

Multi-million pound initiative advances the sustainable management of UK's marine resources



UNIVERSITY OF
PLYMOUTH

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A consortium of universities, industry, government and NGOs are joining forces for a major new initiative aimed at sustainably managing the UK's coasts and seas.

The Centre for Doctoral Training in Sustainable Management of UK Marine Resources (SuMMeR CDT) aims to deliver the next generation of researchers, solution providers and practitioners who will sustainably manage our marine resources.

Supported by £2.2million in funding from the Natural Environment Research Council, part of UK Research and Innovation, the Centre will train almost 50 interdisciplinary PhD students over the next seven years.

Based at locations across England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, they will focus on subjects ranging from marine and social sciences to law, health, education and economics.

Together they will cover existing and emerging topics of local, national and global importance, from enabling biodiversity gains and delivering Net Zero, to enhancing coastal protection and supporting coastal communities, and from pioneering marine technology to fostering a sustainable marine economy.

The SuMMeR CDT is being coordinated by some of the UK's foremost marine universities. Led by the University of Plymouth, its core hosting partners include the universities of Bangor, Heriot-Watt and Exeter, Plymouth Marine Laboratory and the Marine Biological Association.

They will in turn work with collaborative partners at the Zoological Society of London, the UK Centre for Ecology and Hydrology (UKCEH), and the universities of Portsmouth and the West of England.

The initiative is also being supported by more than 45 associate partners from research, industry, government and third sectors, giving students the opportunity to understand current marine resource management issues from multiple perspectives.

The first cohort of 16 students aligned to the SuMMeR CDT will start their courses in the autumn of 2022.

Melanie Austen, Professor of Ocean Society at the University of Plymouth and Director of the SuMMeR CDT, said: *"As global populations continue to rise, a huge range of increasing demands are being placed on our coasts and seas. People are turning more to the ocean as a potential source of food and energy, and to support human health and wellbeing. However, there is a delicate balance to be struck so that we harness the power of the ocean without affecting its contribution to the health of societies and the planet as a whole. That can only be achieved by looking at the issues from all angles, and the students and collaborations involved in the SuMMeR CDT will play a crucial role in driving that approach forward."*

Professor Michel Kaiser, Chief Scientist at Heriot-Watt University and the SuMMeR CDT's Deputy Director, added: *"The strength of our partnership is our close collaboration with industry, Government and non-governmental partners. Students emerging from this PhD programme will have an innate understanding and appreciation of the importance of seeing global challenges from a trans-*

disciplinary perspective. They are the next generation of global problem solvers, we will prepare them to be societal champions of the future.”

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Notes to Editors

For more information about this news release, contact University of Plymouth Media & Communications Officer Alan Williams on 01752 588004 or email alan.williams@plymouth.ac.uk.

About the University of Plymouth

The University of Plymouth is renowned for high quality, internationally-leading education, research and innovation.

With a mission to Advance Knowledge and Transform Lives, Plymouth is a *top 50 research university with clusters of world class research across a wide range of disciplines including marine science and engineering, medicine, cybersecurity and psychology. A three-time winner of the Queen’s Anniversary Prize for Higher and Further Education, most recently in 2020 in respect of its pioneering research on microplastics pollution in the oceans and its impact on the environment and changing behaviour, the University continues to grow in stature and reputation.

It has a strong track record for teaching and learning excellence, and has one of the highest numbers of National Teaching Fellows of any UK university. With over 18,000 students, and a further 7,000 studying for a Plymouth degree at partner institutions in the UK and around the world, and over 140,000 alumni pursuing their chosen careers globally, it has a growing global presence.

<http://www.plymouth.ac.uk>

* Research Fortnight Research Power League Table 2014.

The Natural Environment Research Council (NERC), part of UK Research and Innovation, is the UK’s main agency for funding and managing research, training and knowledge exchange in the environmental sciences. Our work covers the full range of atmospheric, Earth, biological, terrestrial and aquatic science, from the deep oceans to the upper atmosphere and from the poles to the equator. We coordinate some of the world’s most exciting research projects, tackling major environmental issues such as climate change, environmental influences on human health, the genetic make-up of life on Earth, and much more.

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