

## OCEAN KNOWLEDGE-ACTION NETWORK

### Call for Expressions of Interest to host the Ocean Knowledge-Action Network International Project Office

The Ocean Knowledge Action Network is soliciting offers to host its International Project Office from February 2021 onward.

#### Background

[The Ocean Knowledge-Action Network \(KAN\)](#) is an initiative currently sponsored by the Scientific Committee on Oceanic Research (SCOR, [www.scor-int.org/](http://www.scor-int.org/)) of the international Science Council (ISC), Future Earth ([www.futureearth.org/](http://www.futureearth.org/)), World Climate Research Programme (WCRP, <https://www.wcrp-climate.org/>) and the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO (IOC-UNESCO, <http://ioc-unesco.org/>).

Since 2018 the Ocean KAN has operated with a sponsor group and a development team with the vision of achieving a healthy, functional, understood and resilient ocean supported by an inclusive global knowledge network providing information for the benefit of the present and future human communities living by, working on, and relying on the ocean. The mission of the Ocean KAN is to bring multidisciplinary research and other knowledge, evidence, information, and strategy into action for ocean health and prosperity through networked approaches in support of achieving global goals for both human well-being and environmental sustainability.

[For a more detailed presentation check our recent publication.](#)

#### The Ocean KAN Implementation Strategy

The Ocean KAN supports existing transformative actions and help inspire new ones by identifying knowledge gaps, synthesizing multidisciplinary knowledge, generating inter- and transdisciplinary knowledge, and disseminating key learnings that will inspire stakeholders, including decision makers, to protect, maintain, and restore the ocean, seas, coasts and marine resources in a way that supports sustainable development.

The Ocean KAN will focus on challenges and solutions that benefit from international cooperation and will link transdisciplinary research and findings to these questions for multi-sectoral, multi-scalar and action-focused solutions<sup>1</sup>. Engagement and networking of a broad range of researchers and societal partners is central to the work of the Ocean KAN. As such, it will promote transdisciplinary research that can be used by policymakers, businesses, and communities to achieve sustainable interactions of humans with the ocean at large. The Ocean KAN will leverage support and capacity for cross-scale learning to empower researchers, affected communities, and other societal partners worldwide to understand and assess the state of the ocean and coasts and to improve their management and governance.

Specifically, the Ocean KAN will: (1) facilitate enhanced connection and collaboration between international marine entities to facilitate knowledge exchange; (2) support strategic and inclusive stakeholder engagement informed by social science research; (3) support the development of novel communication and networking tools to inform evidence-based decision making in support of sustainable development; and (4) support partners in adopting and implementing management and policy actions that lead to improved ecosystem health and human health, safety, and welfare.

For more detail on the Ocean KAN strategy, please see the [Ocean Knowledge-Action Network Strategic Plan and Guidelines](#).

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<sup>1</sup> For example, including ocean actions in countries' Nationally Determined Contributions to achieve their climate goals under the Paris Agreement; improving ocean observations; taking action on marine debris; working with the shipping industry to reduce marine mammal strikes through implementing slow steaming and/or adjusting shipping lanes; among many others.

## Hosting the Ocean KAN International Project Office

This will be the first International Project Office (IPO) for the Ocean KAN. The Ocean KAN is soliciting offers for a host arrangement from February 2021 onwards, for a period of at least three, and preferably five years.

The Ocean KAN IPO will comprise one full time employee at the senior scientist level (Ocean KAN Executive Officer), and may also include an administrative officer, treasurer, communication officer and/or a research and action officer, whose salary(ies), office space, financial and IT support are provided by the host institute. The Executive Officer will work in close consultation with the Steering Committee and Sponsors, as well as with Ocean KAN working groups, project teams and members.

### Benefits for the host institution

The host institution will benefit from hosting the Ocean KAN in several ways:

- Hosting the Ocean KAN will enhance the host's international profile, through
  - connections with the Ocean KAN international, multi-sectoral community;
  - association with a range of international conferences and processes (in particular the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development);
  - connections to the Ocean KAN working groups and project action teams;
  - access to an active network of early career ocean professionals.
- Hosting the KAN offers the opportunity to engage in joint projects.
- Hosting the KAN provides connections to other sponsor organizations for research, policy, and outreach.

We would seek an active collaboration between the Ocean KAN and professionals at the host institution with the aim of increased international exposure, scientific publications, policy relevance, and ocean solutions.

### Terms of Reference

The primary function of the Ocean KAN IPO is to provide management support to planning and implementation of Ocean KAN activities. The offices ensure both appropriate international coordination between the network of Ocean KAN members as well as collaboration with related international projects and programmes.

The IPO will:

- Assist the Ocean KAN in engaging in the UN Decade
- Serve as a channel of communication between ocean professionals working in different countries on various aspects of global change

The tasks of an IPO are as follows:

- Administer the Ocean KAN on a day-to-day basis, under the long-term guidance of the [Steering Committee \(SC\)](#)
- Provide day-to-day support to the work of the SC
- Secure financial and human resource support for the Ocean KAN activities (meetings, conferences, etc.), ideally also including for occasional meetings with working groups and project teams
- Provide the technical secretariat for meetings of the SC and other meetings convened by the SC within the Ocean KAN framework
- Provide project advocacy and promotion, enlisting wide international participation in the work of the Ocean KAN
- Maintain and develop connections with relevant national and regional projects and with the host institution
- Ensure effective coordination with other components of the sponsors, and other relevant international research programmes

- Disseminate information and research results
- Monitor and assess progress of the Ocean KAN

### **Ocean KAN International Project Office Requirements**

- *Hosting by an institution with a strong connection to interdisciplinary and multi-sectoral ocean research and engagement leading to policy and action in support of the Sustainable Development Goals.* In view of the envisaged synergies between host institution and the IPO, preference will be given to hosts with a focus on the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development.
- *Salaries and benefits for staff:* financial, IT and HR administrative support will be provided by the host institution.
- *Office space, internet, telephone, and other necessary office equipment:* office space with associated computers, telephones and other office equipment should be provided. Ocean KAN IPO staff will have access to the same working conditions and institutional facilities as other staff.
- *Supplies and consumables:* office supplies and consumables are provided by the host.
- *Allowance for travel and similar expenses:* an annual allowance for travel and subsistence expenses will be provided for the Ocean KAN IPO by the host.

### **Invitation: Expression of Interest**

The Ocean KAN welcomes expressions of interest to host the IPO from February 2021 for a period of initially three (or five) years. **Co-financing or partnerships between institutions are permissible.**

Please send a letter of intent to express your interest by **4 October 2020** to [ocean@futureearth.org](mailto:ocean@futureearth.org)

Expressions of interest will be assessed by a selection committee, and competitive bids will be invited to submit a full proposal by **6 November 2020**.

### **Selection**

The Ocean KAN Development Team will establish a selection committee, including members of the current Sponsor Group, with due consideration to avoid any potential conflicts of interest. The selection committee will be chaired by the co-chairs of the Development Team and use the selection criteria set out above.

Expressions of Interest will be assessed with regard to the following criteria:

- Strong ability to actively engage in Ocean KAN activities
- Capabilities to deliver against the role specifications, taking into account:
  - Willingness to host a global research coordination and management entity
  - Experience in managing international research programmes/projects
  - Capacity to enable effective collaboration and international research, policy, and solutions exchange
  - Capacity to enable interaction with a range of stakeholder groups (e.g. academia, funders, governments, international organisations, development groups, business and industry, civil society, and the media)
- Proposed funding strategy
- Ability to enable and support national and international travel of Ocean KAN staff

Full proposals will include:

- A clear vision for a successful Ocean KAN IPO supporting the Ocean KAN mission
- A statement of interest to actively engage in Ocean KAN activities
- A description of capabilities to deliver against the role specifications, considering:
  - Willingness to host a global research coordination and management entity
  - Experience in managing international research programmes/projects
  - Logistic, IT and other support capacity
  - Capacity to enable effective collaboration and international research, policy, and action exchange
  - Experience in hosting and supporting virtual events (meetings, seminars, conferences, networking)
- A detailed funding plan for the envisaged hosting period of at least three years
- A plan outlining the expected staffing of the office, logistical, administrative, and in-kind support

Full proposals will be assessed with regard to completion of the above and the following criteria:

- All full proposals must be backed by a robust funding strategy for at least three, and preferably five years. The funding is expected to support the staff required for the IPO to fulfil its role; office space; IT and furniture; operating and travel expenses (national and international).
- As part of its provision of the Ocean KAN IPO, the host institution is expected to employ, and provide the salary for the Ocean KAN Executive Officer and ideally also for administrative support staff. Recruitment for open positions should be by open, international competition, and the host institution together with the Ocean KAN Steering Committee and Sponsors will be engaged in the recruitment process.
- Experience of the host organization/institution in networking and fostering and managing multidisciplinary research; creating opportunities for multisectoral actor involvement, including decisionmakers at multiple scales, intergovernmental organizations, indigenous communities, citizen scientists, funders, businesses, and civil society.
- Access – is the host institution easy to get to? What are the visa formalities for international visitors to the IPO? There must be no barriers participants of whatever nationality/background.
- Little or no overhead charge by host institution on funding and services provided in-kind as well as on funding received by the IPO (from whatever source).
- Willingness and experience of the host to join the Ocean KAN and IPO in their fundraising efforts
- Provision of a suite of fully equipped offices, access to appropriate meeting facilities, provision of administrative/accounting and communication/outreach support, and access to public transportation.
- Unhindered access to, and transfer of, scientific information/literature through high speed Internet connection; tele/video conference facilities; ability to set up and run an independent website devoted to the Ocean KAN project.
- If required, the ability to attract excellent candidates for the post of Executive Officer, and Deputy Executive Officer through open, international recruitment. Ease with which other qualified staff can be recruited locally or internationally, noting that English is the main language of communication in this international project.
- Administrative and financial management processes and regulations that are conducive to the running of the IPO, providing the necessary financial accountability required by funders, and including the facility to receive and transfer funds from and to institutions and individuals outside of the host country.
- Bidders will have the ability and willingness to develop and establish a memorandum of understanding (MOU) to support the Ocean KAN.

**Proposed timeline**

- Call for Expressions of Interest (10 August 2020)
- Deadline for Expressions of Interest (4 October 2020)
- Assessment of Expressions of Interest (October 2020)
- Deadline for full bids (6 November 2020)
- Negotiations for hosting
- Start of new IPO Operations (February 2021)

**Contact**

Interested parties can contact [ocean@futureearth.org](mailto:ocean@futureearth.org) for any questions related to this call and the Ocean KAN.