



Applicant Guidelines

Master's Degree Scholarships Call 2023

The *Our Shared Ocean Programme* is funded by the Department of Foreign Affairs through Ireland's development cooperation programme, Irish Aid. The programme is administered and managed by the Marine Institute on behalf of Irish Aid/DFA.

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1. Introduction

As part of the Climate and Oceans focus of [A Better World](#), Ireland’s policy for international development, and the associated national [Strategy for Partnership with Small Island Developing States](#) (SIDS), there is an ambition to build closer partnerships between Ireland and SIDS. The Our Ocean Wealth Summit in 2019 provided an important milestone in this effort. Political leaders and UN Permanent Representatives from almost 30 SIDS travelled to Ireland, and met Irish political leaders and officials. The Summit addressed shared experiences of island nations and discussed the critical challenges faced by many of the SIDS which are on the front line in dealing with climate change impacts and vulnerable, in particular, to sea-level rise and extreme weather events.

Building on the success of the Summit, the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) and the Marine Institute (MI) have established a new programme called ‘Our Shared Ocean’ to support research, knowledge exchange and capacity building in partnership with SIDS. The programme will run from January 2022 to December 2026 with a total investment of €3.8 million funded by the DFA, and administered by the MI.

The *Our Shared Ocean Master’s Scholarships Call 2023* is part of a suite of competitive calls that will address specific ocean, climate and sustainable blue economy related challenges faced by SIDS; support the building of scientific and technical capacity to address such challenges; and promote the exchange of knowledge and expertise between Irish institutions and their counterparts in SIDS to underpin longer-term cooperation. Applicants for funding under the *Our Shared Ocean* Programme should address a topic under one of the three themes as outlined in Table 1 below, and also state how their award will contribute to achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (refer to Annex 1) by 2030 and link to the [UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development](#).

Table 1: Themes

1. Oceans and Climate Action	2. Inclusive and Sustainable Blue Economy	3. Marine Policy and Ocean Governance
<p>Adaptation, mitigation and nature-based solutions, socio-economic dimensions and the preservation of marine and maritime-related culture.</p> <p>Cultural and Social effects of Climate Change.</p> <p>Biosecurity and managing the impacts of invasive species.</p> <p>Healthy oceans.</p> <p>Ocean observations – role to inform climate services.</p>	<p>Renewable energy, aquaculture, seaweed and fisheries.</p> <p>Value chains and biopharmaceutical research.</p> <p>Promoting entrepreneurship.</p> <p>Coastal communities.</p> <p>Tourism.</p> <p>Skills foresight and planning.</p>	<p>Marine spatial planning and marine protected areas.</p> <p>Maritime law.</p> <p>Financing for enforcement and regulation.</p> <p>Digital tools and data management (e.g. environmental).</p> <p>International cooperation.</p>

2. Purpose

The objectives of the *Our Shared Ocean* Programme for Master’s Scholarships are:

- Provide research training opportunities for scientists in oceanography, marine engineering and related marine science, social science and humanities disciplines leading to the acquisition of a Master’s degree;
- Establish and grow research partnerships between Irish institutions and international counterparts, providing research and technical support to assist eligible SIDS in addressing specific ocean and climate related challenges and opportunities.; and
- Support capacity building in eligible SIDS partner countries in the following areas:
 - (i) Ocean observing, seabed mapping, data and informatics, integrated ecosystem assessments;
 - (ii) Integrated maritime policy, ocean governance & sustainable blue economy; and
 - (iii) Climate science and climate services for adaptation, planning and resilience.

3. Duration and Value of Awards

The duration of the successful awards under this call is **up to 24 months** for either taught or research Master’s degree.

The maximum grant-aid per award will be 84,000 Euro for 24 months (42,000 Euro per annum)¹.

The Marine Institute expect to invest circa €0.25 million under this call in 2023.

Successful grantees will receive payment in instalments, up to 30% on signature of the grant-aid agreement and the remaining 70% in annual instalments following submission of the required reports (financial and technical).

4. The Calls

The Department of Foreign Affairs and the Marine Institute hosted online Policy Dialogues facilitated by [Change by Degrees](#) in 2022, which provided an opportunity for SIDS (Caribbean, Pacific, Indian Ocean and Atlantic) to meet with Irish counterparts and discuss current challenges.

Participants welcomed this early engagement as an opportunity to initiate a new type of best practice research partnership which promoted parity of esteem for the island states. A subsequent report², by Change by Degrees, captured the common environmental, oceanic and governance issues identified by the participants. Additional, extensive stakeholder engagement with governments, NGOs, research groups, regional island assemblies and international actors further established local, regional and global opportunities and challenges for the Programme.

¹ There is a national review currently underway of the PhD annual student stipend payment from which a rate increase is expected. The Marine Institute will adjust the total funding accordingly as we pay the same rate for MSc Students.

² Available on request, please email oursharedocean@marine.ie

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Following on from these analyses we are delighted to offer Master Scholarships in 2023 under the following research topics:

- 1) Develop standardised collection, management and sharing of marine data with local and regional applications to the SIDS.
Examples include (but are not limited to):
Establishing transferable survey protocols to improve international data collection OR developing novel technology / platforms to share data in real-time.
- 2) Examine long-term financing costs for enforcement and management of marine protected areas in SIDS including the monetisation of ecosystem services.
- 3) Investigate how SIDS communities can establish and manage ecosystem-based coastal resilience initiatives including coral reef restoration, artificial reefs, mangroves and / or associated sensitive habitats.
- 4) Assess the cultural, social and economic implications of climate change for specific Small Island Developing States.
- 5) Complete a review of existing vulnerability assessments and mapping of key resources (including culture and heritage sources at risk from sea level rise) and ecosystems at risk.
- 6) Examine potential innovative processes and technological developments that can help to grow salt resistant crops, restore mangrove ecosystems and protect aquaculture/fisheries nurseries.
- 7) Examine current marine macro-algae aquaculture practises and provide recommendations to sustainably increase productivity (value and yield).
- 8) Assess the key challenges that exist for the SIDS in utilising International Development Aid including ‘invisible’ social or cultural barriers, knowledge gaps, lack of expertise and inequity.
- 9) Develop strategic communication tools to map, promote and disseminate conservation / environmental initiatives in SIDS.

Important:

- As mentioned, applicants should also state how their award will contribute to achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (refer to Annex 1) by 2030 and link to the [UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development](#).
- Additionally, projects that identify and establish clear capacity building initiatives and demonstrate how research can be applied regionally are welcomed.
- Please note the above topics are neither exhaustive nor exclusive and are only intended to provide guidance. Master’s Scholarship proposals are welcomed on any topic relevant under the three broad themes in Table 1 (refer to page 3).
- The Our Shared Ocean team is available to discuss possible research proposals (oursharedocean@marine.ie).

5. Who can apply?

Applications are invited from eligible legal entities with the appropriate scientific and technical qualifications and research expertise.

The lead applicant must be a member of the full-time academic staff in a recognised Higher Education Institute in Ireland (refer to Annex 3).

The co-applicant must be a member of staff from a Higher Education Institute (HEI) or Research Performing Organisation (RPO) from one of the eligible Small Island Developing States (SIDS) listed in Annex 2.

There can be more than two applicants, but only the lead and co-applicant are required to sign the Grant-Aid Agreement (refer to Annex 4).

6. Proposal Submission

These Applicant Guidelines provide information on general issues such as eligibility, the evaluation and awarding of research grants, research costs and the application process.

Successful applicants will be required to sign a Grant-Aid Agreement in advance of starting any work funded by this Programme. Please refer to Appendix 4 to view the template for this Grant-Aid Agreement.

The applicants (lead and co-applicant) are expected to develop the proposal jointly. Candidates for scholarships should be recruited from an eligible Small Island Developing State (see Section 9). In all cases, the students will be registered for a Master’s degree training in an Irish Higher Education Institution. It is expected that scholars should be primarily located in Ireland but spend a minimum of 25% (6 months) of the scholarship period on placement in the relevant Small Island Developing State.

The *Our Shared Ocean* Programme is committed to adhering to the following principles to ensure that there is equity between research collaborators in SIDS and in Ireland³. These principles include equitable design and implementation of research programmes, shared publication of research results, and a respect for different research cultures.

Elements identified for consideration in the development of research partnerships and proposals between SIDS and Ireland include:

- A shared vision of success.
- Shared values including fairness and respect, the usability of research (action and policy oriented with tangible outputs and societal benefits), readiness to listen, openness to feedback.
- Acknowledgement of any power inequalities and cultural differences with measures to mitigate risks.

³ Policy dialogue report available on request, please email oursharedocean@marine.ie

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- Clarity about roles, ownership and the sharing of benefits.
- Clarity on governance around how decisions are made and how resources are allocated.
- An emphasis on co-creation of research proposals.
- A commitment to fair acknowledgment of all partners in publications and citations.

Applications must be made on the standard application form submitted through the Marine Institute’s online grant management system RIMS, (Research Information Management System). Proposals must be received via RIMS on or before the final closing date specified in the call.

- If you are already registered on RIMS please visit <https://marine.smartsimple.ie/>
- To register as a new user please email rims.support@marine.ie with a password request.

7. Evaluation of Proposals

Only completed applications received on or before the closing date specified in the call for proposals will be evaluated for funding. Each application will be examined initially to ensure that it is complete and that it contains adequate information to properly evaluate the research proposal.

A panel of national/international experts established by the Marine Institute’s Our Shared Ocean team will evaluate eligible proposals. All reasonable measures will be taken to ensure objectivity, fairness, quality and confidentiality.

Eligible proposals will be evaluated using the following criteria:

Criteria	Marks
<p>1. Scientific/scholarly background and technical quality of the application</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Is the relevance of the research proposed (under one of the three specified themes) clearly demonstrated?○ Does the application reflect a clear understanding of the research area?○ Is the application of high scientific/scholarly quality, realistic and well described?○ Is the methodology/approach appropriate to the project?○ Does the application demonstrate best use of facilities?	50%
<p>2. Project Plan and Tasks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Are the research objectives clearly specified, measurable and time specific?○ Do the tasks represent realistic measurable steps in the delivery of the task objectives?○ Does the project plan consider gender equality/equal opportunities within the team, including as part of the student recruitment/selection process?○ Does the project plan include structured training and research modules that the student must complete?○ Are the deliverables clearly stated and achievable within the time frame proposed?○ Are there references to achieving the UN SDGs and explicit links to the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development?	20%

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<p>3. Expected Benefits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Are the expected benefits realistic? ○ Is there a structured plan for the student’s placement in the Small Island Developing State, and is this plan sufficiently detailed? ○ Is the relevance of the benefits to various stakeholder groups clearly identified? ○ Is there a clear commitment to open access research? 	15%
<p>4. Supervision and Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Do the supervisors have the qualifications/expertise to oversee the successful completion of the work proposed in the application? ○ Is there evidence of commitment to the development of the postgraduate student? ○ Does the application represent value for money e.g. additional support from host institution and benefit of facilities available? 	15%
Total	100

In accepting and evaluating research proposals the Marine Institute does not commit funding to any project or guarantee that funds will be made available to research proposals submitted under any call for proposals.

Proposals are ranked in accordance with the scores of the evaluation panel, with the top ranked proposal recommended for funding.

The evaluation and approval process involves the following stages:

- Applications are evaluated by an external panel of expert evaluators. All reasonable measures will be taken to ensure objectivity, fairness, quality and confidentiality.
- The Marine Institute’s Our Shared Ocean team will make a recommendation to the Board of the Institute, based on the ranking of proposals following the conclusion of the external evaluation process and detail the top ranked proposals to be funded.
- Irish Aid/DFA and the Marine Institute approves the scholarship for funding.

An offer of award letter will be issued within two weeks of the Marine Institute’s Board approval of the funding recommendations to successful applicant. The applicant must acknowledge receipt of the offer of award letter a specified date. Unsuccessful applicants will also be informed within two weeks of the Marine Institute’s Board approval of the funding recommendations.

In accepting the award, applicants agree to carry out the work according to the work programme in the project proposal (taking into account modifications arising from the evaluators’ recommendations) and the agreed budget.

The final award of a grant to any applicant is dependent on the availability of funds.

8. Grant Award and Grant-Aid Funding

The grant-aid funding will be 84,000 Euro per award for 24 months, details as follows:

Description	Amount in Euro
Student Stipend (€18,500 per annum – Irish Research Council rate)	37,000 ⁴
College Fees (€17,000 per annum)	34,000
Research Costs - Travel & subsistence, publication costs, consumables and other costs e.g. laptop (€6,500 per annum)	13,000
Total	84,000

College fees are for international students from an eligible SIDS as listed in Annex 2. The balance of a higher fee over €17,000 per annum is the responsibility of the host institution/scholar.

Research costs are for the sole use of the scholar and are payable on a reimbursement basis in annual instalments direct to the host institution at which the scholar is registered.

Any changes to the budget must be approved in advance by the Marine Institute.

There are no overheads payable on the scholarship.

Publication costs are intended to cover publications on which the scholar is listed as first author and are published under Open Access.

Mileage and subsistence rates are reimbursed at the rates for the host institution.

The student can also apply for additional funding under the *Our Shared Ocean* Mobility and Travel Grants call.

9. Student Selection and Location

If successful, the applicants select the scholar following public advertisement and in accordance with normal practice for student recruitment in their institutions. The student recruited should ideally be from an eligible SIDS, as listed in Annex 2 (i.e. national with passport from a Small Island Developing State) having a first-class or upper second-class Bachelors (or the international equivalent) degree.

The student will be located at the host HEI in Ireland for the duration of their scholarship if applicable i.e. for taught programmes, except during the required placement in the relevant SIDS.

If a suitable candidate has not been selected and registered at the host institution within a period of six months from the signing of the Grant-Aid Agreement, the Scholarship award may be cancelled and the advance payment refunded to the Marine Institute.

To satisfy the Irish Revenue Commissioners as to their tax-free status, students must be registered for full-time Master’s degree programmes in host institutions. For this reason, scholars must become registered postgraduate students of their HEI at the earliest opportunity following

⁴ As advised on page 4 the annual student stipend is currently under review.

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their appointment. Students are required to complete the Irish Revenue’s Scholarship Exemption Declaration Form at the time of registration.

In order for scholarships to benefit from scholarship tax exemption under Section 193 of the Taxes Consolidation Act, 1997, the following conditions must apply throughout the duration of the Scholarship:

- The Scholar must be registered as a full time postgraduate student with a recognised HEI (Higher Education Institution).
- The Scholar must sign the [Scholarship Exemption Declaration Form](#) available online from the Irish Revenue. **Note:** a copy of this form will be required as part of the financial verifications carried out by the Marine Institute.
- Total weekly attendance hours (between lectures and research work) must not be less than 40 hours.

Once the student has registered, the supervisor in the Irish HEI must provide a copy of the Scholarship Exemption Declaration Form to the Marine Institute’s Our Shared Ocean team.

The supervisors should also provide the student with a copy of the Grant-Aid Agreement, within one month of the appointment of the scholar. The student may also contact the Marine Institute’s Our Shared Ocean team by email at oursharedocean@marine.ie for any clarifications or further information.

Scholars are not employees of the Marine Institute.

Scholarships will be awarded only to those who are full-time students and who engage full-time on the approved research project during the period of the Scholarship. Scholarship holders may not engage in other paid or unpaid activities.

10. Equality, Open Access and Research Integrity

The Marine Institute promotes equality and has published its [Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy Statement and Action Plan 2021 to 2023](#) on the Institute’s website

The EU principle of gender mainstreaming⁵ applies to the Marine Institutes’ Our Shared Ocean programme. Applicants are encouraged to take action to encourage female leads on research projects and shall be required to report the ratios of males to females working on projects.

The Marine Institute supports funding for high quality and responsible research with the results widely disseminated. The lead applicant and the scholar are required to complete the Epigeum online research integrity training provided through their organisation. The Marine Institute will require applicants to report on completion of the research integrity training in annual progress reports and provide copies of the training certificates.

⁵ <http://eige.europa.eu/gender-mainstreaming>

11. Scholarship Supervision and Reporting

As the primary objective of this scholarship programme is the training and professional development of the student, adequate supervision is essential and this is the responsibility of the supervisors. The supervisors should meet and discuss progress regularly (at least monthly) with the scholar.

The supervisors should ensure that the scholar achieves a level of statistical expertise appropriate to a Master’s programme, including principles of experimental design, statistical analysis and critical evaluation of data. In addition, the supervisor should see that the scholar acquires competence in the following areas:

- Reviewing and analysing literature,
- Technical writing skills,
- Presentation skills, and
- Specific technical skills (e.g. laboratory assays/analyses, time management, health & safety).

The supervisors should ensure that the scholar avails of other training and supports being provided by the HEI e.g. Research Integrity Training provided by Epigeum, etc.

Continued funding will be dependent on the submission of satisfactory progress reports as specified below.

The supervisor in the Irish HEI is required to submit two written progress reports to the Marine Institute’s Our Shared Ocean team, at the end of the first 12 months following the appointment of the scholar and again at the end of month 24. It is the supervisor’s responsibility to ensure that these reports are submitted each year.

The supervisor may submit a confidential evaluation of the scholar’s progress at any time to the Marine Institute’s Our Shared Ocean team should they deem this course of action necessary.

The timely submission of these reports by the supervisor is a condition of holding and renewing the Scholarship. If the Marine Institute’s Our Shared Ocean team receives an unsatisfactory report on a scholar’s progress, or if the reports are not submitted on time, the Scholarship may be terminated.

If the Marine Institute deems that the host institution has provided inadequate supervision of the student, that host institution may be liable for reimbursement to the Marine Institute of the award in whole or in part.

The final report, being the Master’s thesis, should be submitted within six months of completion of the Scholarship (i.e. month 30) by the supervisor to the Marine Institute’s Our Shared Ocean team. The final payment of 10% will be withheld pending receipt of the final report/thesis.

Outputs (conference presentations, papers, etc.) arising from the project must be submitted to the Marine Institute via RIMS. The Marine Institute publishes details of project outputs from Marine Institute funded research projects on their website including the name and organisation of the applicant.

It is the supervisor’s responsibility to ensure that a copy of the scholar’s thesis (final published version) is submitted to the Marine Institute, which can be provided as an electronic link to the host institution’s open access repository.

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All public lectures and/or publications given or issued by the scholar which arise from work supported by the must contain an acknowledgement of the funding received as specified in the Grant-Aid Agreement.

Scholars will be required to present their work at an annual Postgraduate Seminar held in the Marine Institute.

12. Deferral, Extension and Termination

Scholarships may not be deferred other than in exceptional circumstances. Scholars are advised that agreement to defer Scholarships will be entirely at the discretion of the HEI and the Institute, whose decision on the matter will be final and any approved deferral may not be for more than six months.

Should the scholar be unable for any reason (including medical reasons) to pursue their studies in accordance with the Terms and Conditions of the Scholarship, then their supervisors must inform the Marine Institute's Our Shared Ocean team within two weeks of such a situation arising. In such situations, the Marine Institute will have regard to the usual conventions of the scholar's HEI. However, given the basis on which Scholarships are awarded, the Marine Institute reserves the right to withdraw or suspend the Scholarship.

Should the scholar be unable to pursue her studies as a result of maternity leave, she must inform the Marine Institute's Our Shared Ocean team when informing her supervisors at 24 weeks. The Scholarship will be suspended for the period of the maternity leave and will resume when the scholar returns.

The Marine Institute recognises that for personal, professional or other reasons; the scholar may wish to terminate their Scholarship. This should not be done without prior consultation, since the Marine Institute will require evidence of academic progress to the date of departure. In the event of that progress being inadequate, the Marine Institute may pursue the scholar and/or the host institution for reimbursement of amounts expended. Where a scholar leaves the Programme, the grant will not be transferable and will expire.

Allowances may be made for those who have taken approved leave from their degree programmes or who have temporarily withdrawn from them for duly certified medical reasons. These circumstances must be notified to the Marine Institute's Our Shared Ocean team at the time. Payment of the Scholarship will cease during such periods of absence.

The Marine Institute's Our Shared Ocean team must in all cases approve extensions, and extensions in the nature of local payments/"arrangements" are not permitted.

Where extensions are approved by the Marine Institute, the maximum duration of the extension will be for six months.

Scholarships will automatically cease one month after the submission of the scholar's thesis and release of the final payment.

It will be the responsibility of the supervisor to ensure that if the scholar leaves his/her institution, or is not dedicating sufficient time or effort to the project, the Marine Institute's Our Shared Ocean team will be informed immediately.

Where a scholar leaves the Programme, the grant will not be transferable and will expire.

13. *Freedom of Information Act*

Information supplied to the Marine Institute may be disclosed in response to a request under the Freedom of Information Act, 2014. It is the responsibility of the applicant to indicate at the time of making an application which information should not be disclosed and the reasons for non-disclosure. The Marine Institute will consult with applicants about this information before making a decision on any Freedom of Information request.

14. *Data Protection*

Personal information supplied to the Marine Institute will be stored by electronic means (e.g. database) for use only in connection with applications for grant-aid. The provisions of the Data Protection Act 2018 will be fully complied with.

15. *Intellectual Property Rights*

It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure procedures for managing intellectual property are maintained and appropriately applied. This programme provides funds for not-for-profit, public good research. The Marine Institute expects that outputs and findings should be widely disseminated and made publicly available.

However, the Marine Institute acknowledges research outputs with commercial potential may arise during the completion of the work programme. Where the researcher(s) want to restrict access to intellectual property for the purpose of commercialisation of research results, the Marine Institute should be informed in advance. Costs associated with registration of patents, registered designs, registered trademarks etc. are not eligible costs.

Applicants shall be guided by Ireland’s National IP Protocol 2019⁶.

⁶ <https://www.knowledgetransferireland.com/ManagingIP/National-IP-Protocol/>

16. Application Procedure and Close Date

Applications must be submitted using the appropriate Application Form. An electronic copy of this application form can be downloaded from the Marine Institute's online Research Information Management System (RIMS). The application form includes instructions for its completion.

Only applications made on the appropriate application form will be accepted for evaluation and no other materials are required (except where specified to be included as Annexes). The application forms are structured to capture the information required to evaluate proposals and applicants are requested to adhere strictly to the stipulated headings and word limits.

RIMS will validate that all the mandatory fields of the online application have been completed. If they have not, you will be required to complete them before the application can be submitted. Do not leave submission of your application until the last minute, as you may find errors at this stage that need to be corrected.

The closing date for receipt of proposals is:

16:00 Hours on Monday, 12th June 2023 (Irish Standard Time)

All applicants will be issued with an acknowledgement of receipt via email shortly after submission.

- Applicants should complete all sections of the application form. Please convert your application to Adobe PDF when complete, and upload the PDF on RIMS.
- The declaration form must be signed by the applicant and the VP for Research (or other authorised position) in the lead organisation, and upload with the lead and co-applicant's CVs on the online grant management system (RIMS).

Late applications will not be accepted

Annex 1: United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



Annex 2: Eligible Small Island Developing States (SIDS)

American Samoa [#]	Fiji	Puerto Rico [#]
Anguilla [#]	French Polynesia [#]	Samoa
Antigua and Barbuda	Grenada	São Tomé and Príncipe [*]
Aruba [#]	Guadeloupe [#]	Seychelles
Bahamas	Guam [#]	Singapore
Barbados	Guinea-Bissau [*]	Sint Maarten [#]
Belize	Guyana	Solomon Islands [*]
Bermuda [#]	Haiti [*]	St. Kitts and Nevis
British Virgin Islands [#]	Jamaica	St. Lucia
Cabo Verde	Kiribati [*]	St. Vincent and the Grenadines
Cayman Islands [#]	Maldives	Suriname
Commonwealth of Northern Marianas [#]	Marshall Islands	Timor-Leste [*]
Comoros [*]	Martinique [#]	Tonga
Cook Islands [#]	Mauritius	Trinidad and Tobago
Cuba	Montserrat [#]	Turks and Caicos Islands [#]
Curaçao [#]	Nauru	Tuvalu [*]
Dominica	New Caledonia [#]	US Virgin Islands [#]
Dominican Republic	Niue [#]	Vanuatu
Federated States of Micronesia	Palau	
	Papua New Guinea	
[*] LDC	[#] Non-UN Members /Associate Members of the Regional Commissions	

Ref. UN website: <https://www.un.org/ohrls/content/about-small-island-developing-states>

Funding provided by Irish Aid is Official Development Assistance (ODA), and must be channelled primarily to ODA eligible states. However, Our Shared Ocean is conscious that SIDS are impacted by regional environmental challenges that need to be tackled at a regional scale. Therefore, applications will be accepted from non-ODA eligible countries. Applicants should in these cases demonstrate how they address regional issues, how benefits will accrue to ODA eligible states, and how local and regional capacity development can be implemented via the learnings and outcomes of the study. Additionally, applicants from non-ODA eligible countries are encouraged to build in collaboration with researchers or organisations in ODA eligible countries where possible.

Please email oursharedocean@marine.ie for any queries on eligibility.

Annex 3: Irish Higher Education Institutes

- Atlantic Technological University (ATU)
- Dublin City University (DCU)
- Dublin Institute of Advances Studies (DIAS)
- Dundalk Institute of Technology (DKIT)
- Maynooth University (MU)
- Munster Technological University (MTU)
- National University of Ireland, Galway (NUI Galway)
- South East Technological University (SETU)
- Technological University Dublin (TU Dublin)
- Technological University of the Shannon (TUS)
- Trinity College Dublin (TCD)
- University College Cork (UCC)
- University College Dublin (UCD)
- University of Limerick (UL)

The list above includes HEIs who have previously been funded to undertake marine research in Ireland, but this list is not exhaustive and if any applicant is unsure whether they are eligible, then they should clarify with the Marine Institute by sending an email to oursharedocean@marine.ie.

Annex 4: Grant-Aid Agreement Template



Irish Aid

An Roinn Gnóthaí Eachtracha
Department of Foreign Affairs



Foras na Mara
Marine Institute

GRANT-AID AGREEMENT

Our Shared Ocean Programme

Master's Degree Scholarship

REF: **OSO/23/SCH/XXX**

TITLE:

THIS AGREEMENT made the **Day of Month 2023**.

BETWEEN

1. **The Marine Institute** of Rinville, Oranmore, Galway, Ireland (hereinafter referred to as "**the MI**"); and
2. **xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx** of Address ("**the Lead Organisation**"). Irish Lead.
3. **xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx** of Address ("**the Partner Organisation**"). SIDS Partner.

Jointly the Lead and Partner Organisations shall hereinafter be referred to as ("**the Grantees**").

WHEREAS:

- A. The MI (on behalf of Irish Aid/DFA) has agreed, following a competitive and open call for proposals (under the Call for Proposals issued on **DATE**), to Grant-Aid the Grantees to host a Post-Graduate Scholarship Programme (hereinafter referred to as "**the Scholarship**") as defined in the *Our Shared Ocean* Master's Degree Scholarship Applicant Guidelines (a copy of which is set out in Annex 1):

Reference:

Title:

- B. The MI and the Grantees agree that Grant-Aid will be made available to the Grantees on the terms and subject to the conditions set out herein.

1 The Term

- 1.1 This Agreement and the obligations of the Grantees hereunder shall commence on the date of signing hereof and shall continue for a period of 24 months unless sooner terminated pursuant to Clause 14. The expected start date is **x Month 2023**, and completion date is **x Month 2025**.

2 The Scholarship

- 2.1 The Grantees agree to appoint a Scholar to undertake research, investigations, literature reviews and other work necessary to carry out the Scholarship as defined in the Scholarship Applicant Guidelines (Annex 1) and the proposed work-plan as outlined in the Application (Annex 2), subject to the terms and conditions of this Agreement.
- 2.2 In signing this Grant-Aid Agreement, the Grantees, details of which are set out in the Application (Annex 2), agree to carry out and complete the Scholarship subject to the terms and conditions of this Agreement.
- 2.3 The Grantees shall not amend, deviate from or depart from this Agreement except with the written consent of the MI.

3 The Grant-Aid

- 3.1 Subject to the continuing performance by the Grantees of its duties and obligations as

set out in this Agreement, the MI agrees to make available to the Grantees Grant-Aid to a maximum of **€84,000** (hereinafter referred to as "the Grant-Aid⁷").

- 3.2 Payment of the Grant-Aid will be made by the MI to the following schedule and will be contingent on the successful outcome of agreed milestones & deliverables.
 - 3.2.1 An advance payment of 30% of the total Scholarship cost will be made on the full execution of this Agreement;
 - 3.2.2 Payment of up to 40% the submission of the annual reports (scientific/technical and financial) due at Month 12; and
 - 3.2.3 The final payment of 30% on the submission of final reports (financial and scientific/technical) due at Month 24.
- 3.3 In the event that the Scholar does not start within six months of the commencement date of this Agreement, no later than **x Month 2023** the Scholarship may be cancelled and the advance payment must be refunded to the MI.
- 3.4 Interim and final payments are payable on a reimbursement basis and are conditional on the submission and acceptance of satisfactory interim/final technical and financial reports (supported, where relevant, by vouched receipts) and achievement of agreed milestones.
- 3.5 The Grant-Aid shall be applied exclusively in discharging the costs incurred by the Grantees in carrying out the research in accordance with the budget submitted in the Proposal Outlined in the Scholarship Applicant Guidelines.
- 3.6 The Grantees' financial management systems must be open to inspection by the MI, its parent Department and/or the Department of Finance, or their appointees, for the purpose of their financial control and audit procedures.
- 3.7 No amendment to the Budget or in the Grant-Aid shall be permitted except with the written consent of the MI and in accordance with Clause 10 (Modifications to the Scholarship).
- 3.8 No expenditure incurred by or on behalf of the Grantees prior to the date of signing this Agreement shall be funded, recovered or reimbursed from the Grant-Aid unless the MI has given specific written consent to the funding of such expenditure under the Scholarship.
- 3.9 No expenditure incurred by the Grantees after the completion date of this Agreement shall be recovered or reimbursed from the Grant-Aid.
- 3.10 The Grantees acknowledges that as regards payment of the Grant-Aid, time shall not be of the essence and the Grantees shall not hold the MI, its parent Department or any other party providing or processing funds liable for any delay in making payment of the Grant-Aid or any portion thereof.
- 3.11 A scholar is not an employee of the Marine Institute. The Grantees shall be liable for and shall indemnify and keep the Marine Institute indemnified against any and all claims howsoever arising from a claim by any member of staff claiming to be an employee of the Marine Institute relating to or arising out of his/her employment or engagement by the Grantees during the term of this Agreement or as a result of the termination of this Agreement.

⁷ The term 'Grant-Aid' refers to the aggregate of all amounts to be made available by the Marine Institute to the Grantees pursuant to this Agreement, as set out in clause 3.

4 Obligation on the Grantees

The Grantees shall:

- 4.1 Apply the Grant-Aid exclusively to the Scholarship and agree to conduct and complete the research in accordance with this Agreement.
- 4.2 Not abandon or vary the Scholarship without the written consent of the MI.
- 4.3 Ensure that proper books and records (including timesheets) concerning the Scholarship are maintained, including records identifying the expenditure incurred on the Scholarship by the Grantees. Such books and records shall be kept by the Grantees in a safe place for six years after their creation or for three years after the completion of the Scholarship Programme (2029), whichever is the later.
- 4.4 Furnish the MI with scientific/technical and financial reports according to the requirements and schedule set out in Clause 8 herein.
- 4.5 Take out and maintain sufficient employer liability and public liability insurance to cover the Grantees and all its employees and agents involved in the Scholarship and if so requested by the MI, provide evidence of such insurance.
- 4.6 Abide by and comply with any existing and future publicity measures required by the MI and notified in writing by the MI (see Clause 13 Publicity).

5 Selection of the Scholar

- 5.1 The Grantees shall appoint a suitable candidate for the Scholarship (hereinafter referred to as “**the Scholar**”) within six months of the notification of the award and agree a start date for the research with the MI. The MI may wish to be represented or nominate a representative on an interview board or panel for appointment of the candidate.
- 5.2 In the event that the Scholar is not appointed by an agreed date the award may be cancelled and the advance payment must be refunded to the MI.
- 5.3 The Grantees shall comply with standard recruitment practices and guidelines of their institution and the relevant national legislation.
- 5.4 The Grantees shall provide the MI with a copy of the CV of the Scholar, once appointed.
- 5.5 The Grantees shall effect a written agreement with the Scholar detailing the terms of the Scholarship. A copy of this agreement shall be lodged with the MI within one month of the appointment of the Scholar.

6 Supervision

- 6.1 The Scholar will be supervised by the named Supervisor (**Name**) in the **host Higher Education Institute (HEI) in Ireland** for the full duration of the Scholarship.
- 6.2 The host HEI will be expected to:
 - 6.2.1 provide opportunities for the Scholar to participate in appropriate structured courses offered to other Post-Graduate (research) Scholars.
 - 6.2.2 ensure that the Scholar appointed conducts and completes the research to ensure that all deliverables are met;
 - 6.2.3 ensure compliance with technical and financial reporting requirements (Clause 8).

7 Location of the Scholar

- 7.1 The Scholar will be based primarily at the host HEI, except for the agreed period of six months in total based in the host Small Island Developing States (SIDS).
- 7.2 The Scholar shall attend all academic modules at the Grantees' premises as required under their post-graduate research degree programme.
- 7.3 The Grantees shall provide an appropriate level of public liability insurance for the Scholar whilst working in their respective premises.

8 Reporting Requirements

- 8.1 The Grantees shall provide the MI with financial and scientific/technical reports on an annual basis.
- 8.2 Reports are due on the annual anniversary of the appointment of the Scholar.
- 8.3 All project reports shall be submitted electronically to the MI, backed up, where necessary, by paper records (e.g. in the case of financial reports).
- 8.4 *Financial Reporting*
 - 8.4.1 Financial reports and certified costs statements shall be submitted annually in a format to be supplied by the MI.
 - 8.4.2 Interim Grant-Aid payments will be made in the form of reimbursement of eligible costs, following submission of financial reports and cost statements, supported by receipts and supporting documentation.
 - 8.4.3 Eligible costs shall be reimbursed where they are adequately justified by the participant.
 - 8.4.4 Cost statements must be approved by the Grantees' Finance Office (or equivalent) and accompanied by a statement of authentication signed by the Finance Office (or equivalent).
 - 8.4.5 Financial reports may be subject to independent audit by the MI or its appointed representative. This audit can occur at any stage during, or following, the completion of the Scholarship.
 - 8.4.6 The Grantees shall ensure that accurate accounts of expenditure are maintained, along with appropriate documentation to support and justify the costs and time reported in their cost statements. This documentation must be complete (e.g. include reference material such as purchase order numbers, cheque numbers, etc.) and be accurate.
- 8.5 *Scientific/Technical Reporting*
 - 8.5.1 Interim scientific/technical reports shall be furnished on an annual basis (in a format to be supplied by the MI) and will clearly detail, e.g., progress on the project in relation to the work plan, outputs (publications etc.), difficulties arising, actions planned to overcome these difficulties, data management issues, etc.
 - 8.5.2 A Final Progress Report (in a format to be supplied by the MI) shall be furnished to the MI to describe the objectives, methodologies, outcomes, etc. of the research. A short Abstract (max. 700 words) should also be provided. Finally, a Synthesis Report providing an overview of the work may also be required.
 - 8.5.3 The MI may require the Grantees to provide clarifications and/or make changes to the final report. The Grantees shall co-operate in revising or amending the final report prior to its completion and before signing off by the MI.
 - 8.5.4 If deemed suitable the Final Progress Report, or Synthesis Report, may be

published by the MI. The MI will endeavour to make all reports (once released) available on its website.

- 8.6 All reports shall carry an acknowledgement of Grant-Aid Funding in a format to be advised by the MI.
- 8.7 The MI requires Grantees to submit financial and scientific/technical reports via their online grant management system.

9 Deductions from and Withholding of Grant-Aid Payments

- 9.1 In the event that the Grantees fails to comply with any of its obligations pursuant to Clause 4 (Obligation on the Grantees) the MI shall be entitled at any time to demand the repayment of an appropriate proportion of the Grant-Aid already advanced, and/or to reduce by an appropriate amount any future grant payments which may otherwise be due to the Grantees hereunder.

9.2 *Deductions from Grant Payments:*

9.2.1 Where the Grantees fails to comply with financial and technical reporting requirements as outlined hereafter, and detailed in Clause 8 of the Grant-Aid Agreement and its annexes, the MI will make deductions from the Grant-Aid; and

9.2.2 Failure to supply cost statements or certification statements to the MI to enable the certification of expenditure not later than two months after the end of the reporting period for which it is due will result in deductions from the value of stipend claimed. Any queries regarding cost statements from either the MI or its Agent must be resolved within one month. Deductions will be made as follows:

- An initial deduction equivalent to 20% of the value of the stipend claimed for the period will be applied.
- For each additional month that this information remains outstanding, beyond the initial two months, a further deduction equivalent to 10% of the value of the stipend claimed for the period will be applied.

9.2.3 Failure to submit scientific/technical progress reports not later than two months after the end of the reporting period will result in reductions from the value of stipend claimed for that period. A deduction will be made as follows:

- For each month that this information remains outstanding a deduction equivalent to 10% of the value of the stipend claimed for the period will be applied.

9.3 *Withholding of Final Grant Payment:*

9.3.1 An amount of 10% of the MI Grant-Aid will be retained in all cases pending satisfactory completion of the Scholarship. A Scholarship will be deemed to be completed satisfactorily, following the certification of the final cost statement, the submission of satisfactorily completed final reports (signed off by the MI), dataset descriptions (as per Clause 12 Datasets) and any other reasonable documentation as required by the MI (e.g. End of Project Questionnaire). All final documentation must be submitted within two months of the agreed Scholarship completion date. Grantees who do not comply with these requirements may be deemed ineligible to apply for future research grants under this programme.

10 Modifications to the Scholarship

10.1 *Timeframe*

- 10.1.1 Changes to the timing of individual tasks may be made without prior notice to the MI on condition that all changes are clearly outlined and justified in the appropriate section of the next interim report.
- 10.1.2 Changes to the overall timeframe of the Scholarship require prior written approval from the MI. Where changes are approved this will not imply any additional cost. Delays, or potential delays, shall be notified to the MI at the earliest opportunity.

10.2 *Work Programme*

- 10.2.1 Changes to the tasks and work packages (e.g. inclusion/omission of tasks) agreed to in the Grant-Aid Agreement require the prior written consent of the MI. The Grantees should ensure that Scholarship research objectives are not altered or adjusted.

10.3 *Personnel*

- 10.3.1 In the event that the Scholar wishes to leave the host institution for personal or other reasons prior to the completion of the research, the Grantees should notify the MI in advance.
- 10.3.2 Where the Scholar leaves the Programme, the Scholarship is not transferable and will expire.

10.4 *Budget Expenditure:*

- 10.4.1 Overall expenditure claimed may not exceed that outlined in the total approved award.
- 10.4.2 A written request (i.e. budget reallocation form) to amend the budget must be submitted, and approved by, the MI.
- 10.4.3 The MI may request further information on any changes made, or retrospectively refuse or penalise any changes made where the above conditions have been breached.

11 Monitoring

11.1 *Monitoring*

- 11.1.1 The MI retains the right at its sole discretion to appoint a technical monitor for the full term of the Scholarship and, if necessary, from time to time, appoint a replacement monitor. The technical monitor will act as an agent of the MI. The Grantees shall provide the MI or its technical monitor with any information relating to the Scholarship as the MI may request from time to time.
- 11.1.2 From time to time at the request of the MI, the Grantees shall make its representatives available on reasonable prior notice (not to exceed thirty (30) days) to discuss the progress of the Scholarship or any matters relating to the Scholarship with a representative or representatives of the MI and/or its technical monitor.

12 Datasets

- 12.1 The Grantees shall submit a full description of the dataset(s) produced by the Scholarship to the MI in ISO 19115 standard format for inclusion in the MI's data catalogue, in a template to be provided by the MI. Metadata is additional to any formal project reports, and will be made publicly available.
- 12.2 The Grantees shall provide details of how such datasets will be maintained and how

other researchers can access and make use of them⁸.

- 12.3 The Grantees shall address data quality control in each project report.
- 12.4 If requested, the Grantees may be required to provide digital copies of all data to the MI at no additional cost. If requested by the Grantees, datasets will not be made publicly available (other than to the Grantees and MI staff) for a period of 12 months after the publication of the project report, but all datasets may thereafter be made publicly available.

13 Publicity

- 13.1 All publications/presentations/publicity arising from this project shall carry an acknowledgement of the MI funding in a format to be advised in writing by the MI.
- 13.2 The supervisor shall provide the MI with electronic copies of all materials accepted for publication (papers, posters, articles etc.).
- 13.3 The Scholar and/or supervisor may be requested, and shall be available, to provide an overview/update on the Scholarship for publicity and outreach purposes (e.g. newspapers, trade magazines, radio or television, outreach events). All media releases concerning Scholarships should be submitted to the MI for agreement prior to issue.
- 13.4 The MI publishes details of research awards and projects that it funds, and also shares information with Government Departments and other Funding Agencies/Authorities in relation to publically funded research. The Grantees agree that information provided to the aforementioned may include the name of the supervisor as stated under Clause 6 above.

14 Termination

- 14.1 This Agreement shall terminate automatically upon the expiry of the term set out in Clause 1 above, unless previously terminated in accordance with Clause 14.2 below.
- 14.2 The MI may terminate this Grant-Aid Agreement upon written notice to the Grantees at any time in the event that:
 - 14.2.1 The Grantees commits any material breach of this agreement and fails to remedy such breach (if capable of remedy) within thirty (30) days of receiving notice from the MI;
 - 14.2.2 The Grantees fails to carry out the research in accordance with the agreement;
 - 14.2.3 The Grantees provides any information (including in relation to expenditure) or report to the MI or its agents which is incorrect or inaccurate; or
- 14.3 In the event that the MI terminates this agreement, any entitlement of the Grantees to receive any outstanding portion of the Grant shall cease automatically and any such termination shall be without prejudice to the right of the MI to claim a complete or partial refund of the Grant or damages for breach of contract or any of its other rights.
- 14.4 The provisions of Clauses 4 (Obligation on the Grantees) and 19 (Indemnity) shall survive the termination of this Agreement.

⁸ The MI shall furnish Grantees with Guidelines to assist with data management issues.

15 Intellectual Property

- 15.1 Ownership of Background Knowledge/Intellectual Property generated by the Grantees will be retained by the party that generated it. A register of Background IP will be established at the start of the project.
- 15.2 The MI acknowledges that the Grantees will own all rights to Foreground Intellectual Property generated by the Scholarship.
- 15.3 The Grantees are required to take all necessary steps to:
 - 15.3.1 Preserve and protect such Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) including, where appropriate, by applying for patent registration; and
 - 15.3.2 Actively to exploit in a timely fashion any discoveries, inventions or processes resulting from the research, by means of commercial licensing arrangements and otherwise.
 - 15.3.3 Whenever possible, intellectual property shall be managed for the benefit of enterprise development in Ireland.
- 15.4 The Grantees shall be guided by *Inspiring Partnership - The National IP Protocol 2019*⁹.
- 15.5 The ownership interest in Intellectual Property generated from work undertaken as part of the Scholarship may not be transferred or assigned without written agreement of the MI. Such agreement shall not be unreasonably withheld.
- 15.6 Where the Grantees has not moved to exploit or commercialise the intellectual property produced by the Scholarship, the Grantees shall, if requested by the MI, appoint the MI as its exclusive agent to exploit the intellectual property on its behalf or to appoint a mutually acceptable third party IP broker. This situation could be anticipated to occur should exploitation or commercialisation not take place within two years of the first identification of the intellectual property.
- 15.7 The Grantees are responsible for ensuring that the research carried out for the purposes of the Scholarship and the final and interim Scholarship reports and any publications arising from the Scholarship shall not knowingly infringe the IPR, including the copyright, of any third party. Subject to Clause 19.1, the Grantees are required to indemnify and keep indemnified the MI against any claims by any third party that the results of the research carried out for the purposes of the Scholarship and the final progress report for the Scholarship infringe that third party's rights.

16 Freedom of Information

- 16.1 Information supplied to the Marine Institute may be disclosed in response to a request under the Freedom of Information Act, 2014. It is the responsibility of the applicant to indicate at the time of making an application which information should not be disclosed and the reasons for non-disclosure. The Marine Institute will consult with applicants about this information before making a decision on any Freedom of Information request.

17 Data Protection Act

- 17.1 Personal information supplied to the MI in relation to the Scholarship Programme will be stored by electronic means (e.g. database) for use only in connection with the Scholarship Programme. The provisions of the Data Protection Act, 1988 and the Data Protection (Amendment) Act, 2018 will be fully complied with. The MI will publish funding call outcomes including Grantees name and organisation on the Marine Institute

⁹ <https://dbe.gov.ie/en/Publications/Publication-files/Ireland-National-IP-Protocol-2019.pdf>

website.

18 Assignments

18.1 This Agreement or the benefit thereof may not be assigned or sub-contracted by the Grantees in whole or in part without the prior written consent of the MI.

19 Indemnity and Cap on Liability

19.1 The Grantees' total liability arising under or in connection with this Agreement, whether arising in contract, tort (including negligence) or restitution, or for breach of statutory duty or misrepresentation, or otherwise, shall be limited to the amount of Grant-Aid received by the Grantees (see Clause 3).

20 Governing Law and Mediation

20.1 This Agreement shall be governed by Irish law and all disputes arising from this Agreement or the relationship between the parties shall be referred to the Irish Courts, after the parties have aimed to settle their dispute by way of mediation.

21 DPER Circular on Grant Management

21.1 The Grantees will have to adhere to the relevant requirements contained in circular 13/2014 Management of and Accountability for Grants from Exchequer Funds issued by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform on 26th September 2014. These requirements, dealing with reporting of grant expenditure, publication of the award details in the Grantees' financial statements and disposal of assets, are detailed in the Certificate of Assurance that the Grantees will be required to sign and submit with their annual financial reports.

**Post-Graduate Scholarship Award
Grant-Aid Agreement**

Reference:

Title:

IN WITNESS whereof the parties hereto have executed this Agreement the day and year first herein WRITTEN

Signed for and on behalf of the **Marine Institute**
Dr. Paul Connolly, Chief Executive Officer

Date: _____

Read and understood by:
(Name) Supervisor in Lead Organisation

Date: _____

Signed for and on behalf of **Organisation 1 Lead**
Authorised Officer (Dean of Research/Financial Controller or equivalent)

Date: _____

Read and understood by:
(Name) Co-Supervisor in Partner Organisation

Date: _____

Signed for and on behalf of **Organisation 2 Partner**
Authorised Officer (Dean of Research/Financial Controller or equivalent)

Date: _____

**Post-Graduate Scholarship Award
Grant-Aid Agreement**

Annexes

1. *Our Shared Ocean* Programme - Master's Degree Scholarships Applicant Guidelines 2023
2. The Application and Declaration
3. Evaluation Report
4. Publicity Guidelines

**ANNEX 1: *OUR SHARED OCEAN* PROGRAMME - MASTER'S DEGREE
SCHOLARSHIPS APPLICANT GUIDELINES 2023**

ANNEX 2: THE APPLICATION AND DECLARATION

ANNEX 3: EVALUATION REPORT

ANNEX 4: PUBLICITY GUIDELINES

All published materials relating to the project should carry full acknowledgement of Grant-Aid, as follows:

This project is funded by the Department of Foreign Affairs through Ireland's development cooperation programme, Irish Aid, administered and managed by the Marine Institute on behalf of Irish Aid/DFA.

In addition to the above wording, **the two logos** should be displayed:



Advertisements

Advertisements (for Press, Websites and Internal Notice Boards) for posts/research scholarships/scholarships Grant-Aided under the project should carry full acknowledgement of the Grant-Aid as stated above.

Presentations/Posters

Presentations (PowerPoint Slides) and Posters should carry full acknowledgement of the Grant-Aid as stated above. In a Presentation, this acknowledgement should come at the beginning of the presentation (e.g. after the introductory slide).

Publications

Grey Literature

Internal and Grey Literature Reports should carry full acknowledgement, including the logos on the title page.

Scientific/Technical Literature

The following text should be included in the Acknowledgements Section:

"This project is funded by the Department of Foreign Affairs through Ireland's development cooperation programme, Irish Aid, administered and managed by the Marine Institute on behalf of Irish Aid/DFA."