



COLUMBIA

MAILMAN SCHOOL  
OF PUBLIC HEALTH

**An Invitation to Apply  
for the Position of  
Founding Director, Center for Climate and Health  
Mailman School of Public Health  
Columbia University  
New York, New York**

**THE SEARCH**

The Columbia University Mailman School of Public Health (“the Mailman School”), widely recognized as a worldwide leader of research, education, and practice at the intersection of climate and health, invites nominations, expressions of interest, and applications for the Founding Director of the new schoolwide Center for Climate and Health (“the Center”). The Mailman School has hosted a Climate and Health Program since 2008 and now with generous philanthropic support, the Mailman School is launching a search for the Founding Director of the new Center for Climate and Health, who will hold the inaugural Jonathan and Jeannie Lavine Chair in Climate and Health.

The mission of the new Center will be to foster innovative, cross- and inter-disciplinary translational scholarship on the human health dimensions of climate change, with the goal of advancing society’s capacity to understand, anticipate, prevent, and adapt. Overcoming challenges in the face of emerging risks related to climate change will require new science to identify impacts, adaptation mechanisms, solutions, policy levers and communication solutions to protect human health in the face of climate change.

The successful candidate will be a highly experienced professional and possess a record of academic achievement in environmental health, public health, and/or biomedical, natural, or socio-economic sciences, communication, and/or environmental justice aspects of climate change. The Director will bring a strong grasp of current and emerging challenges in the field, a vision for future Center goals, and an ability to inspire and foster effective collaborations. The Director will have a primary appointment in one of the six departments within the Mailman School of Public Health, as well as an appointment in the Columbia Climate School.

The Columbia University Mailman School of Public Health is an equal opportunity, affirmative action employer. It has retained Isaacson, Miller, a national executive search firm, to help with this recruitment. Confidential inquiries, nominations, and applications may be submitted to Isaacson, Miller, as indicated at the end of this document.

## **COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY AND COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY IRVING MEDICAL CENTER**

Founded in 1754, Columbia University in the City of New York encompasses 16 graduate and professional schools and enrolls over 9,739 undergraduates and 22,063 graduate and professional students. The University extends across three campuses in upper Manhattan in the Morningside Heights neighborhood, Manhattanville, and the Medical Center in Washington Heights. Called “the quintessential great urban university,” like the City of New York, it is diverse in every way: students come from all 50 states, over 90 foreign countries, and over half of the undergraduates are students of color.

Columbia University Irving Medical Center (CUIMC), which includes the Mailman School of Public Health, the Vagelos College of Physicians and Surgeons, the College of Dental Medicine, and the School of Nursing, includes approximately 2,847 full-time faculty and more than 4,825 enrolled students. In addition to providing outstanding health professions education, CUIMC provides world-class patient care and contributes scientific breakthroughs that advance health.

## **THE MAILMAN SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH**

The Mailman School of Public Health is acknowledged for its well-established global leadership in public health research and education, as well as its translation of new knowledge to policy and impact. Established in 1922, it is one of the oldest and most highly respected graduate schools of public health in the nation. Currently, the Mailman School is ranked Number 4 among schools of public health in the country by US News and World Report, and is the fourth largest recipient of National Institutes of Health grants with a total grant portfolio in excess of \$300M annually. The School’s more than 1,619 Master’s and 162 Doctoral students and 250 full-time faculty with primary appointment and over 150 full-time faculty affiliated with the Mailman School are both highly global and locally committed – leading an agenda of research, education, and service to address the critical and complex public health issues affecting New Yorkers, the nation, and the world. The School includes six academic departments ([Biostatistics](#), [Environmental Health Sciences](#), [Epidemiology](#), [Health Policy and Management](#), [Population and Family Health](#), and [Sociomedical Sciences](#)). The new Center for Climate and Health will join three leading, interdisciplinary schoolwide research centers: [ICAP](#) (formerly the International Center for AIDS Care and Treatment), the [Center for Infection and Immunity](#), and the [Robert N. Butler Columbia Aging Center](#).

Under the leadership of Dean Linda Fried, Columbia Mailman has initiated and realized sequential innovations that have truly differentiated Mailman from other elite schools of public health. In 2008, the first program on the health impacts of climate change in a school of public health was implemented, which now embraces over 30 faculty across most disciplines of the school. Further, the Mailman School has led in transforming education, from a total MPH curricular redesign, building an interdisciplinary core curriculum complemented by disciplinary expertise and grounded in a commitment to prevention across the full life course, to new graduate degrees in climate and health, data science and health, and key other emerging areas. From there, the School reinforced an unambiguous commitment to diversity and inclusion by creating an [Office of Diversity, Culture, and Inclusion](#). Led by an academic, the office works

to further an inclusive and equitable campus community committed to the development of public health practice, scholarship, and community that reflects structural competency and cultural humility. As the Mailman School launches its second century, it is committed to a full transition to being an interdisciplinary matrixed organization, and to directing particular focus on maximizing its interdisciplinary work, and thus impact, in climate and health; data science for health; healthy longevity; food and food systems; pandemic prevention, and mental health, among key issues of the 21<sup>st</sup> century - while continuing its work to eliminate health disparities and ensure that all have access to the conditions for good health.

Located in Washington Heights in Northern Manhattan, the Mailman School is a long-standing and well-regarded partner in the local community and throughout New York City. The Mailman School applies public health science to meet its mission of ensuring equal access to the conditions for good health for all, and is dedicated to dismantling the structures that continue to support health disparities and inequities within the United States. Faculty and students partner with the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene and work with diverse populations throughout the City's five boroughs to improve urban health in areas including, but not limited to, life-course approaches to lengthening health span and health in aging, reproductive health and rights, healthy child development, disease prevention, environmental health, food systems and policy, resolving the school to prison pipeline and gun violence, global and local mental health, designing cities and workplaces to promote health and cohesion, pandemic preparedness and response, HIV/AIDS prevention, smoking cessation initiatives, school-based clinics, and programs and research to stem growing asthma and obesity epidemics in urban environments. The long-standing [Columbia Center for Children's Environmental Health](#) uses its deep partnership with the local community to understand their environmental health and justice needs and concerns, focuses its research accordingly, and disseminates findings back to the community to leverage in advocating for policy and practice changes. [The Columbia P30 NIEHS Center for Environmental Health and Justice in Northern Manhattan](#) maintains strong partnerships with communities in Washington Heights, Inwood, and the South Bronx to address challenges and concerns along a variety of health issues.

With a global presence built on vision, excellence, partnerships of equity and impact, the Mailman School addresses today's and tomorrow's health challenges through a broad lens, driving scientific discoveries and innovations to create model public-health solutions that provide lifesaving and health-improving interventions to millions of people. To this end, faculty members pursue research, service, and educational projects in more than 100 countries. Through developing solutions to reduce health disparities, promoting the health of whole populations, working in resource-limited communities to improve reproductive health, shaping healthier food systems for all, and developing models of prevention and care for people in northern Manhattan and internationally, the Mailman School is committed to improving the health of populations in all corners of the world and to its mission statement of "Building a healthy and just world".

## LEADERSHIP

Linda P. Fried, MD, MPH, Dean of Columbia University's Mailman School of Public Health since 2008, is one of the world's foremost experts in the field of healthy longevity and aging. Trained in cardiovascular and chronic disease epidemiology, internal medicine, and geriatrics, she has dedicated her career to the science of healthy aging and creating a health span that matches our increased life expectancy, prevention of frailty, disability, and cardiovascular disease, and how to transition to a world where greater longevity benefits people of all ages.

## THE COLUMBIA CLIMATE SCHOOL

In 2020, Columbia University committed to forming the first Climate School in the world to connect, amplify, and advance new areas of climate inquiry, research, and impact across the University. The climate crisis is an unprecedented challenge and tackling it requires innovative, coordinated, and transdisciplinary approaches. The [Columbia Climate School](#), led by Founding Dean Alex Halliday, organizes the University's strengths in basic disciplines and expands its resources to understand climate, its mitigation, and its impacts on society. By working with communities, businesses, and policymakers, the Climate School will create and inspire new technologies, policies, and approaches to solving the climate crisis.

Spanning over 660 faculty, trainees, and staff, the Climate School leverages more than 70 years of climate scholarship and innovation at the Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory. Four Research to Action Accelerators strategically advance the University's contribution to combating climate change: Coastal Resilience, Global Decarbonization, Disaster Resilience, and Food for Humanity.

The Founding Director of the Center for Climate and Health will have the unique opportunity to collaborate with the Climate School, to lead the health arm of the Climate School, and advance health-related research, training, and solutions in this area. The Director of the Center will have an interdisciplinary appointment in the Climate School, acting as the Director of its health leadership.

## THE CENTER FOR CLIMATE AND HEALTH

The current [Climate and Health Program](#), part of the Mailman School of Public Health since 2008 and the first program of its kind in a school of public health, is in the process of elevating to interdisciplinary research center status, integrating faculty across all Departments into a shared vision and goals. The Founding Director will be responsible for shaping the future of the Center. The overarching goals of the Center are to:

- Catalyze cutting-edge science to address basic questions about how climate change affects health, and solutions to protect and promote human health in the face of climate change.
- Train a new generation of professionals in the public health dimensions of climate change vulnerabilities, impacts, and adaptation strategies.

- Lead translation and communication of science on the health impacts of climate change to support advancing policy, public knowledge, and practice nationally and globally.
- Partner with governments, NGOs, health systems, and public health and clinical practitioners to ensure that the knowledge generated by the Center will inform strategies for reducing harm to vulnerable populations.

### *Research*

With broad and deep expertise across a range of climate and health areas, Mailman School faculty are uniquely positioned to build interdisciplinary teams within the Center that unlock complex new understandings in this important field. The Founding Director will have the leadership skills and scholastic stature to bring together investigators across Columbia as well as recruit top talent to the Center to conduct vital interdisciplinary research that will in turn drive education, advocacy, and community-based work. Dozens of Mailman School faculty conduct critical research on a wide range of areas impacted by climate, including food security, pollution, energy insecurity, heat-related morbidity and mortality, forced migration, infectious disease, children's health, epigenetics, metabolomics, environmental justice, and neurodevelopment. The Center will tap into pockets of important expertise from each department and foster further research collaborations among faculty, staff, and students. The Director will amplify capabilities across the Mailman School to further investigate and recognize the major issues and threats that climate change causes in human health. Current research initiatives that have been developed through the Program can be found [here](#).

### *Education*

The Center will foster innovative, cross-disciplinary scholarship on the human health dimensions of climate change and will coordinate graduate training in climate and health at the master's and doctoral levels within the Mailman School of Public Health. In addition, the Mailman School offers a certificate program in climate and health for master's students to specialize in addressing climate-related issues, translate climate and health science into action, and design public health interventions. The National Institute for Environmental Health Science (NIEHS) established the first formal PhD training program for Climate and Health through a T32 Training Grant in Climate and Health, awarded in 2014 to Columbia University. In 2019, the Climate and Health T32 merged with two other NIEHS T32 grants based at Columbia to create one of the country's largest training grants focused on the intersection of the environment and health. The Center will serve as the intellectual home of the PhD program in Climate and Health, building upon diverse theoretical and methodological frameworks to provide students with the competencies necessary to understand and respond to the complex linkages between climate and human health.

### *Global Consortium on Climate and Health Education*

Launched in early 2017, the [Global Consortium on Climate and Health Education](#) (GCCHE) is a WHO-endorsed initiative of the Paris Climate Accords. Its goal is to promote health professions schools around

the world pledging to educate students on the health impacts of climate change. GCCHE then provides curated curricular contents and training so schools and organizations can succeed in those educational goals. Directed by Cecilia Sorenson, MD, the GCCHE's vision is that all health professionals throughout the world – doctors, nurses, public health practitioners, mental health practitioners, and allied health specialists – will be trained to prevent, reduce, and respond to the health impacts of climate change. The GCCHE harnesses the expertise of more than 300 member institutions and partners to create best practices, educational trainings, and resources that are open-access and for the public good. In fall 2022, GCCHE launched two new initiatives to educate health professionals about the health impacts of climate change and how they can make a difference. Health professionals across over 50 countries have signed up to participate in the [Climate and Health Advocacy Bootcamp](#), jointly offered by the GCCHE and the Medical Society Consortium on Climate and Health. The bootcamp will feature guest experts in communications, storytelling, and advocacy. The GCCHE also recently launched the [Climate Clinic Podcast](#), bringing listeners the latest climate and health headlines every week alongside in-depth discussions with experts and students. The GCCHE will be housed in the Center for Climate and Health and the Founding Director will provide direct oversight over the Consortium's initiatives.

### *Partners*

An interdisciplinary Center at its core, the Center for Climate and Health will partner closely with programs within and beyond the Mailman School of Public Health. The Center will draw from Mailman's robust programs in Epidemiology, Global Public Health, Environmental Health Sciences, Justice and Governance, and numerous others. Furthermore, the Center will benefit from its proximity to global leaders and top international organizations in New York City. The Center will be uniquely positioned to partner with the [Columbia University Irving Medical Center](#), the [NASA Goddard Institute for Space Studies](#), and the [Columbia Climate School](#), including the [Earth Institute](#), the [International Research Institute for Climate and Society](#), and the [Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory](#). These partnerships provide the Center with expanded interdisciplinary expertise as well as the ability to convene faculty, post-doctoral scientists, and graduate students to share information, coordinate research, and develop curricula.

### **POSITION SUMMARY**

Reporting to the Dean and to the Department Chair of their tenure home, the Founding Director of the schoolwide Center for Climate and Health will lead the establishment of the Center. The Director will identify opportunities to facilitate the development of new areas of emphasis, recruit faculty to the Center, lead and facilitate collaborations resulting in cutting-edge science to identify impacts and practice solutions, as well as train a new workforce of professionals who can develop and translate climate and health science into action.

### **KEY OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES**

The Founding Director will set forth a vision for the Center, leveraging its unique strengths, to maximize both the Mailman School's as well as the University's impact in advancing public health locally, nationally

and globally. The successful candidate will be responsible for building the capacity of the Center, identifying new faculty as well as developing additional existing faculty, and establishing new research initiatives. The Director will also be responsible for acting as the health arm for the Columbia University Climate School to advance health-related research, training, and solutions in the area.

***Establish a bold, distinctive, and forward-looking scientific vision for the Center***

The Director will identify and craft a distinct vision for an interdisciplinary Center that draws on the strengths and resources of the Mailman School and its existing Climate and Health Program, and synergizes with the Climate School. The Director will ensure that its programs and initiatives are well integrated into the Center's overall mission and that its focus and program of research stay agile and responsive to changing needs and conditions, new funding opportunities, and emerging environmental challenges. Under the guidance of the new Director, the Center will lead efforts to emphasize and advance applied research opportunities at the intersection between public health and climate, as well as health equity and climate, which is a core institutional priority for the Mailman School and more broadly throughout the University.

***Serve as an ambassador, spokesperson, and fundraiser for the Center***

Communications and public engagement will be critical to the success of the Center for Climate and Health, which will be among the first in the world to harness the intellectual resources of a major university in addressing one of the major public health challenges of this century. Given its interdisciplinary nature, the Center will have the opportunity to garner financial support from a variety of sources including individuals, foundations, corporations, industry and government. The Founding Director will serve as its vocal champion and advocate to these and other potential funders. The Founding Director will work to develop collaborations, research partnerships, and entrepreneurial activity to broaden and amplify the impact of the center both nationally and globally.

***Recruit, develop, and retain excellent faculty***

The Climate and Health Program currently has over 30 faculty. As a builder and an innovator, the Director will work to develop a strategy on how to engage additional faculty across the University to enhance the impact of this interdisciplinary field of study. Furthermore, the Founding Director will be a persuasive recruiter in attracting talented new faculty members to the Center.

***Leverage the full potential of collaborative partnerships across Columbia***

One of the unique aspects of this position will be the opportunity to collaborate with the Columbia University Climate School, leading in advancing health-related research, training, and solutions in this area.

The Director will have opportunities to leverage the strong foundation of collaboration established over the last decade within the Climate and Health Program and the various schools, centers, and institutes across Columbia's campus that promote public health and climate related research. The Director will work closely with Mailman and Columbia leadership to identify additional collaborations where the Center's research and educational priorities intersect and build upon the University's longer-term public health priorities.

### **THE SUCCESSFUL CANDIDATE**

The Director will be a forward-thinking, entrepreneurial, and dynamic leader with significant experience in academia, research, and administration and a compelling vision for the Center.

While no single candidate will likely have all the ideal qualifications, candidates should possess many of the following qualifications and characteristics:

- Proven ability to cultivate and provide visionary strategic leadership, including setting and inspiring an inclusive organizational vision, bringing diverse groups together for a stronger whole while addressing needs and goals of subgroups.
- Ability to attract a strong team, and to partner with other leaders, to guide the implementation of a strategic plan, establish metrics, measure progress, and adapt as necessary as the Center evolves.
- Strong management experience and capabilities.
- Record of fundraising experience and/or an understanding of the responsibility of institutional fundraising, along with a creative understanding of how to access and use various funding sources.
- Capacity to gain credibility with students, faculty, staff, and administrators; the commitment and ability to work collaboratively with other leaders across a university's ecosystem.
- Demonstrated experience in managing and influencing change throughout the organization with effective relationship-building skills across all levels.
- Ability to engage stakeholders at all levels, including university and school leaders, leaders of the Climate School and Medical Center, faculty leaders, students, alumni, Board members, donors, and prospects.
- Record of leading large, complex, results-oriented projects, and handling multiple and evolving priorities simultaneously.
- Record of building and leading diverse and inclusive teams.
- Possess the appropriate scholastic stature to lead an extramurally funded center on Climate and Health

### **TO APPLY**

All inquiries, nominations, and applications, should be directed in confidence to:  
Stephanie Fidel, Partner



Lauren Wilkes, Senior Associate  
Damla Williams, Associate  
Isaacson, Miller

<https://www.imsearch.com/open-searches/columbia-university-mailman-school-public-health/founding-director-climate-and-health>

*The Columbia University Mailman School of Public Health is an equal opportunity, affirmative action employer.*

The salary range for this position is \$325,000-375,000 and is commensurate with experience.