



2021 Global
Maritime Forum



Dr. Robin Bell

Robin Bell is a research professor at the Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory at Columbia University and past-president of the American Geophysical Union. Bell's research accomplishments emerge looking holistically at Earth's large ice sheets on our planet with the goal of understanding how they work and how they will change in the future. She is motivated by the goal of enabling coastal communities around the globe to develop scientifically informed strategies to respond to changing sea levels.

Using innovative technologies, Bell has demonstrated that what is beneath the large polar ice sheets influences how ice flows and how stable the ice is and will be in the future. She discovered an active volcano beneath the vulnerable West Antarctic ice sheet, launched the first systematic study of Lake Vostok, a lake the size of New Jersey, located beneath two miles of ice and lead an international expedition to the Gamburtsev Mountains during the International Polar Year. Atop the Antarctic ice sheet the team discovered that water beneath the ice can move uphill. Bell is motivated by the goal of enabling coastal communities around the globe to develop scientifically informed strategies to respond to changing sea levels.

Bell has been part of the research staff at Columbia University's Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory since 1989 and is a member of the Earth Institute faculty. As the Palisades Geophysical Institute Lamont Research Professor, Bell directs research programs in Antarctica and Greenland, and focuses on developing new technologies to monitor our rapidly changing planet. Bell has published over 100 peer reviewed articles and more than 30 other publications and continues to pursue new directions in her field to meet the challenges presented by climate change in the Polar Regions.

Bell is the Past President of the American Geophysical Union, the largest Earth and Space Science community. Through her AGU leadership she has been instrumental to defining bullying and harassment as scientific misconduct prior to the #Metoo movement and fostering programs to combat bias.

Robin Bell received her undergraduate degree in Geology from Middlebury College in Vermont in 1980 and her Ph.D. in Geophysics from Columbia University in 1989. Her leadership has been recognized through: Middlebury College - Alumni Achievement Award, AGU Fellow; Antarctic Ridge named After R.E. Bell; Nyack Boat Club Woman Sailor of the Year; Middlebury College, Honorary Doctorate of Science, Emma Willard School Young Alumnae Award; Stroke Doherty Junior Scientist Award.