

PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

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Mission Blue Supports CCMI Women in Ocean Science Programme (WIOS)

Mission Blue strongly supports diversity in science and is especially interested in the Women in Ocean Science programme, launched and funded by the Central Caribbean Marine Institute (CCMI).

Whilst progress has been made over the last 30 years in terms of women's representation within the scientific community, the discipline of ocean science remains hugely unequal in terms of women entering at professional levels vs their progression to key positions within academia. The proportion of women receiving graduate oceanography degrees in the United States rose from 2 percent in the early 1970s to 38 percent in 2001 (NSF, 2004), yet this increase in women in ocean science is not translating to women in upper ranking roles.

By 2014, only 15% were reaching senior faculty positions. The Women in Ocean Science Programme seeks to recognize outstanding early-career and mid-career scholars, who can advance the frontiers of marine science and become world-leading professionals. The programme will include an Advisory Council, to provide leadership and networking opportunities. The WIOS programme will also establish a strong network of professionals (men and women) who are committed to increasing diversity at the highest level of science and will fund research aimed at finding solutions to the greatest challenges facing the ocean and society today.

Legendary oceanographer Dr. Sylvia Earle, President and Chairman of Mission Blue/the Sylvia Earle Alliance, has a message for scientists who are eligible to apply to WIOS:

"Why let guys have all the fun of being ocean scientists? Girls, go for it!

The world's best minds are needed to explore, understand, and care for the ocean. At least half of them are female."

Applications for the WIOS scholars (Post-doctoral level) are open until, the 28th February 2020 and internship positions are open until the 15th March 2020. For a programme overview and details for application please see the CCMI website: <https://reefresearch.org/what-we-do/research/wios/>

About WIOS

WIOS supports the advancement of women in ocean sciences, so participants can become world-leading professionals. By establishing a network and providing mentorship, funding, and field access for a cohort of WIOS coming through the ranks, this programme seeks to push the frontiers of science and to support a generation of leading women ocean scientists who want to work on crucial topics related to coral reefs and tropical ecosystems. The WIOS programme will directly impact researchers and interns who will collectively help find

solutions to some of the greatest questions facing the ocean and our society today. WIOS is made possible by the support from the Brian Melito and Jessica Colker Trust.

WIOS Scholar Details

One WIOS Scholar will be identified by March 2020 (application deadline is 28th February 2020). The WIOS Scholar will have full resources to establish a new field research experiment on the topic of *coral reef/ocean resiliency* over a two-year period, based at the Little Cayman Research Centre. A \$10,000 USD financial fellowship award will be granted to the scholar, per annum. A further \$10,000 USD per annum will be awarded to support a full month of field research activity (diving, boat, transportation, room and board, equipment) at the Little Cayman Research Station as well as participation in a relevant international scientific conference. A field budget must be submitted for approval by 15 April. The scholar will have the ability to select their interns (see below), via a fair and transparent process. This award is open to everyone, there are no geographical restrictions.

WIOS Intern Details

Two residential internships of up to 3-month terms will be awarded by 1st April 2020, and the position will start in June 2020. The application deadline is the 15th March 2020.

Each intern receives a \$500 USD per month stipend, plus full room and board. The scholar will oversee the interns' fieldwork and project deliverables. Two new internships will also be available in Year 2 (2021) to support the scholar. The internships are open to everyone, there are no geographical restrictions.

Release Ends

ABOUT CCM I

CCMI is a not-for-profit organization founded in 1998 to protect the future of coral reefs, envisioning a world with vibrant oceans and healthy coral reef ecosystems. We seek to be the Caribbean's premier marine research institute by delivering cutting edge research, transforming conservation strategy and developing education programmes of excellence - discovering and promoting real solutions to declining ocean health. Our plan is to invigorate key species and understand key ocean processes that drive reef resilience. We support early career scientists who are INNOVATING ways to improve coral reef health. We are TRANSFORMING conservation strategy and work to inspire the CHANGE that is needed to achieve our mission. CCMI are PIONEERS in the region working to reverse the declines of coral reefs.