

Irish Ocean Literacy Network

Terms of Reference

1. Role

The Irish Ocean Literacy Network (IOLN), hereinafter referred to as “the Network”, is the working name of a new, informal (non-legal entity) network aimed at bringing together relevant institutes, agencies, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), large corporate entities, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), individuals and educators on the island of Ireland who are currently involved in, or would like to become involved in, working towards the vision of the Network.

2. Vision

The vision of the Network is **to achieve an Ocean Literate society across the island of Ireland**. An Ocean Literate society is described as being one in which citizens understand the ocean’s influence on us and vice versa.

“An ocean literate citizen.... understands the importance of the ocean to humankind...can communicate about the ocean in a meaningful way and....is able to make informed and responsible decisions regarding the ocean and its resources.” - H2020 SeaChange project

3. Mission Statement

The mission of the Network is to create, maintain and develop an informal network of ocean literacy champions to facilitate collaboration, sharing and coordination of marine outreach and ocean literacy projects across the island of Ireland.

4. Goals

The goals of the Network are:

- a) To create a sustainable network of ocean literacy champions on the island of Ireland
- b) To facilitate collaboration, sharing and coordination of marine outreach and ocean literacy projects on the island of Ireland
- c) To maintain a facilitator who will act as a central contact and dissemination point for the network
- d) To generate ideas to support initiatives and collaboration opportunities between network members
- e) To support and grow the membership of the network by creating a vibrant and active network of members
- f) To provide a platform for engagement with relevant stakeholders

5. Term

The Terms of Reference will be put forward for ratification at the first meeting of the Network on October 6th, 2016 and, subject to acceptance, will be effective until April 2017 when it will be reviewed for continued suitability by the Steering Committee.

6. Membership, fees and commitments

- i. Membership of the Network is free and open to any public or private entity on the island of Ireland which has an interest in working towards the vision of the Network.
- ii. Application for membership should be made by returning the completed membership application form (Appendix I) to the Network Coordinator.
- iii. The Steering Committee reserves the right to review any application within 10 working days of receipt. In this event, the Steering Committee will discuss the proposed application. The Steering Committee will then vote on whether to accept the application. In the event that the application is not accepted by the Steering Committee, the applicant will be informed of the decision in writing with the reasons for rejection being clearly outlined.

- iv. Uncontended applications will be informed of their successful application within 15 working days of submission.
- v. Any member of the Network may put themselves forward for Steering Committee.

Network member responsibilities:

- i. To champion the vision of the Network
- ii. To actively promote the Network
- iii. To commit to update the Network, via the Network coordinator, on marine outreach and ocean literacy projects of the member, or others of which the member is aware
- iv. To endeavour to attend or send representatives to Network meetings

7. Roles and responsibilities (Governance)

a. Steering Committee

A Steering Committee has been established to support the Network coordinator. The first Steering Committee for the Network was agreed at the meeting of April 22nd, 2016 and consists of the following members:

- Public / Government / Agency representative: Lisa Fitzpatrick, Marine Institute, RoI
- NGO representative: Karin Dubsy, Coastwatch, RoI
- University / Education representative 1: Sophie Power / Aoife Deane, MaREI, UCC, RoI
- University / Education representative 2: Jane Wall / Fiona Regan, Water Institute, DCU, RoI
- Media representative: Marcus Wall, Earth Horizon, RoI
- Visitor Attraction representative: Pat O'Suilleabhain, SEALIFE, Bray, RoI
- Other representative: David Murphy, Aqua TT, RoI

- Micheál O'Conneide from the EPA has agreed to be an observer to the Steering Committee work, but not an official member.

Steering Committee member responsibilities:

- i. To attend a minimum of 75% of Steering Committee meetings. Failure to meet this attendance rate may result in that committee member being asked to step down. This is at the discretion of the remaining committee members. Proxies may attend in place of Steering Committee members but the meeting must contain a minimum of 60% of Steering Committee members to pass any actions which may require a vote.
- ii. To respond to any Network related business within 5 working days
- iii. To give clear guidance to the Network coordinator on request
- iv. Guide the development of the Network in working towards the vision
- v. Communicate with the Network and members in a timely fashion
- vi. Recruit further members for the Network
- vii. To advocate on behalf of the Network

b. Network Coordinator

The day to day operation of the Network will be carried out by the Network coordinator. The first Network coordinator is Susan Heaney of Blue Inspiration Ltd. This Network coordinator was appointed by the Marine Institute through a competitive application process.

Network Coordinator responsibilities:

- i. To draft a mission statement for the Network and circulate to Steering Committee members for review and feedback

- ii. To draft Terms of Reference for the Network and circulate to Steering Committee members for review and feedback.
- iii. To work, in conjunction with the Steering Committee, to define goals and deliverables for the Network in order to measure impact and effectiveness of the Network. The deliverables should be assigned to defined categories (eg. Formal and informal education) and should reflect the interest of the majority of membership.
- iv. To coordinate and chair the first meeting of the Network
- v. To draft and circulate the agenda and invitation to the first meeting to all existing Network members
- vi. To coordinate and chair subsequent Network meetings
- vii. To contribute to Steering Committee meetings
- viii. To act as a central contact and dissemination point for the Network to facilitate coordination, sharing and collaboration on marine outreach and ocean literacy projects on the island of Ireland
- ix. To generate ideas and support initiatives and opportunities for collaboration among Network members and to promote and grow the membership of the Network
- x. To communicate all relevant information to Network members in a timely fashion
- xi. To scope out and manage the expectations of the Network members

8. Meetings

Face to face meetings will be held every 6 months with all members eligible to attend. Members wishing to add an item to the agenda should forward details to the Network coordinator no later than 10 working days prior to the meeting date.

The first face to face meeting of the Network will be on October 6th, 2016 at 3pm in Titanic Belfast, Belfast, Northern Ireland, BT3 9EP. Subsequent meetings will be organised in the Dublin area to be as accessible to all members as possible.

The Steering Committee will meet on a face to face basis in advance of full member meetings (every 6 months) and will hold additional quarterly virtual meetings to discuss the operation of the Network. Further meetings may be organised as necessary. Steering Committee meetings will require a majority participation in order to go ahead.

.End.