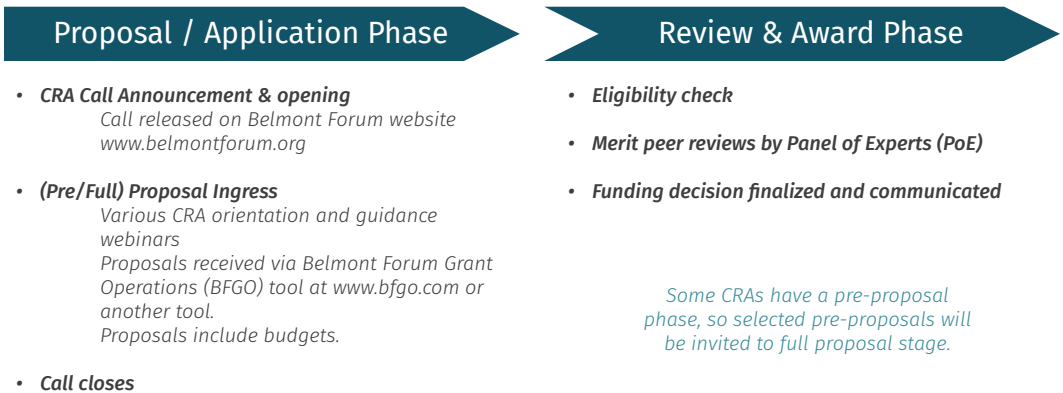
Submit a proposal

Application systems and processes may vary from call-to-call. Many of our current and prior calls can be found at the Belmont Forum Grants Operations website at <https://bfgo.org/> and information for open and upcoming calls can be found at <http://www.belmontforum.org/opportunities>. Please carefully review the materials for each specific call when preparing a proposal.

Basic eligibility requirements:

- Every proposal must include natural scientists, social scientists, and stakeholders.
- Each proposal must include collaborators from at least three different countries based on those providing resources for the call.
- Researchers from countries not represented by resource partners on the call may participate on projects with their own funding.
- Only one proposal is submitted per team.

The proposal application and review process are as follows:



Open Calls

Scenarios of Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services II

Calls in Progress

Transformations 2 Sustainability

Sustainable Urbanisation Global Initiative (SUGI)/ Food-Water-Energy Nexus

Belmont projects span the globe



In its first five years of operation, the Forum successfully led seven calls for proposals, supporting 48 projects and more than 450 scientists and stakeholders, representing over 35 countries on 6 continents.

Open data policy and principles

The Belmont Forum adopted this data policy and the following principles to widen access to data and promote its long-term preservation in global change research, help improve data management and exploitation, coordinate and integrate disparate organizational and technical elements, fill critical global e-infrastructure gaps, share best practices, and foster new data literacy.

Significant advances in open access to data have been achieved and implementation of this policy and principles requires support by a highly skilled workforce. A broad-based training and education curriculum is an integral part of research programs and encourages researchers to be aware of, and plan for, the costs of data intensive research. This policy and these principles take positive steps toward establishing a global, interoperable e-infrastructure based on cost-effective solutions that can help enable actionable and societally beneficial science.



Mountains as sentinels of change

Arctic observing and research for sustainability

Scenarios of biodiversity and ecosystem services

Climate predictability and inter-regional linkages

Food security and land use change

Coastal vulnerability

Freshwater security

Data should be:

- Discoverable through catalogues and search engines.
- Accessible as open data by default, and made available with minimum time delay.
- Understandable in a way that allows researchers—including those outside the discipline of origin—to use them.
- Manageable and protected from loss for future use in sustainable, trustworthy repositories. The Belmont Forum and its members will support and promote this data policy and principles with the intent of making these data principles enforceable over time.



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Sign up for our newsletter and subscribe to new funding opportunities through our connect page: www.belmontforum.org/contact-connect.



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