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Explorer-in-Training Program

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Explorer-in-Training Ingrid Martinson participates in mapping data collection in the control room aboard NOAA Ship *Okeanos Explorer*. Image courtesy of NOAA Ocean Exploration, Seascapes Alaska. [Download largest version \(jpg, 6.05 MB\)](#).

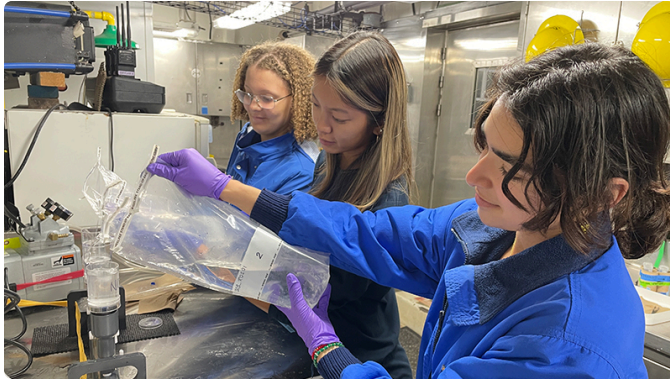
[NOAA Ocean Exploration](#) is dedicated to exploring the unknown ocean, unlocking its potential through scientific discovery, technological advancements, and data delivery. By working closely with partners across public, private, and academic sectors, we are filling gaps in our basic understanding of the marine environment. This allows us, collectively, to protect ocean health, sustainably manage our marine resources, accelerate our national economy, better understand our changing environment, and enhance appreciation of the importance of the ocean in our everyday lives.

With priority placed on exploration of deep waters and the waters of the U.S. Exclusive Economic Zone, NOAA Ocean Exploration applies the latest tools and technologies to explore previously unknown areas of the ocean, making discoveries of scientific, economic, and cultural value. By

making collected data publicly available in increasingly innovative and accessible ways, we provide a unique and centralized national resource of critical ocean information. And, through live exploration video, online resources, training and educational opportunities, and public events, we share the excitement of ocean exploration with people around the world and inspire and engage the next generation of ocean scientists, engineers, and leaders.

A core part of the NOAA Ocean Exploration mission is to train the next generation of ocean explorers through internship and fellowship opportunities for students and early career professionals. One of the many ways that the office addresses this goal is through the Explorer-in-Training program, administered in partnership with the [Cooperative Program for the Advancement of Earth System Science \(CPAESS\)](#) , a community program of the [University Corporation for Atmospheric Research \(UCAR\)](#) , to coordinate opportunities to gain valuable experience in ocean exploration.

About the Explorer-in-Training Program



Explorers-in-Training Rebecca Ruiz, Rose Leeger, and Ranna Zahabi filter water samples for [environmental DNA](#) collection during the [Seascope Alaska 2: Aleutians Deepwater Mapping](#) expedition. *Image courtesy of NOAA Ocean Exploration, Seascope Alaska.*
[↓ Download largest version \(jpg, 5.09 MB\).](#)



Explorers-in-Training Kathrin Bayer and Daryin Medley process mapping data in the control room aboard NOAA Ship *Okeanos Explorer*. *Image courtesy of Caitlin Bailey, GFOE, [2022 Caribbean Mapping](#).*
[↓ Download largest version \(jpg, 4.02 MB\).](#)

Since 2009, NOAA Ocean Exploration and UCAR CPAESS have hosted over [170 explorers-in-training](#). These interns gain valuable, interdisciplinary experience in ocean exploration while collaborating on office projects and expeditions. The program equips participants with skills to meet the current and future demands of the ocean exploration workforce by providing meaningful experiential learning opportunities that support NOAA Ocean Exploration's mission, inspire ocean literacy for the next generation, and enable students to increase their competitiveness for educational and career opportunities in ocean-related fields.

The program features two internship options: (a) 10-week, summertime opportunities and (b) expedition-based opportunities. The 10-week internships provide students an opportunity to develop their skills and knowledge through long-term projects supported by NOAA Ocean Exploration mentors. The 2 to 4-week expedition-based internships involve participation in NOAA Ocean Exploration-supported expeditions aboard NOAA Ship *Okeanos Explorer* supporting seafloor mapping operations, giving participants the chance to contribute to mission efforts while

gaining tangible skills that can benefit their future pursuits. Information about internship themes available during 2025 are listed in the [Internship Themes](#) section below.

In addition to working on projects and supporting expedition objectives, explorers-in-training participate in professional development workshops, conferences, and networking opportunities designed to teach key skills and expose students to career paths in ocean exploration. As part of the program requirements, explorers-in-training also produce a report detailing their project outcomes, and present their findings to office staff and collaborators at a virtual NOAA Ocean Exploration Internship Symposium at the end of their internship period. Together, the components of this internship program give students an opportunity to learn, explore, and contribute to the office in meaningful ways while sharpening their professional skills to ready them for their future pursuits in the ocean workforce.

Internship Themes

The Explorer-in-Training program is offering multiple 10-week, summer internships and expedition-based opportunities for 2025, designed to reflect NOAA Ocean Exploration's diverse and interdisciplinary expertise, work products, and services, and provide training in critical ocean exploration mission fields. Learn more about the available opportunities by reading through the options below. **Applicants may only apply to one internship theme per program year.**

Midwater ROV Annotations

Emerging Technologies in the Deep Sea: Environmental DNA

Maritime Heritage Communications

Science and Native Hawaiian Cultural Communications

Ocean Mapping


How to Apply

Eligibility

- U.S. citizenship
- Must be at least 18 years of age by internship or expedition start date
- Students (undergraduate or graduate) who are currently enrolled in or recently graduated (within one year of graduation date) from an accredited academic institution
- Degree, major, or intent to major in a field relevant to NOAA Ocean Exploration's mission, including but not limited to: STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) fields, social sciences, communications, education, business operations/administration, and ocean policy/management
- Willingness to learn and follow office policies and/or shipboard standard operating procedures
- Clearance of a Special Agreement Check (SAC) upon acceptance into the program
- Valid U.S. Passport (2-4 week, expedition-based seafloor mapping internship only)

Visit the [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQs\)](#) section to learn more about the Explorer-in-Training program eligibility requirements, including U.S. citizenship, who qualifies as “recently graduated”, and Special Agreement Check (SAC clearances).

Application Requirements

- Submit online application form, including the following:
- Current resume or curriculum vitae (CV). (Maximum 2 pages).
 - Note: If you have never created a resume or CV before, see resources and guidance from the [Purdue Online Writing Lab](#) .
- Required short answer response to each of the following prompts:
 1. Tell us where you are in your academic/professional path, and how ocean exploration fits with your long-term career and educational goals. (Maximum 250 words)
 2. The Explorer-in-Training program is intended to be an experiential learning opportunity. For the internship theme you are applying for, what specifically interests you in the opportunity and what skills and/or experiences are you hoping to gain? (Maximum 250 words)
 3. Describe a situation when you had to overcome a challenge or step outside of your comfort zone. How did you get through it and what did you learn? (Maximum 250 words)
 4. *Question #4 has been removed from the application requirements. Applicants are no longer required to answer Question #4 in future submissions. Any responses to Question #4 already included in previously submitted applications will not be considered during the review process.*
 5. The following question is required for applicants to the 10-week Science and Native Hawaiian Cultural Communications internship only: Explain how you hope that your passion for and familiarity with Native Hawaiian culture, knowledge, and language will connect to local and indigenous communities through this role. (Maximum 250 words)
- Contact information for at least one professional reference (professor, advisor, work supervisor, mentor, etc.).
 - Note: Professional references should be able to speak to your character and your professional and/or academic background. Professional references will only be contacted for finalists during the final phase of candidate selection (i.e., those invited to interview with the

selection team). Please ask your references for permission to include their information before final submission of your application. If necessary, references will be contacted by email and asked to complete a short questionnaire.

[Apply Here](#)

Important Dates

Explorer-in-Training Applications Open	November 15, 2024
Explorer-in-Training 2025: Informational Webinar	Wednesday, January 15, 2025, 4:00-5:00 PM Eastern Standard Time (EST)
Application Deadline for 10-Week Internships	January 31, 2025
Application Deadline for Ocean Mapping Internship	January 31, 2025 (Priority Deadline) Applications for the Ocean Mapping internship will be accepted on a rolling basis until all slots are filled for the 2025 field season.
Finalists Invited for Virtual Interviews	By March 31, 2025
Acceptance Letters Sent	April 1 - April 15, 2025


All Applicants Notified	May 1, 2025
10-Week Summer Internship Period	Late-May to early-August (dates are flexible)
Expedition Schedule	<p>Tentative* expedition dates, days at sea (DAS), and port locations for 2025:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• EX2506: July 22 - August 11 (21 DAS), Palau - Guam• EX2507: August 20 - September 4 (14 DAS), Guam - Guam• EX2508: September 12 - October 8 (27 DAS), Guam - Palau• EX2601: October 16 - November 20 (28 DAS), Guam - Honolulu

**Note: The expedition schedule is subject to change due to a variety of factors including federal budget appropriations, weather, mechanical issues, and other logistical challenges. Final expedition dates and locations, as well as any changes in the expedition schedule, will be communicated with selected applicants.*

Informational Webinar

- **Webinar:** 2025 Explorer-in-Training Program: Informational Webinar
- **Date:** Wednesday, January 15, 2025
- **Time:** 4:00-5:00 PM Eastern Standard Time (EST)

NOAA Ocean Exploration hosted a 60-minute virtual webinar for interested applicants. The session provided an overview of the Explorer-in-Training program, including available internship themes for 2025, eligibility and application requirements, important dates, and available

resources. Registration for this event is now closed. The webinar recording is available below, along with [responses to applicant questions](#)  submitted during the webinar and through the registration form.

Additional Info & Resources

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

I am not a U.S. citizen. Am I eligible to apply?
What is a Special Agreement Check (SAC) clearance?
What qualifies as “recently graduated”?
How can I make my application stand out?
How do I know that my application was received?
When will I hear back about my application status?
When will my references be contacted?
What are the dates for the 10-week internships?
What are the dates and locations for the 2-4 week ocean mapping expeditions?
I’m interested in the expedition-based, seafloor mapping internship but am still in school. How will I know if I can join the expeditions?
How will I know which expedition I would go on?

Why do seafloor mapping interns need a valid U.S. passport to participate in an expedition?

Can I conduct my own original research project through this internship?

Will I receive feedback on my application?

NOAA Ocean Exploration Resources

- [NOAA Ocean Exploration Website](#)
- [NOAA Ocean Exploration Expeditions](#)
- [About NOAA Ship *Okeanos Explorer*](#)
- [Beyond the Blue: Illuminating the Pacific](#)
- [Previous Student Explorers](#)
- [Exploration Tools](#)
- [Ocean Exploration Facts](#)

Other Student Opportunities

Explore a range of internships, fellowships, volunteer positions, and student opportunities available through NOAA, other federal agencies, and NOAA Ocean Exploration partner institutions offering a range of eligibility requirements, application and internship timelines, and focus areas — find the one that best fits with your interests and goals!

- [NOAA Student Opportunities Database](#)

- [Finding a Career at NOAA](#)
- [NOAA Ocean Exploration Student Opportunities](#)
- [UCAR CPAESS Internships & Postdoctoral Fellowships](#) ↗
- [USAJobs Federal Internship Portal](#)
- [Ocean Exploration Trust \(OET\) Science & Engineering Internship](#) ↗
- [University-National Oceanographic Laboratory System \(UNOLS\) Early Career Programs](#) ↗
- [Science, Technology, Engineering And Math Student Experiences Aboard Ships \(STEMSEAS\)](#) ↗
- [Schmidt Ocean Institute Student Opportunities](#) ↗
- [OceanX Young Explorers Program](#) ↗

Contact

If you have any questions, need guidance, or experience technical difficulties, please contact the NOAA Ocean Exploration Internship Program Coordinator at oer.internships@noaa.gov.



Explorers-in-Training (from left to right) Abby Norstad, Nathanael Mathis, and Gina Knox on the back deck of NOAA Ship *Okeanos Explorer*. Read about their experience as ocean mapping explorers-in-training in [this expedition feature/Q&A](#). Image courtesy of NOAA Ocean Exploration, *Beyond the Blue: Johnston Atoll Mapping*. [Download largest version \(jpg, 3.54 MB\)](#).

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