



Mairéad O'Donovan

Personal Statement

Ocean science & advocacy professional with 5+ years experience working on international projects with UNESCO Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission's Global Ocean Observing System, research institutes & private sector partners. Scientific background (B.Sc.) with experience in project management, development of funding proposals, reports & communication campaigns, event management, stakeholder & partner engagement.

Professional Skills

Science communication

- Creation of science-related content for a range of target audiences, channels & media

Event management

- Programming, promotion, logistics, delivery, reporting, hosting

Project coordination

- Development of project concepts, funding proposals, sponsorship pitches, work plans, budgets & reports

Stakeholder engagement & partnership management

- Collaboration with a variety of stakeholders including scientific research partners, sponsors, suppliers, community stakeholders

Contact Details

Software

Content Management Systems
Monday
ArcGIS
Canva
Microsoft Office/Google Doc suite
Slack
Mailchimp

Work Experience

Programme Support Consultant, Global Ocean Observing System [GOOS], UNESCO Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission | Nov 2021-present

Support Programme steering & executive boards & working groups of three UN Ocean Decade Programmes [Ocean Observing Co-Design, Observing Together and CoastPredict]. Including: preparation of strategy, governance & implementation documentation & presentations; meeting logistics & content; assessment of partner applications & resourcing needs.

Coordinate communication with & between partners including meeting organisation & follow-up communication, initial engagement to encourage active participation & identification of needs & synergies.

Managed workshop logistics, programming, delivery, participant communication & follow-up for the first Ocean Decade 'Co-Design Workshop' attended online by 280 participants from 41 countries [June 2022].

Prepare communications content for international dissemination through newsletter articles, key UN & other events, social media, video, GOOS / UNESCO websites & webinars.

Represented Programmes at various meetings & events including presentations at high-level international Ocean Decade conferences, launch events & Global Ocean Observing System meetings & workshops.

Coordinator, Irish Schools Sustainability Network | Sept 2022-present [part-time]

Support Network steering team in set-up phase - develop funding proposals, organise meetings, create communications materials, strategy documents & operational procedures, manage website.

Communicate with network members & other stakeholders - mail-outs, newsletters, meetings.

Mentor student group for Young Environmentalist Award - mentorship of student environmental awareness campaign that has reached almost 10,000 secondary school students.

Coordinate video project with secondary school students - scripting, direction, editing, promotion.

Work Experience [continued]

Science & Learning Programmes Advisor | The Ocean Race [former Volvo Ocean Race] | Nov 2017 - Nov 2021 | [LINK](#)

Managed citizen science project that delivered data from professional racing boats competing in the 2017-18 Volvo Ocean Race & other events. Involved partnership development & interaction with international science institutes, sailing teams & sponsors; reporting on science activities ([example link](#)); budget & timeline management; operational logistics; coordination of external contractors & suppliers; data management.

Developed funding proposals for EU funding calls & sponsorship pitches.

Managed events including international 'innovation workshops' - in-person, virtual & hybrid. Workshop themes included ocean plastic pollution, science communication, sustainability in the boatbuilding industry.

Created communication & outreach content to report on and publicise science activities to a diversity of audiences including sports fans, sponsors, media. This included briefing professional sailors for international television appearances & other media opportunities.

Created content & coordinated ocean literacy education programmes that have engaged 200 000 students worldwide & one that featured as a case study by the International Olympic Committee. Included coordination of design & translation into 10 languages & delivery of workshops for students & educators | [LINK](#)

Ocean Literacy Education Officer | Leave No Trace Ireland - delivery of Marine Institute's Explorers Education Programme | 2021-22 [part-time]

Delivered ocean literacy programme to Sligo schools including outdoor/classroom/online/blended & project-based formats. Included creation & adaptation of material to suit delivery format.

Facilitated project that won an Ocean Champion School Award for 'Best Outdoor Project' in Ireland.

Delivered week-long teacher CPD training for Waterford Education Centre (July 2022).

'Scoil na Mara' video project | Funded by Community Environment Action Fund, Cork County Council & Local Authority Waters Programme | 2020-21 | [VIDEOS LINK](#)

Created a series of marine biodiversity-themed videos that were featured on RTÉ website & used by local authorities for engagement around Blue Flag beaches, water quality & biodiversity awareness & have over 17,000 views. Managed all project phases including fundraising & reporting, scripting, presenting, editing, promotion, creation of learning resources.

Marine Activities Manager | Sea Synergy Marine Awareness & Activities Centre, Co. Kerry | May - Nov 2018 & previously voluntary part-time 2015 - 2016

Organised & delivered ecotours, beach cleans & outdoor events to engage participants of all ages in ocean literacy, marine biodiversity & ocean plastic pollution activities.

Managed & mentored a team of interns including rostering & training.

Marine Project Contractor & Research Assistant | Self-employed / Irish Whale & Dolphin Group Marine Consultancy | 2014 - 2016 [contract-basis]

Conducted offshore scientific surveys of marine mammals, seabirds & bycatch onboard Irish Marine Institute research ships & fishing boats off Irish south & west coasts.

Monitored inshore construction works to ensure compliance with environmental conditions.

Provided best practice advice to construction personnel/boat crew.

Submitted comprehensive official reports to relevant authorities.

Surveyed / sampled megafauna, fish & benthic sediment grabs during a survey cruise investigating microplastics & trophic interactions.

Work Experience [continued]

Research Assistant | Environmental Research Institute, University College Cork | 2004 - 2005 & 2008 - 2011

Conducted boat, cliff & acoustic surveys of marine mammals including photo identification
Managed & analysed data & GIS & co-authored reports, scientific publications, conference presentations, posters, funding reports
Engaged local community & consulted stakeholders for a marine ecotourism feasibility study.

Windfarm Ecological Scientist | SWS Natural Resources | 2006 - 2008

Managed environmental compliance & liaised with government agencies, fisheries board & local authority during windfarm construction projects.
Liaised with landowners & local communities.
Conducted desk-based research & field surveys, prepared written reports & impact assessments including GIS & visual impact modelling.

Education & Professional Development

University College Cork

2003 | Bachelor of Science Zoology [1.1]

Galway Mayo Institute of Technology

2014 | Multi-disciplinary marine science courses incorporating training aboard Irish research vessels - Applied Marine Biological Sampling postgraduate module [1.1] & 'Science at Sea' CPD course

Ocean Teacher Global Academy online course, 2021 'Educating about the Ocean: Waves of change'

Community-Based Social Marketing Workshop, 2019 by Doug McKenzie-Mohr

Global Ocean Science Education Workshop, 2019 conducted by College of Exploration, Atlantic Ocean Research Alliance & Seabed 2030 Project

Marine Institute Explorers Education training, 2018 & 2021 promoting & advancing ocean literacy

Media / press features

Southern Star [Wildlife feature](#) | June 2021

Eco Eye ['Ireland's Big Blue'](#) | [EE 19 Episode 6](#) | Feb 2021

Echo-Live ['Green Women' feature](#) | July 2020

Interests

Sea swimming - first solo female swimmer to complete 10km Galley Head Swim, Co. Cork & yearly participant

Instructor of surf & SUP

Medallist Irish surfing & swimming inter-varsities

Captain of Cork Women's Lifesaving team at World & Irish National Lifesaving Championships

Voluntary Experience

Cape to Cape Catchments Group, Margaret River, Western Australia | 2012 [part-time]

Conservation work including beach clean-ups & marine litter analysis, track & reserve maintenance, seed collection & dune rehabilitation planting

Large Marine Vertebrates Research Project, Philippines | February / March 2010

Engagement with fishermen's groups & local communities; correspondence with government agencies; preparation of survey equipment; project budget documentation

Referees details on request