

## **Blueprint: The Future of Our Seas Opportunity for Public Engagement Training and Practice**

Human well-being is directly affected by the health of our seas, yet public awareness of many of the challenges facing the marine environment remains low. For decades, researchers have investigated issues such as non-native species, climate change, pollution, overfishing, and ocean acidification, but these topics are only recently gathering interest from outside the academic community.

So how do we make our seas and oceans relevant to us all? By bringing together scientists and creative professionals to share expertise, training and innovation to spark a vibrant, nationwide conversation about the future of our seas.

This year, we are offering the opportunity to work with public engagement professionals, artists and creatives to train and to inspire you, and to help you to generate powerful stories and media friendly conversation prompts from your work. We will work together to develop your skills and confidence to plan and carry out a successful public engagement activity based on a marine science topic of your interest. You will have the opportunity to work with community organisations to co-create exciting activities which will be showcased at public events in Plymouth or Oban.

In a three-day training programme, we will explore the different roles scientists can adopt in engagement and policy-making and discuss the psychology of opinion formation and values. We will also provide hands-on training in developing 'story arcs' for engagement activities and strategies for working with different community organisations to develop outreach activities.

### **What you will get:**

- Three days of expert public engagement training
- Support for preparation of public engagement activities
- An opportunity to deliver your activities at a public event in Plymouth or Oban
- Connections with community organisations interested in collaborating with scientists
- Where appropriate, opportunities to showcase your public engagement work in the media

### **What we expect from you:**

- Attendance to three full days of training either in Plymouth or Oban
- Continued preparation of engagement activities: an estimated 1-3 days in the 6 weeks following the training session and before the outreach event.
- Participation in outreach events in Plymouth or in Oban: 1-2 days, but not full days
- Participation in post-event debriefing sessions: 1-2 afternoons for Skype call / round table
- Optional attendance of the closing 2-day event with the Blueprint team in September 2018

### **How to apply:**

We require that participants commit to attending all days of both the training and public engagement events. If you are not able to commit to these days, please do not apply, so that we can allow someone else to take up the opportunity.

To apply, please send an email to the appropriate contact below containing:

1. Your research area and/or topics of interest.
2. Why you wish to take part in Blueprint: The Future of Our Seas training (200 words max).
3. Confirmation that you are able to attend all training and public engagement event days.

- Confirmation that you have the support to attend these events from your project supervisor or line manager.

For the Plymouth training, please email your application to Jennifer Skinner, [jenski@sahfos.co.uk](mailto:jenski@sahfos.co.uk) by 5pm on **Friday 16th March**.

For Oban, please email your application to Raeanne Miller, [Raeanne.Miller@sams.ac.uk](mailto:Raeanne.Miller@sams.ac.uk), by 5pm on **Friday 1st June**.

### Training and Public Engagement Event Dates

Plymouth	Training	26 - 28 March, 2018 Marine Biological Association, Plymouth
	Public Engagement Event	12-13 May, 2018 Plymouth Pirate Days Weekend, Plymouth
Oban	Training	Week of 11-15 June, exact dates TBD Scottish Association for Marine Science, Oban
	Public Engagement Event	30-31 July, 2018 West Highland Yachting Week, Oban

### Accommodation, Meals, Travel

Meals and refreshments will be provided and we are also able to offer financial support for travel and accommodation to those wishing to attend the course who do not live in the local area.

### Further training details:

During the 3 day training, we will cover the following:

**Day 1:** What to expect when trying to engage the public on the future of our seas? What are the opportunities? What are the challenges? What are the roles of scientists in society? How do people form opinions? How to understand what different audiences value in life and connect with that?

**Day 2:** What makes for successful engagement projects and productive collaborations between scientists and creatives? Hands-on exercises of translating your scientific research into engaging and media-friendly language. Radio interview practice. Opportunity to meet local community organisations, artists and creatives.

**Day 3:** Develop engagement activities around your scientific research. How to bring an engaging 'story arc' into your engagement activity. Preparation of next steps (public engagement delivery).

### About Blueprint - The Future of Our Seas:

Funded by NERC and supported by the National Co-ordinating Centre for Public Engagement (NCCPE), *Blueprint* brings together nine major UK-leading marine research, engagement, advocacy and environmental arts organisations (Marine Biological Association, King's College London, Joint Nature Conservation Committee, Sir Alister Hardy Foundation for Ocean Science, University of Plymouth Marine Institute, University of Edinburgh, Scottish Association of Marine Science, Incredible Oceans and Invisible Dust). By combining scientists, facilitators, creatives and media communicators, we aim to equip researchers with capacity and skills to engage people in a nation-wide conversation on the future of our seas, and through media coverage amplify their work. Find out more [www.futureofourseas.org](http://www.futureofourseas.org) or follow us on Twitter [@futureofourseas](https://twitter.com/futureofourseas)