

NEW FELLOWSHIP OPPORTUNITY
Science Integration Fellow, California Ocean Science Trust

Synopsis

The California Ocean Science Trust (OST) is pleased to announce availability of a 1-year Science Integration Fellowship, to be filled by a creative, skilled, outgoing individual with a demonstrated commitment to developing innovative approaches for science integration into ocean resource policy and management. The Fellow will join a team of scientists, technologists and communications experts dedicated to advancing science-informed decisions for healthy and resilient California coasts and oceans.

This Fellowship represents an exciting opportunity to advance citizen science research and practice, and explore the variety of ways in which non-professional forms of science can play a constructive, mutually beneficial role in natural resource management, with a focus on California's statewide network of marine protected areas (MPAs). While MPA monitoring has traditionally been the purview of academic and agency scientists, a tremendous capacity exists among citizens actively engaged in the world around them. The Science Integration Fellow will engage in primary research, build new relationships with citizen science programs and manage complex collaborative efforts with diverse stakeholders to deepen understanding of models of citizen science for adaptive management, and apply and test that knowledge through MPA monitoring in California.

The position, based in Oakland, is a 1-year fixed-term appointment. Review of applications will begin immediately. Salary will be commensurate with experience and is expected to be in the range of \$50,000-\$60,000. Generous benefits including medical, dental and vision insurance are included.

Background

The California Ocean Science Trust (OST, www.calost.org) is a non-profit organization established pursuant to the Coastal Ocean Resources Stewardship Act of 2000 to provide scientific guidance to the state on ocean policy issues. Our mission is to advance a constructive role for science in decision-making by promoting collaboration and mutual understanding among scientists, citizens, managers and policymakers working towards sustained, healthy and productive coastal and ocean ecosystems. We work at the nexus between the state and scientific communities and hold ourselves dually accountable to these partners. By developing new tools and processes and synthesizing and translating scientific knowledge, we help decision-makers realize the full value of public investments in science and help scientists increase their relevance and impact on society.

The largest program within OST is the MPA Monitoring Enterprise (www.monitoringenterprise.org). Within this program we lead the design and implementation of scientifically rigorous and cost-effective monitoring of the network of marine protected areas established in California. We are pioneering scientific and practical assessments of the changing condition of ocean ecosystems and the performance of MPA networks, and developing innovative approaches for sharing monitoring results so that decision-makers and stakeholders have timely, credible information for making sound management decisions. We are developing new tools and approaches to facilitate broad citizen participation in monitoring and to ensure that MPA monitoring data can also support broader ocean management including fisheries, climate adaptation and water quality management.

Fellowship Description

OST fellowships represent a unique opportunity to launch a career in science integration. Fellows experience the inner workings of policy and management and build valuable facilitation, communication, and strategic skills while drawing on and advancing their formal academic training. They engage a diverse landscape of partners including local, state and federal agencies, NGOs representing a wide variety of interests, and an interdisciplinary array of social and natural scientists.

The Science Integration Fellow will join a dynamic and multi-disciplinary team united by a mission to design innovative ways for science to play a constructive role in decision making. The focus of this Science Integration Fellowship is on the role that citizen science can play in our pursuit of that mission. OST has recently launched a collaborative research and planning effort focused on citizen science and monitoring of MPAs in the Central Coast. Working with state partners, a wide array of citizen science programs, and key expert advisors, we aim to develop a shared understanding of the ways in which citizen science programs can contribute to adaptive management of MPAs, and benefit from that activity in the process. A deeper understanding of a range of models by which citizen science can usefully contribute to adaptive management can offer principles and recommendations that may be broadly applicable. This project will directly advance the implementation of long term, rigorous, cost-effective and useful monitoring of MPAs, a challenge that is experienced globally. A variety of current OST initiatives, including our OceanSpaces community platform, can also be leveraged in support of this work and can benefit from this project. Responsibilities of the Science Integration Fellow will include:

- Conduct primary research and literature reviews that advance understanding of the challenge of linking citizen science with adaptive management.
- Lead collaborative development of a framework through which citizen science organizations, OST, and state government agencies can meaningfully and productively engage.
- Develop partnerships with citizen science programs throughout the California Central Coast region.
- Lead workshops with practitioners, scholars, and potential users of citizen science data.
- Contribute blog posts and other communications activities that build community and awareness of the OST citizen science project.

Qualifications

Skills and attributes

- Strategic, analytic, and synthetic abilities. Able to set clear objectives and timelines, establish and follow priorities, analyze and synthesize complex and disparate data (particularly qualitative data), and distill critical information from diverse and detailed sources.
- Strong team player. Able to take on diverse tasks and play both supporting and leading roles as needed to achieve organizational goals.
- Ability to participate in collaborative processes and technical working groups to generate timely products, and to work effectively with diverse public and private partners.
- Outcome-driven with sound project management skills.

- Ability to translate scientific and technical concepts and ideas across disciplines and between technical experts and more general audiences.
- Flexible thinker. Able to help build on existing tools and methods to develop and evaluate new ideas and approaches as needed to attain objectives.
- Ability to prioritize multiple tasks and remain flexible when faced with short or changing timelines.
- Strong interpersonal skills to professionally and effectively represent the organization to all partners, funders, vendors, contractors and other external constituents.
- Authorized to work in the U.S.

Knowledge and experience

- PhD in a relevant discipline or problem area such as science and technology studies, political ecology, science policy, human geography, marine policy, citizen science, education studies, ecology, or environmental science is required.
- Demonstrated success working on issues involving multiple stakeholders, balancing diverse viewpoints, especially in a convening role (as opposed to an advocacy role) is strongly preferred.
- Understanding and prior experience in the application of social science methods, especially qualitative research approaches, is an asset.
- Knowledge of citizen science practice and scholarship is an asset.

Location

The position will be based in the offices of the California Ocean Science Trust, in Oakland, California. Travel within California and possibly elsewhere in the U.S. will be required. Applicants must possess a valid drivers' license permitting driving within the US and may be required to use their own vehicle for travel, reimbursable at the state rate.

Start date

The preferred start date is as soon as possible and review of applications is planned to begin immediately.

Salary

Salary will be commensurate with experience and is expected to be in the range of \$50,000-\$60,000. Generous benefits including medical, dental and vision insurance are included.

Application information

Qualified applicants should apply via email to hr@calost.org, using a subject line of Science Integration Fellow. Please send a current curriculum vitae, and an application letter including: 1) an explanation of your interest in the position and how it fits with your long-term career goals; 2) a brief (1-2 page) statement of your qualifications and experience relative to the qualifications listed above, highlighting your most relevant skills and experience, and; 3) a brief (1 page, maximum) statement of what you believe will be the most challenging aspects of this position.