

California Ocean Science Trust Sea Grant Fellow Opportunity

Host location

California Ocean Science Trust
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Fellowship supervisor(s)

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Synopsis for a California Ocean Science Trust Sea Grant fellow

[California Ocean Science Trust](#) is a boundary organization. We work across traditional boundaries between government, science, and communities to build trust and understanding in ocean and coastal science. Our organization is novel. We are an independent non-profit, but linked directly to the State in that we were established pursuant to the California Ocean Resources Stewardship Act of 2000. Through our innovative approaches, we empower broad participation in policy and management decisions with useful, reliable science.

Our [projects](#) span the gamut of topics, from ocean acidification and sea-level rise, to advancing science in fisheries management, to monitoring marine protected areas (MPAs). Our work is guided by the priorities of California, which through the California Ocean Protection Council (OPC), is committed to healthy, resilient, and productive ocean and coastal ecosystems. We work closely with the OPC to ensure state actions on ocean and coastal issues are informed by the best available science

Our approach

In taking on new projects, we see ourselves as process experts – employing a variety of tools such as interviews, focus groups, and expert judgment among others – to understand the institutions involved, different ways of looking at the issues, and the range of relevant science. We then actively shape projects to bring different communities together around the science so that participants can see a role for themselves and engage constructively. Furthermore, all of Ocean Science Trust’s projects are interrelated – continually contributing to and drawing from each other while at the same time generating their individual momentum.

Sea Grant fellow opportunities

The Ocean Science Trust Sea Grant fellow will gain diverse educational and career experience. Our fellows engage in a variety of projects, based on a balance between our organizational needs and the fellow’s background and interests. The fellow will work most closely with the senior program manager, but will collaborate to varying degrees with the full [Ocean Science Trust team](#). Ocean Science Trust is a collaborative, team-oriented atmosphere, welcoming the ideas and contributions of all staff to shaping projects and our organization as a whole.

The Sea Grant fellow will be treated as a full member of our team, and have the opportunity to contribute to, and possibly lead, any range of projects. Through these activities, the fellow will have numerous opportunities to interact with high-level scientists, managers, policymakers, and other partners in the NGO and stakeholder communities, as well participate in meetings and workshops.

Some examples of work within some of our key focal areas the fellow could participate in include:

- **Working with the Ocean Protection Council Science Advisory Team (OPC---SAT):** Ocean Science Trust coordinates all activities of the OPC-SAT. They are a team of 24 interdisciplinary scientists from California and beyond that provide scientific and technical advice to the State, and act as a conduit to the broader scientific community on behalf of decision-makers. Through semi-annual OPC-SAT workshops, we work to seed collaborative initiatives between scientists and decision-makers across priority issues in California, including fisheries, climate change, and ocean and coastal health. To learn more, visit their [organizational page on OceanSpaces](#).
- **Promoting Resilience and Adaptive Capacity:** We are strengthening our work to support the State with the science needed to adapt to a changing climate. Integral to this will be the OPC-SAT. We will be engaging the OPC-SAT to develop a process for updating California’s statewide sea-level rise guidance. We will also be working with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) and the Fish and Game Commission to convene an OPC-SAT working group to assess vulnerability of California’s fisheries to climate change. Taking the broad view, through these projects we aim to launch a new science-policy conversation about climate adaptation.
- **Implementing the Findings of the [West Coast Ocean Acidification & Hypoxia Science Panel](#):** Another critical component of our climate change work is advancing decision-makers’ understanding at the state, regional, and federal levels of changing ocean chemistry, and how it is impacting species, industries, ecosystems, and communities. As we look toward the conclusion of the Panel itself, we will be working closely with the OPC to integrate the Panel’s findings into management and policy in California, and ensure they remain at the center of a growing regional and federal dialogue.

- **Leveraging State Investments: Putting the MPAs to Work:** Ocean Science Trust pilots an innovative, sustainable monitoring program that takes the pulse of ocean ecosystems. Through our baseline and long-term monitoring projects, we are leveraging the MPAs not just to understand MPA performance, but also to evaluate management actions and inform future decisions across jurisdictions and mandates, including fisheries and climate change stressors.
- **Building a Shared Vision for Ocean and Coastal Health:** California's ocean and coastal health is the goal that motivates our projects. As we advance the science of climate change on multiple fronts, and assess ecosystem health through MPA monitoring, Ocean Science Trust and other state agencies are recognizing the emerging opportunity to come together and build a science-based vision for ocean and coastal health that helps to clarify what we're collectively working toward.

Past Ocean Science Trust Sea Grant fellows have had the opportunity to participate in a wide range of topics depending on their expertise and interests, and have often assumed leadership roles. We also greatly value professional development at Ocean Science Trust, and will mentor the fellow by drafting and pursuing professional goals, offering assistance in resume building, and ensuring the fellow is provided networking opportunities.