

## Grant Guidelines

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### The Ocean Conservation Trust

The Ocean Conservation Trust (OCT) is a global charity that exists to protect and restore the Ocean.

Our work, which began in 1998, is centred around people and positive action through pro-Ocean behaviour and habitat restoration.

Our vision is a healthy Ocean, that sustains all life.

### What is a healthy Ocean?

The Ocean covers two-thirds of our planet and is the world's largest ecosystem. Ocean waters are home to nearly a million known species and support the global population's economic, social and environmental needs.

A healthy Ocean is one that is thriving. A thriving Ocean is beautifully biodiverse, with each creature and plant fulfilling a unique place in the ecosystem, ensuring resilience and strength. A thriving Ocean is able to store carbon and maintain the water and nitrogen cycles and other essential natural processes that shape our planet. Livelihoods and economies are built on a thriving Ocean, providing us with products and services that are integral to our daily lives. A thriving Ocean is one that provides a sustainable daily catch for local people and that can contribute to feeding a growing global population. Many countries rely on a thriving Ocean to provide opportunities for recreation and tourism. The Ocean is inextricably interconnected with the cultural and emotional wellbeing of humans.

A thriving Ocean gives us a sense of place and an opportunity to be invigorated or rested, both physically and mentally. Our vision is a healthy Ocean, that continues to sustain all life.

### Conservation at the Ocean Conservation Trust

There are numerous threats to the Ocean, most of which are caused by humans and our behaviour. The Ocean Conservation Trust brings people and the environment together to work on solutions to the issues that the Ocean faces. Many of these threats are driven by smaller, everyday actions.

Through three key programmes the OCT seeks to '**connect us with our Ocean**'. Connecting us with our Ocean means putting individuals and communities at the heart of marine environmental issues, linking people with their seas, supporting a meaningful connection to it, and motivating them to take action.

Large-scale conservation of the natural environment can result from the actions of motivated and well-informed individuals and collectives.

### Our core programmes:



#### Ocean Habitats Blue Meadows

Blue Meadows is our seagrass protection, regeneration and restoration programme. We work alongside local communities to locate and then protect seagrass meadows. We are currently working in Plymouth, Falmouth, the Solent and Torbay with an ambition to restore at least 10% of UK seagrass (700 hectares) and develop a blueprint for seagrass restoration at scale. We are trialling different planting and growing techniques in our large-scale seagrass nursery.



**Ocean Experiences**  
**National Marine Aquarium**

The OCT owns and operates the Nation's Aquarium, which sits on the shores of Plymouth Sound National Marine Park, receiving 280,000 visitors a year. Our team use the NMA as a base for our world class schools programme, as well as outreach into communities, taking people snorkelling, running our 'Ocean Squad' club for young people and taking the Ocean into hospitals and care homes via VR headsets.



**Ocean Advocacy**  
**Think Ocean**

Raising the voice of the Ocean at all levels of society, helping people to understand how we are all connected to the Ocean and what they can do to help.

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## Our Grants Programme

We give small grants to organisations or individuals that operate projects to further the goals and programmes of the Ocean Conservation Trust.

Projects can be research-based, educational or community events – the unifying theme is that the project must contribute towards a healthy Ocean.

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## Guidelines for Ocean Conservation Trust Grants

**There are five pages to this document, please ensure you have read all of the information before you begin the application process.**

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### Who can apply?

- Applications will be accepted from all sectors of society; there are no restrictions upon age range or abilities of groups carrying out the projects.
- Student projects that are mainly requesting funds for travel or equipment will not be funded, however.
- There is no geographical restriction on where projects might be located, or where applications might come from. Consideration will be given to projects operating at every scale, but priority will be given to local and national initiatives.
- Applications will be accepted from other charities, organizations, schools, colleges and individuals.
- Each funding call will be themed, projects that link with the theme are more likely to be selected by the Trustees.

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### Application Process:

- To apply for a grant, you must complete the application form that you can download from the Ocean Conservation Trust website – [www.oceanconservationtrust.org/applications-for-ocean-grants](http://www.oceanconservationtrust.org/applications-for-ocean-grants).

- Send your completed form to the grant administrator at the Ocean Conservation Trust (details can be found on the application form).
  - Closing dates are detailed on the Ocean Conservation Trust website. We require all applications by midnight on the advertised date.
  - Your application form will be screened by the Ocean Conservation Trust for compliance with the application criteria, before passing to the OCT Science & Education Advisory Group for consideration.
  - Notification of decision will be issued within two weeks of each Board meeting. We cannot provide feedback for unsuccessful applications.
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### **Application Criteria**

Before applying, please ensure your project meets the following application criteria and that you are able to build capacity within your project to ensure you can fulfil the essential project deliverables.

Only applications made using the Ocean Conservation Trust Grant Application Form will be considered.

Please include all your information within the application form. Supplementary documents will not be considered.

- All projects should support at least one of the core programmes of the OCT and ultimately the vision of the OCT which is a healthy, thriving Ocean for us all.
- The maximum grant awarded per application will be £5000.
- We will only support projects which follow best practice environmental and animal welfare requirements.
- Projects should be discrete, with a commencement and finish date, although they may form an individual module of a larger scheme.
- Projects should have stated aims which can be measured as outputs.
- Applications should be accompanied by references from competent persons capable of commenting upon the specific project in a professional capacity.
- We would encourage applicants to use our grants in conjunction with other sources of finance, although where additional funding is necessary for the project to proceed, funding will be made available upon proof of match funding being in place.
- Projects which demonstrate a novel approach are more likely to attract support.
- We will not fund applications which are primarily for training courses, expeditions or travel.
- Clear evaluation methods must be shown, ideally to provide feedback in relation to the generic learning outcomes (GLO) of the Ocean Conservation Trust. **See evaluation section on page 4/5 for details of GLO's.**

**Projects that can evidence the following indicators are more likely to be selected:**

- Collaborative projects that work alongside local communities, empowering them to be part of the solution, whatever the issue.
  - Focus on the protection and restoration of seagrass habitats, and the key species found within them.
  - Use a systems approach, to ensure that ecosystems and socioeconomic systems are connected.
  - Carefully monitor habitat protection and restoration schemes from both biodiversity and social perspectives.
  - Evidence that results will be used to improve what you do.
  - Champion Ocean biodiversity, and our inextricable interconnection with the Ocean.
  - Encourage a physical and emotional connection with the Ocean.
  - Use natural resources sustainably.
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**Essential Project Deliverables:**

Please provide details on your application form of how of how you plan to achieve these essentials.

**Results dissemination:**

The Ocean Conservation Trust will support worthwhile projects that can be shared with others, as such there is an expectation that dissemination of results will occur – how will your project do this?

**End of project deliverable:**

A short video will be provided to the OCT, showcasing the work that has been completed, highlighting impacts from the project and the role OCT played. This video will be used on OCT communication channels to promote the grants programme.

**Communications:**

Pictures and videos are expected to be shared with the OCT, so they can be shared on social media. At least one blog post will be required in the duration of the grant which can be shared on the OCT website.

**Branding:**

Ocean Conservation Trust logo must be used throughout the project and the OCT Communications team should be kept aware of press contact.

**Evaluation:**

You must evaluate the outcome of your project to enable you to demonstrate how your project achieved at least three of the following Ocean Conservation Trust's **generic learning outcomes**. You must also include details of how the finances have been spent.

- **Broaden knowledge of the marine environment.**
- **Develop new skills i.e. formulation scientific questions, observation skills, communication skills.**

- **Appreciate the value of the marine environment and develop or enhance respect and empathy for its inhabitants.**
  - **Have fun and be inspired by the project.**
  - **Take action to reduce negative impacts and increase positive impacts on the environment.**
  - **Motivation to explore the marine environment further.**
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### **Frequently asked questions:**

#### **Who can act as a referee? Do they have to be external to the project partners?**

We only take up references occasionally; however we would like to have the name and contact details of 2 people from different organisations who can vouch for your project in an independent and constructive way, if required.

#### **Do all partners have to sign the application?**

Ideally, we require all partners' signatures, but will accept only 1 if necessary.

#### **Can you provide comment/guidance before an application is submitted?**

We do not provide comment before a completed application is submitted, as all necessary guidance can be found within the grant guidelines.

#### **Can a charity partner with a business?**

Yes. We accept and encourage partnerships in all forms.

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### **What happens if you are successful in gaining an Ocean Conservation Trust Grant?**

1. Once you have successfully gained a grant you will be contacted by our grant administrator who will organise payment of the first instalment (usually half of the total). The final payment will be made on submission and approval of the final report.
2. You must provide the essential project deliverables throughout and at the end of the project.
3. You must provide photographic AND video evidence of your project to the Ocean Conservation Trust.
4. We will provide you with official Ocean Conservation Trust logos to use on all promotional material.
5. Successful applicants may be asked to assist in the production of public communication of their project through the public audience of the Ocean Conservation Trust or elsewhere as appropriate.
6. The National Marine Aquarium may wish to use extracts and results of the project within its exhibitions, programmes or publicity.