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**JOBS OF
THE WEEK**

During the 23 July US Democratic presidential debate, candidates responded to video questions from the public submitted via YouTube. In one video, an animated snowman begged the candidates to consider climate change, which it described as the “single most important issue to the snowmen of this country.” Turning to a smaller snowman, it asked the candidates: “What will you do to ensure that my son will live a full and happy life?”

It was part of an innovative debate format that included several minutes of discussion about global warming, energy efficiency and nuclear power. Triggered in part by former presidential candidate Al Gore and his Oscar-winning movie *An Inconvenient Truth*, and by coverage of Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change reports on global warming, these topics are receiving a spike in attention from the US public and policymakers.

What is the implication for research careers? With so much talk of innovative science and policy solutions for global warming, scientists should be looking at a better job market. But beware. As this week’s feature reveals on page 618, it depends on where you look. The most promising jobs, in the short term, seem to be in the private sector, where companies are increasingly looking to hire climate experts. This makes sense — companies are under pressure to develop ‘greener’ practices that reduce carbon-dioxide emissions and foster sustainability. It is partly an attempt to be more responsible, and partly a public-relations ploy to appease customers and stockholders.

US academic institutions recognize the need for more training and the development of new interdisciplinary programmes, but many have not increased the number of tenure-track professorships in the atmospheric sciences. There are mixed prospects in Europe too, where, despite funding from the EU’s Seventh Research Framework Programme, climate-science positions are surging only in niche areas. The YouTube generation has helped promote the issues, but young researchers interested in atmospheric science should be careful when considering their career paths.

Gene Russo, acting editor of *Naturejobs*

CONTACTS

Acting Editor: Gene Russo

European Head Office, London

The Macmillan Building,
4 Crinan Street,
London N1 9XW, UK
Tel: +44 (0) 20 7843 4961
Fax: +44 (0) 20 7843 4996
e-mail: naturejobs@nature.com

European Sales Manager:

Andy Douglas (4975)
e-mail: a.douglas@nature.com
**Business Development
Manager:**
Amelie Pequignot (4974)
e-mail: a.pequignot@nature.com

Natureevents:

Claudia Paulsen Young
(+44 (0) 20 7014 4015)
e-mail: c.paulsenyoung@nature.com

France/Switzerland/Belgium:

Muriel Lestringuez (4994)

Southwest UK/RoW:

Nils Moeller (4953)

Scandinavia/Spain/Portugal/Italy:

Evelina Rubio-Hakansson (4973)

Northeast UK/Ireland:

Matthew Ward (+44 (0) 20 7014 4059)

North Germany/The Netherlands:

Reya Silao (4970)

South Germany/Austria:

Hildi Rowland (+44 (0) 20 7014 4084)

Advertising Production Manager:

Stephen Russell
To send materials use London
address above.
Tel: +44 (0) 20 7843 4816
Fax: +44 (0) 20 7843 4996

e-mail: naturejobs@nature.com

Naturejobs web development:

Tom Hancock

Naturejobs online production:

Jasmine Myer
US Head Office, New York
75 Varick Street, 9th Floor,
New York, NY 10013-1917
Tel: +1 800 989 7718
Fax: +1 800 989 7103
e-mail: naturejobs@natureny.com

US Sales Manager: Peter Bless

Japan Head Office, Tokyo

Chiyoda Building,
2-37 Ichigayatamachi,
Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo 162-0843
Tel: +81 3 3267 8751
Fax: +81 3 3267 8746

Asia-Pacific Sales Manager:

Ayako Watanabe
Tel: +81-3-3267-8765
e-mail: a.watanabe@natureasia.com