



Press release: For immediate release

Prestigious national award enables Plymouth scientist to further studies into ocean warming

UKRI Future Leaders Fellowships award announcement

A research scientist at the MBA has been awarded a prestigious Future Leaders Fellowship as part of a new scheme funded by UK Research and Innovation (UKRI).

The scheme aims to establish the careers of world-class research and innovation leaders across UK business and academia, and offers significant funding to address a critically important issue.

Dr Dan Smale, a marine ecologist at the MBA, was awarded an FLF to study the impacts of rapid ocean warming on marine ecosystems globally. The project will involve running innovative warming experiments on a range of organisms, as well as analysing existing datasets and conducting surveys and experiments in different marine habitats.

Dr Smale said, "I'm delighted and honoured to be awarded this prestigious fellowship and look forward to developing a vibrant and diverse research group here at the MBA. More importantly, climate change poses a real and serious threat to the integrity and persistence of many marine species and ecosystems. It is vitally important that we improve our understanding of how rapid warming affects ecological processes and functions, so we can explore options for adaptation to and mitigation against the worst effects of climate change in the coming decades".

Science Minister Chris Skidmore said:

"Delivering on our research and innovation ambitions means putting people first, whether they are just starting out in their career or are leading major projects in academia or industry.

These inspirational Future Leaders Fellows will generate the ideas of the future, helping to shape science and research for the 21st century. But to realise the full potential of these discoveries, their ideas need to be taken out of the lab and turned into real products and services, where they can actually change people's lives for the better.

That's why we are creating 20 new University Enterprise Zones, helping local start-ups to co-locate in universities to build the businesses of the future – all inspired by university research."

UK Research and Innovation Chief Executive, Professor Sir Mark Walport, said:

"The Future Leaders Fellowships will enable the most promising researchers and innovators to become leaders in their fields, working on subjects as diverse as climate change, dementia and quantum computing.



“UKRI is committed to creating modern research and innovation careers and our Future Leaders Fellowships aim to support and retain the most talented people, including those with flexible career paths.

“These 20 University Enterprise Zones funded by Research England will be important focal points for collaboration in business-friendly environments, driving innovation and delivering benefits that will be felt across economies at the local, regional and national scale.”

UKRI have so far announced 119 FLF awardees, which span across traditional research councils and disciplines.

Ends

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The Marine Biological Association (MBA) is a professional body for marine scientists with some 1,600 members world-wide. Since 1884 the MBA has established itself as a leading marine biological research organization contributing to the work of several Nobel Laureates and over 170 Fellows of the Royal Society. In 2013, the MBA was awarded a Royal Charter in recognition of its long and eminent history and its status within the field of marine biology. The award strengthens the Association’s role in promoting marine biology as a discipline and in representing the interests of the marine biological community. The Association is based at its world-class marine research laboratory in Plymouth.

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