

How to Get Support from Your Employer Institution

For experts who want to participate in IPBES/IPCC processes. This toolkit explains how to discuss your participation with your employer institution, clarify time and funding implications, and secure the support you need to contribute meaningfully.

Why Participate in IPBES/IPCC?

Getting involved in [Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services \(IPBES\)](#) and in [Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change \(IPCC\)](#) assessments and their work programmes offers a strategic opportunity to develop and advance professional networks and strengthen the policy impact of your research expertise. Both platforms rely on voluntary contributions from experts for their assessments and other parts of their work programme.

- **Contributions to scientific syntheses** – Mobilise and promote your own research and expertise for co-creation of knowledge.
- **Contributions to future research orientation** – Identify knowledge gaps that will set out future research priorities.
- **Contributions to governance and influence** – Knowledge contributions shape international climate and biodiversity governance.
- **Professional growth and networking** – Collaboration with leading experts enhances career prospects.
- **Capacity Building** – Training and networking opportunities expand expertise.
- **Visibility & Recognition** – Experts are credited in the assessment reports and gain high impact publications.

Learn more about IPBES and IPCC processes and how to get involved

ONLINE COURSE

RESPIN self-paced course
[IPBES & IPCC: Bridging Science, Policy & Practice](#)

FACTSHEET

RESPIN Factsheet
[IPBES and IPCC explained: Why and How to Engage as an Expert](#)

OPPORTUNITIES

Receive [IPBES notifications](#) and check the [IPCC website](#) to learn about opportunities for engagement.

Why institutional support matters

Organisations employing experts that are nominated to contribute to IPBES or IPCC play an essential role in enabling their contribution, for instance by allowing them to dedicate working hours to contribute to IPBES or by providing financial support for travelling to meetings. Note that this guide is general and that there can be country-specific differences.

Before applying as an expert for an assessment, **discuss your intention to participate with your employer institution** (e.g., research organisation, university, NGO, etc.). Ensure your institution is aware and understands:

1

That IPBES and IPCC **do not provide remuneration** for experts' work on assessments.

2

The **expected time commitment** throughout the assessment process (see RESPIN Factsheet [IPBES and IPCC explained: Why and How to Engage as an Expert](#)). Engagement is rather low/medium throughout an assessment, but with intense periods of work around pre-defined deadlines.

3

The need to **attend both virtual and international in-person meetings** across different continents at least once a year (even more for Coordinating Lead Authors).

4

The **professional and institutional benefits** that participation can bring.

Voices from experts



There are many reasons for getting engaged in IPBES and IPCC, including expanding your network and getting more research opportunities. It can be a lot of extra time and some governments cover the costs. Unfortunately, the United States has left both IPBES and IPCC at the moment, so funding opportunities have largely disappeared. Universities play a major role as they now act as the primary US observers and through a coalition can nominate US authors.

Pamela McElwee

Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, USA · May 2026

Co-chair for the IPBES Nexus Assessment; Lead Author for the IPBES Global Assessment; Author in the IPBES/IPCC workshop report; Lead Author for the IPCC 6th Assessment Special Report on Climate Change and Land; Lead Author for the IPCC 7th Assessment Report on Mitigation of Climate Change (WG3)



Back then Kyrgyzstan didn't have a focal point who could nominate me to be considered as a fellow for IPBES Global Assessment. So I asked my organisation where I was working back then to support my nomination, and I think because IPBES has this flexibility in terms of who can nominate authors, this was a very enabling condition for me.

Aibek Samakov

University of Central Asia · May 2026

Lead Author in the IPBES Second Global Assessment and IPBES Values Assessment; Fellow in the IPBES Global Assessment

Interview conducted during the BESPIN Regional Triologue for Europe and Central Asia, May 2026

Clarify time commitments and funding implications

Before applying as an author or even signing up as a reviewer, consider whether you can dedicate the necessary time and discuss this with your employer or affiliated institution. Depending on your role, participation can require a significant investment of time.

ROLE	WHAT IT INVOLVES	TYPICAL TIME COMMITMENT
IPBES Coordinating Lead Author (CLA) or Lead Author (LA)	Several in-person lead author meetings, held in different locales, and regular virtual meetings.	Approx. 15–40% of your working time over two to four years
Contributing Author	Specialised input to specific parts of the assessment.	May also be substantial , but for a limited time period
Expert Reviewer	Evaluating IPBES and/or IPCC draft reports for scientific accuracy, balance and completeness during draft review periods.	A couple of days , depending on your expertise, while reviews are open (typically 8 weeks)

Confirm how your participation will be supported financially

Before accepting a nomination, confirm how your participation will be supported financially. Currently, permission from employer institutions and support (financial and non-financial) are two major barriers to the engagement of experts in both processes¹. Securing support from your employer institution will have many advantages, including keeping a manageable workload and increasing the chance of collaborations.

Experts from developed countries

You are expected to cover your own expenses, but financial and non-financial support can be provided by your employer institution (cost of travel, dedicated working time).

Experts from developing countries and economies in transition²

Where governments may not be in a position to provide support, IPBES or IPCC can reimburse the cost of travel to author meetings for CLAs, LAs and Review Editors. It is still important to discuss non-financial support (i.e., a workload compatible with the work in an assessment) with your employer.

Nominating government or organisation

In some cases, the nominating government or organisation offers to cover travel costs upon request. Clarifying these arrangements early helps avoid uncertainty later in the process.

Put the support arrangements in writing

If the nomination is successful, the expert and the employer institution should consider documenting the support arrangements in a simple written plan. This may specify:

- How regular duties will be adjusted or redistributed during intensive periods.
- How the contribution will be recognised in the expert's work plan or performance assessment.
- The expected proportion of working time.
- Travel and funding arrangements.

Institutional permission without adequate workload adjustment may not be sufficient to enable meaningful participation.

¹ Lambertucci, S.A., Frantzeskaki, N., Villasante, S. et al. Supporting researchers' engagement in international science-policy bodies. *Nat Sustain* 8, 982–985 (2025). <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41893-025-01612-x>

² IPBES and IPCC do not maintain a static list but align with the official United Nations regional groups and economic groupings (see Country Classification in the [World Economic Situation and Prospects 2026](#)).

How to secure support from your employer institution

When approaching your employer institution:

- 1 **Explain your intention** to participate in IPBES or IPCC processes.
- 2 **Outline the expected time commitment, travel requirements and funding implications** (see RESPIN Factsheet [IPBES and IPCC explained: Why and How to Engage as an Expert](#)).
- 3 **Highlight the benefits** that participation will bring to both you and your institution (see [Toolkit 2 – Why and How to Support Experts to Participate in IPBES/IPCC Processes](#)).
- 4 **Share [Toolkit 2](#)** as supporting information.
- 5 **Use the RESPIN template letter** ([Toolkit 3 – Letter to Secure Institutional Support for Experts applying as Lead Author or Coordinating Lead Author for IPBES or IPCC](#)) if relevant.
- 6 **Propose an institutional return plan**, explaining how you will share relevant findings and lessons with colleagues, contribute to internal capacity building, connect the institution with international networks, and support the uptake of IPBES/IPCC knowledge in its research, policy or operational activities.

If your institution declines or does not respond

BARRIER

Your employer institution declines to support your participation, or does not respond to your request.

SOLUTION

Consider contacting your **National Focal Point**, who may be able to advocate on your behalf. We also recommend asking them to write you a **letter of request** for your employer institution to support you for the substantial time and travel commitment required if a nomination is successful.

Find your Country's National Focal Point

IPBES National Focal Points →

→ IPCC National Focal Points



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