



Frequently Asked Questions

Early Career Ocean Professionals Program – 2026

Q: Who can apply?

A: Applications are open to citizens or residents of any [Indian Ocean Rim Association \(IORA\) Member State](#) who are within six years of graduating from their highest degree (Bachelor, Master, or PhD). Applicants who are not citizens or residents of an IORA Member State are not eligible. Successful applicants may be required to provide documentation confirming citizenship or residency status. Final participation is subject to endorsement from the relevant IORA National Focal Point.

Q: How do I apply?

A: Applications must be submitted through the application form available via the Blue Carbon Hub [website](#).

Q: What should I include in my application?

A: Applicants are required to submit a current CV, letter of support from their host institution and an outline of their proposed project.

Q: Where should collaborators be based?

A: Collaborators may be based anywhere; however, collaborators from IORA Member States are strongly preferred. Successful applicants will be expected to work closely with the Blue Carbon Hub and their nominated collaborators throughout the program. Applicants are likely to find collaborators based at the IOMRC will be most useful during the program

Our goal is to foster professional networks that strengthen regional knowledge and capacity. Applicants who would like assistance identifying a suitable collaborator are encouraged to send a brief project summary (one paragraph) to Mat Vanderklift (mat.vanderklift@uwa.edu.au) prior to submitting their application.

Q: Where will I stay during the program?

A: Accommodation will be arranged by the Blue Carbon Hub, with every effort made to secure housing close to the office in Perth, Australia. Participants should note that accommodation proximity cannot always be guaranteed. Successful applicants will generally share housing with other program participants (which might include both men and women), with private bedrooms and shared common spaces such as kitchens and bathrooms. We cannot provide separate or individual accommodation.

Q: Are my expenses covered?

A: The program covers accommodation during the placement period. A weekly per-diem will be paid to each participant to cover meals, transport and other out-of-pocket expenses throughout the program.

Q: When should my project be completed?

A: Projects are intended to be completed within the placement period while working with the Blue Carbon Hub. Projects should be focused, achievable, and designed to deliver meaningful outcomes within this timeframe.

Q: What topics can my project focus on?

A: Projects may include original research, reviews, policy briefs, or other innovative activities relevant to these themes. Applicants unsure whether their project idea is within scope are encouraged to contact Mat Vanderklift (mat.vanderklift@uwa.edu.au) with a summary prior to submission.

Q: Can my project involve fieldwork or in situ data collection?

A: Fieldwork may be included where appropriate; however, funding for field activities is limited. Most project activities are expected to take place at the Blue Carbon Hub offices in Perth. Any anticipated fieldwork should be clearly outlined in the application, including expected costs. Modest fieldwork-related expenses may be considered, depending on available funding.

Q: Can I send samples to Australia for analysis?

A: Yes, this may be possible; however, applicants must indicate this intention within their application. If successful, further guidance regarding the samples, required quantities, and customs requirements will be provided. Due to potential customs processing delays, early preparation is strongly recommended.

Q: How do I obtain a visa for Australia?

A: Successful applicants will be responsible for applying for the appropriate visa, with eligible visa application costs reimbursed by the Blue Carbon Hub. Information about visas can be found at <https://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/visas/getting-a-visa/visa-finder>.

Q: Where can I get more information about the endorsement process?

A: For endorsement-related enquiries, applicants should contact the IORA Secretariat: Shamimtaz Sadally – shamimtaz.sadally@iora.int.

Q: Who do I contact for further questions?

A: For additional information about the ECOP Program or application process, applicants should contact the Blue Carbon Hub directly – hello@bluecarbonhub.org.