**Recommendations of the BIO Oceans Association (OA) Working Group on Review/Renewal**

December 11, 2015

| **Recommendation** | **Comments/Examples** |
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| Mandate | |
| Revise the BIO OA mandate (proposed changes in italics):   * 1. To provide a forum for continued contact between present and former employees of *or people formerly associated with* the Bedford Institute of Oceanography (BIO), (DFO, NRCAN, *EC*, *CCG and DND*) and DFO retirees *or other alumni* outside DFO.   2. To promote preservation of the history of BIO and artifacts associated with oceanographic research.   3. To *lead,* support *or participate in regional projects or initiatives aimed at* increasing public understanding of the oceans and oceans science *through active community outreach*. | These changes are more inclusive of other potential members of the BIO OA, as per section 7.1 of the by-laws. Many temporary staff want to maintain their ties to BIO after their short term job terminates. The BIO OA can do that and continue to offer volunteer options if they remain in the vicinity.  The current terminology of “support” suggests another organization is leading. The change reflects that the OA will need to lead their own initiatives, or partner with other regional organizations, including but not limited to BIO, whose interests also align with science education and outreach initiatives. |
| Review and revise Memorandum of Association (MOA) | As the principle document guiding the OA mandate, the BIO OA MOA should be updated first and foremost. It should identify the need for an Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with BIO for the purpose of conducting its business on the premises (e.g., use of meeting rooms, storage and agreements vis-à-vis archived equipment, selected activities such as the Beluga award), to provide assurances of BIO OA activities conforming with federal government values and ethics, and to identify areas of collaboration between the two organizations. Note that it is the responsibility of the BIO OA Executive Committee to ensure that activities are aligned with federal government value and ethics.  Need to capture ocean science education and outreach objective in the MOA, and to define it broadly enough to allow joint initiatives and partnerships that go beyond working with BIO. |
| MOU between BIO OA and DFO and NRCan | |
| Reconsider the role the OA plays as an advisory service given this role doesn’t clearly fall under the mandate.  Remove “hosting social events for BIO OA and BIO staff” from the roles.  Consider revising/relaxing language about the “Values and Ethics Code for the Public Sector”.  Modify language re outreach role | Perhaps some of these events should fall to an eventual staff association. The social events could still continue informally/organically without stating this as an OA role.  Is this still the relevant code and would all members who are not currently public servants have access to the code? Note that the BIO OA Working Group felt that it was not necessary or beneficial for all members to have access to the Values and Ethics Code. Instead, the BIO OA Executive would be responsible for ensuring that BIO OA activities and initiatives are consistent with this code.  Role should be changed to:  Promote and support efforts to increase the public’s awareness and understanding of the oceans and their resources through a variety of outreach programs determined by the OA membership and supported by the OA Executive. |
| Outreach | |
| Conduct outreach activities to educate the public on marine life in our waters. | This could be done via touch tanks/display tanks of marine organisms during the summer months, either at BIO (and well-advertised) or in an easily-accessible location (e.g., Halifax Waterfront).  This could include such things as volunteers for education seminars and Oceans 11 curriculum. |
| Partner with staff at BIO who already do outreach work (including with schools) and/or who can contribute materials in order to find synergies and broaden outreach activities. | Ensure a BIO OA representative is a new member of the BIO Outreach Committee (which reports to the BIO Steering Committee) in an effort to better coordinate their combined efforts.  Once a BIO outreach committee is formed, plan occasional meetings with the OA to either collaborate, coordinate, pool efforts (recruit outreach volunteers) or clarify the outreach goals of the OA in relation to a newly formed BIO outreach committee.  Seek input from sectors active in outreach activities that are not part of the outreach committee to understand their activities and needs, and determine if OA can play a role.  Publicize archivist position at BIO as an OA initiative and invite current staff to contribute materials.  Identify OA member as key contact for providing tours of BIO to the public. This individual could coordinate OA volunteers interested in providing tours. Ensure BIO staff know who to contact to facilitate tours as requests are often made to current BIO staff who do not always have the capacity to conduct tours. |
| Raise awareness of BIO research by creating a hall of researcher/ manager profiles in a central area. | Dalhousie Biology has recently done this. Each Biology professor has a mounted poster with their picture, a few research pictures and a description of their work. Having these profiles visible may help staff and the public to better understand the services provided by BIO and may stimulate more communication within BIO by revealing synergies between staff and projects. |
| Review aspects of Ocean Literacy program for defining a rejuvenated Outreach Program | Reach out into school and youth programs to become a ‘resource centre’ and educator for ocean related information.  Ocean Literacy: The Essential Principles of Ocean Sciences for Learners of All Ages, Version 2, 2013 http://oceanservice.noaa.gov/education/literacy/ocean\_literacy.pdf |
| Equipment Archives and Outreach |  |
| Produce a series of educational video shorts or vignettes that show how equipment was used for research for public dissemination. | This could be in the form of video interviews with users (i.e. scientists) and video demos of how the equipment is used.  Videos could easily be inserted into iBooks or online to create educational or outreach materials that are accessible to teachers and youth, with minimal writing required.  Connect with Canadian Network of Ocean Educators to determine whether there may be interest in including DFO “ocean sampling” in curriculum units. Centering teaching units around sampling and equipment provides opportunities for interdisciplinary science teaching and can be expanded to the social sciences when considering how the data are used. |
| Explore broader range of opportunities for partnering outside of BIO, including establishing and implementing a mechanism for loans of archived equipment. | Consider a formal mechanism/committee member in charge of managing equipment loan.  Partner with Museum of Natural History, Maritime Museum of the Atlantic, Discovery Center, etc. to:  a) identify potential current or upcoming museum projects requiring equipment,  b) establish a mechanism for loan of archived equipment, and  c) establish project-based partnering initiatives with these organizations that build on the available archived equipment/displays (e.g., lecture series by OA members, demonstrations).  Initiate projects that connect archived equipment with outreach activities at museums and through BIO sectors. This would be more effective if the equipment were paired with a story of how it was used. These types of projects could be moved forward with assistance from experiential learning students (80 hours for experiential learning credit at Dalhousie) or Dalhousie Science Leadership and Communication students who require practicum component for a certificate. |
| Advance documentation and use of archived equipment | Prepare list/description of archived equipment.  Distribute list to BIO sectors involved in outreach activities.  Develop and document a process whereby the OA is contacted if BIO departments are disposing of equipment/materials of potentially historic interest for the OA to decide what to archive. Communicate process to BIO sectors. |
| Membership | |
| Seek membership from sectors not traditionally sought from. | * Develop brief BIO OA overview presentation and deliver it at various DFO sector meetings to seek membership. There needs to be an explicit indication that other DFO sectors can be involved in the OA. * Tap into the pool of non-permanent employees for involvement in various projects – shorter term projects would be doable within a finite contract, and such involvement would increase contact with permanent employees. * Encourage emails from managers/supervisors when seeking members to volunteer for specific projects. * OA presentation at town-hall meeting outlining OA roles and specific projects with one slide per project (benefit of reinforcement from Morley Knight/Alain Vezina). * Work with management to increase support of OA involvement by supervisors – communicate this support formally in town hall meetings and informally by having managers suggest that supervisors encourage involvement from their staff during regular work hours. * Build OA recruitment drives as part of any OA sponsored or joint event at BIO. * Profile current OA projects through poster campaign at key locations (e.g., cafeteria, elevators, billboards (electronic billboard in the Murray building)), and facebook and/or twitter (link via OA website). * Contact DFO *Connect!* to seek opportunities to distribute BIO OA information and promote new membership. * Encourage current OA members to seek membership from others (e.g., word of mouth). |
| Seek membership from BIO youth | * Contact DFO’s Young Professional Network and discuss potential for BIO OA overview presentation at one of their events. * Seek mechanism to inform new employees of the OA when they start work (e.g., a notice or brochure about the OA included with their paperwork or orientation package), as youth are more likely to be new employees. * Make a short OA presentation (including on specific projects, with involvement from younger members) at the Beluga ceremony, and ensuring message about young/new members being welcome. * Work with management to increase support of OA involvement by having managers suggest that supervisors encourage involvement from their staff during regular work hours (may need to give an idea of time commitment as many new or term employees are reluctant to deviate from their work schedule). |
| Communication | |
| Improve communication with current BIO employees about the BIO OA.  Re-Invent the ways and how’s to reach the broad based audience of all those working at BIO. | * Use internal communication venues (e.g., In the Loop (bilingual), BIO distributions lists) for promoting communication about BIO OA initiatives to current BIO employees. * Develop a live Facebook page to track current events and link it to the static BIO OA Web page. * Use a 10 minute slot in the RDG Town Hall meeting to spotlight/publicize the organization. * Print OA materials (i.e. posters/pamphlets) and post them in high traffic areas at BIO. Could have development of materials be a project for a student through experiential learning or through Dalhousie’s Science Leadership certificate practicum (currently all practicums are in-house at Dalhousie but expansion may be an option). Materials should include messaging about new members being welcome and that OA is not only for retirees. * Seek opportunities for announcing BIO OA meetings/projects at meetings for charitable campaigns and seminars. |
| Bylaws of the BIO OA | |
| Review and revise the By-laws of the OA. | * Section 7.3 of the by-laws states that each new member shall receive a copy of the “Memorandum and Articles of Association”. This may not be happening. There are several OA documents that require revisions and streamlining first. Thereafter, this clause should be adhered to (at least via a link to the website, where tidied up documents should be kept). It is important for members to be clear on the mandate of the organization to which they belong. * Section 14.2 states a quorum of 10% is required for an Annual General Meeting. Verification of whether this has been happening should be done. If it’s not happening, the clause should be updated or a bigger push to achieve 10% should be made. * Section 21.1 Frequency of meetings of the executive should be revised. Currently only September, November, January and March meetings are identified in the Bylaws whereas the executive meets more frequently. |
| Specific recommendations to rejuvenate/renew/ expand implementation of roles outlined in the BIO Campus Management Committee’s Policy on the Storage of Archived Oceanographic Equipment (Draft 2011) (e.g., new projects or initiatives) | |
| Re-visit roles and responsibilities given the transformation of BIO into a full campus of DFO Sectors c/w CCG. | Re-visit the volume and quantity of material that can and will be stored. |