Researchers across the U of I are addressing the climate crisis in their work every day, advancing science, interpretation, and applied knowledge in many domains and disciplines. This new CAS initiative creates a space for reflecting and understanding the ways researchers at our institution are addressing climate change, and simultaneously considers changes and improvements to the climate of the research university for doing this more effectively.

Over the coming years, the initiative will convene conversations among researchers across campus, as well as invited guests, to build a space for what many of us often say we long for and need—a meeting of disciplines and better awareness of each other’s work on this topic. We know that many cross-disciplinary networks already exist on campus and in some places are well-developed. We also know that we have lots of new researchers at U of I who have arrived during the pandemic and there be cause to build, re-build, extend, and renew our connections.

Our kickoff event will feature 10 short talks by researchers from different units, and from across the University. It will be an opportunity to sample the different ways U of I researchers approach the issue. It will allow an opportunity for networking and to imagine new connections and collaborations on this important theme.

This event is part of the new initiative Climate | Change, which examines creative interventions in, interpretations of, and solutions to the climate crisis in which all academic work is embedded. It also pushes us to rethink how the “climate” of our institution currently facilitates and limits those interventions and solutions. The initiative envisions new possibilities and fosters new relationships, bringing scholars, researchers, artists, and knowledge-makers together at the Center for Advanced Study for interdisciplinary conversations and actions.

CAS Resident Associates Jamie Jones (English), Robert Morrissey (History), and Roderick Wilson (East Asian Languages & Cultures; History) oversee this initiative which includes an ongoing public events series and a graduate seminar (CAS 587) in Spring 2024 among other activities.