

Dear Society for Marine Mammalogy Leadership,

We are writing to request that the Society update its [Code of Professional Ethics](#) to reflect that all workers in the field of marine mammal science should be compensated for their labor. We further request that the category of “Internships (unpaid)” be removed from the [Marine Mammal Science Job Openings](#) and that the posting of unpaid positions on the Society’s website be disallowed.

In [A Recent Letter to the Community Regarding Racial Injustice](#), the President of the Society emphasized “our commitment to our membership and our global community at large . . . to actively create a diverse, inclusive and tolerant world.” Similarly, the Society’s [Ad Hoc Diversity and Inclusion Committee Terms of Reference](#) states that “the SMM is dedicated to enhancing diversity in its membership, leadership, and readership.”

**Unpaid positions are a barrier to a diverse and inclusive Society and should no longer be part of the status quo of marine mammal science.**

Fundamentally, unpaid positions are available to people who are able to work for free. In the US and abroad, the [racial wealth gap](#) means that such persons are disproportionately likely to be white. Unpaid positions are a common point of entry for people interested in careers in marine mammal science, so it should not come as a surprise that people of color are underrepresented in our field as well as [in other environmental sciences](#). These gaps [are not improving](#), which means we are not doing enough to combat structural racism in environmental sciences. Unpaid positions [amplify existing barriers to participation](#) for persons of low socioeconomic class. Ultimately, this harms not only those who are discriminated against, but limits diversity in the field and [stifles innovation](#).

In addition to being unethical, [unpaid positions are sometimes illegal](#) and do not afford workers the protections that paid workers have access to. For example, in the US, unpaid workers are not eligible for employer-provided health insurance or workers compensation if injured on the job, nor are they protected against discrimination or harassment.

**The pipeline of unpaid positions reinforces the existing racial and socioeconomic makeup of marine mammal scientists. If the Society is committed to increasing diversity in marine mammal science, it will ask members to compensate all workers appropriately and refuse to advertise or encourage unpaid positions.**

Further Reading:

Bernard, R.E., Cooperdock, E.H.G. (2018) No progress on diversity in 40 years. *Nature Geosci* 11, 292–295. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41561-018-0116-6>

Fournier AMV, Bond AL. (2015) Volunteer field technicians are bad for wildlife ecology. *Wildl Soc Bull*. 39: 819–821. <https://doi.org/10.1002/wsb.603>

Fournier AMV, Holford AJ, Bond AL, Leighton MA (2019) Unpaid work and access to science professions. *PLoS ONE* 14(6): e0217032. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0217032>

Whitaker, D.M. (2003) The Use of Full-Time Volunteers and Interns by Natural-Resource Professionals. *Conservation Biology*, 17: 330-333. doi:10.1046/j.1523-1739.2003.01503.x

**Signed,**

Table 1: Alphabetized list of 727 co-signatures

Minna Abassi	Serenity Dog Training and Behavior Associates
Salma Abdel-Raheem	The Whale Museum
Ms Selina Agbayani	University of British Columbia
Fadia Al Abbar	Wageningen university
Dr. Alana Alexander	University of Otago
Dr Jennifer Allen	Griffith University
Claudia allen	Swansea university
Dr. Simon Allen	University of Bristol
Miss Megan Allison	None/ postgrad
Gabriela Alongi	National Marine Mammal Foundation
Christine Bezic Alpeñes	N/A
Diana Alvarado	University of California
Ms. Abigail Ames	University of Washington
Rachel amos	previously participated in unpaid marine mammal science positions
Ms. Dale Anania	n/a
Dale Anania	The Marine Mammal Center
Dr. Frederick Archer	NOAA/NMFS/Southwest Fisheries Science Center and UCSD/Scripps Institution of Oceanography
Dr. Amanda Ardente	Ardente Veterinary Nutrition LLC
Caroline Armon	Oceans Initiative
Dr Holly Armstrong	University of Abertay Dundee; University of St Andrews
Dr Monica Arso Civil	Sea Mammal Research Unit, University of St Andrews
Mr. Karthik Ashok	Five Oceans Environmental
Ms Meghan Aulich	PhD candidate
Dr Julie Avery	University of Alaska Fairbanks

Taylor Azizeh	Aarhus University
Cathy Bacon	HDR, Inc.
Janelle Badger	University of Alaska Fairbanks
Ms. Sara Badiali	Citizen
Ms. Kimberly Bagley	Marine mammal science
Talia Bailey	Marine naturalist
Nevé Baker	University of California Santa Cruz
Ms. Nicole Baker	University of Washington, Seattle
Michele Bane	Marine mammal biologist
Dr. Meghan Barboza	Southern Connecticut State University
Yvonne Barkley	University of Hawaii
Dawn Barlow	Marine Mammal Institute, Oregon State University
Dr Ashley Barratclough	National Marine Mammal Foundation
Heather Barrett	Moss Landing Marine Labs
Miss Katline Barrows	Student
Dr Carolyn Barton	MMO trainer
Dr. Brian Battaile	NA
Dr. Mark Baumgartner	Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution
Dr. Elizabeth Becker	Contractor, Southwest Fisheries Science Center
Brenda Becker	
Dr. Roxanne Beltran	UC Santa Cruz
Dr Kimberley Bennett	Abertay University
Michelle Berger	Shaw Institute
Ms Alexandria Bevan	San Francisco State University
Mr Shemar Blakeney	MSc Marine Biology at Bangor University
Ashley Blawas	PhD Student, Duke University
Brooke Blosser	College of Charleston
Miss Olivia Boeberitz	Michigan State University
Dr. Anna Boegehold	Oak Ridge Associated Universities

Ms Mary Kate Bolger	University College Cork
Eva-Maria Bønnelycke	University of St. Andrews
Dr Cormac Booth	University of St Andrews
Ashley Booth, PhD Student	Louisiana State University
Dr. Abraham Borker	University of California Santa Cruz
Dr Guilherme A. Bortolotto	Scottish Oceans Institute, University of St Andrews
Dr Charlotte Boyd	University of Washington
Dr. Amanda Bradford	Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center, NOAA Fisheries
Dr. Brian Branstetter	National Marine Mammal Foundation
Dr gill braulik	University of St Andrews
Riona Bray	Ecotourism guide
Arial Brewer	University of Washington & NOAA Marine Mammal Lab
Marisa Bright-DeLoatch	Advisory Board (WDC)
Kristy Brightwell	Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission
Erin Brodie	National Marine Mammal Foundation
Miss Josephine Brown	University of St Andrews
Dr. Susannah Buchan	University of Concepcion / Centro COPAS Sur-Austral / Centro de Estudios Avanzados en Zonas Aridas
Miss Lucie Buckland	Marine Mammal Ecologist
Dr Juditha C. A. Burchsted	Salem State University
Jennifer Burns	Texas Tech University
Hallie Burrell	Recent Grad
Alec Burslem	SMRU, University of St Andrews
Ethan Bushey	Currently trying to join the world of marine mammalogists
Miss Andrea Cabrera	Private
David Cade, post-doctoral researcher	UC Santa Cruz
Tara Callahan MSc	University of the Basque Country
Ms Claire Carrington	Student

Dr John Carroll	Georgia Southern University
Alexandra Carroll	University of Maryland
Miss Tierney Carter	MSc Marine Mammal Science student
Dr Matt Carter	SMRU
Dr. Rachel Cartwright	Keiki Kohola Project
Mr. Richard Cartwright	USC
Dr. Francesco Caruso	Institute of Deep-sea Science and Engineering, Chinese Academy of Sciences
Jorie Carvalho	Undergraduate student
Miss Jessica Carvalho	University of Algarve
Erin Casellas	Soundwatch boater education program, The Whale Museum
Ms. Laura Cassetty	Wellesley College
Veronica Cendejas	National Marine Mammal Foundation
Lic. Ailen Chalcobsky	CESIMAR-CONICET; National University of Patagonia San Juan Bosco
Dr Cory Champagne	UW Bothell
Mrs. Tess Chapman	University of Hawaii at Manoa
Ms. Samantha Chaves	Prior internship holder
Samantha Chaves	Recent undergrad
Dr. Ellen Chenoweth	University of Alaska Fairbanks
Francesca Chipparoni	Indiana University Graduate
Dr. Ann Chiu	Veterinarian
Cher Chow	University of St Andrews
Dr. Emily Choy	McGill University
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Dr Tommy Clay	University of Liverpool
Allison Clemons	Michigan State University
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Ms Melissa Collier	Georgetown University
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Heather Conkerton, MS	n/a
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Ms. Ashley Cook	University of Miami
Ms Lauren Cooke	Conservation Educator
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Alex Coram	University of St Andrews
Ms. Dulce Cortez	California Sea Grant
Dr David Costalago	OceanMind
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Jessica Coulon	PNMM, Mayotte, France
Dr. Jonathan Cowart	University of Florida
Dr Sam L Cox	University College Cork
Marjorie Cox	California Academy of Sciences
Ms Elise Coxhell	Ten Lives Cat Centre
Ms. Danielle Crain	Baylor University
Ms. Carrie Cramer	Student
Ms. Angela Crone	The Marine Mammal Center
Ms. Sophie Crouch	Postgraduate student

Abigail Crowder	Colorado State University
Leah Crowe	Integrated Statistics
Dr Hannah Cubaynes	University of Cambridge/British Antarctic Survey
Laura Cupicha	Marine Biologist, previous unpaid intern
Leslie Curran	Marine Biologist
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Miss Kate Dunning	UiT
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Ms Julia Haywood	University of Exeter

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Dr Ailbhe Kavanagh	Marine Institute
Kaycee	Member of WMMS
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Miss Emma Keen	Looking for new role
Alyssa Kelley	Animal behavior MSc graduate
Courtney Kelley	B.S. Marine Biology graduate
Ms Emily Kelly	Center for Coastal Studies
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Mr. Gary Kett	University College Cork
Lisa Elena Kettermer	UiT - The Arctic University of Norway
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Mrs Kimberley Kliska	Australian Antarctic Division
Mrs. Kaitlin knight	None
Mr. Daniel Kosiba	University of Iceland
Madison Kosma	Alaska Sea Grant Fellow
Dr/Prof Kit M. Kovacs	Norwegian Polar Institute
Mrs. Katie Kowarski	Dalhousie University
Miss Michaela Kratofil	Cascadia Research Collective
Ms Allyson Kristan	LSU Department of Oceanography & Coastal Sciences
Merve Kurt	Middle East Technical University Institute of Marine Sciences
Loïc L	Marine Mammal Ecologist
Mx Claire Lacey	University of St Andrews
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Charlotte Lewis	-
Ms. Amanda Liebau	University of New England - Marine Biology and Education
Mother of marine mammal scientist, Mary Liebau	Mother of marine mammal scientist
Sylvia Lima	None
Barbara Linnehan, DVM	National Marine Mammal Foundation
Dr Carolina Loch	University of Otago
Mr David Lockwood	None
Kelsey Loflin	N/A
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Prof David Lusseau	University of Aberdeen
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Meredith MacQueeney	Eckerd College



Meredith MacQueeney	Eckerd College
Professor Peter T. Madsen	Aarhus University
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Ms Chloe Malinka	Aarhus University, Denmark
Ms Vidhi Manghnani	Veterinary student
Professor Janet Mann	Georgetown University
Ms Suzanne Manugian	Bureau of Reclamation
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Dr. Karen Martien	Southwest Fisheries Science Center
Nadya C Ramirez Martinez	St Andrews University & University of Veterinary Medicine Hannover; Germany
Ross Martinson	National Marine Mammal Foundation
Ms Natalie Mastick	University of Washington
Dr. Leanna Matthews	Sound Science Research Collective
Noelle Mauricio	Dominican University of California
Lauren McCaslin	None
Dr. Abby M. McClain	National Marine Mammal Foundation
Mr. John McClung	Self-employed wildlife biologist
Mr. Dane McDermott	Monterey Bay Whale Watch
Mx Alex McDonald	Student
Molly McEntee	Georgetown University
Kristen McGovern	Texas A&M University (previously)
Megan McGrath	Freelance
Brigid McKenna	Center for Coastal Studies
Samantha McLendon	Duke University
Ms Fiona McNie	Natural England
Ms Kate McPherson	Clearwater Marine Aquarium Research Institute
Jennifer Meegan	NMMF
Yashwant Meghare	University of Rhode Island.

Yashwant Meghare	University of Rhode Island.
Ms. Sonya Meier	Symbiota Environmental Solutions Ltd.
Dr. Karlina Merkens	NOAA/NMFS/PIFSC & Lynker Technologies
Greg Merrill	Duke University Marine Lab
Mr. Roosevelt Mesa	Environmental Contractor
Suzanna Mickey	Coker University
Mandy Migura, MSc	Broad Conservation LLC, owner
Susan Miles	Student
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Miss Aleksandrina Mitseva	Aarhus University
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Miss Areeba Moiz	WWF-Pakistan
Martina Montali	Member of Community
Erin Moreland	Marine Mammal Lab, Alaska Fisheries Science Center
Dr. Marcia Moreno-Baez	University of New England
Jeanine Morey	National Marine Mammal Foundation
Mrs. Kat Morin	International Master of Science in Marine Biological Resources (IMBRSea)
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Mr Xavier Mouy	University of Victoria
Mx	Sea Mammal Research Unit
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Brittany Novick - Clinical Diagnostic Coordinator	National Marine Mammal Foundation
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Ms Laetitia Nunny	Wild Animal Welfare
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Aubrie Onoufriou	University of St Andrews
Dr. Rachael Orben	Oregon State University
Ksenia Orekhova, DVM	University of Padova
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Dr. Kaitlin Palmer	SMRU Consulting
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Dr. Kaitlin Palmer	SMRU Consulting
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Chenoa Payne	N/a
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Carolin Philipp	ITAW, University of Veterinary Medicine Hannover
Dr Theoni Photopoulou	Scottish Oceans Institute, University of St Andrews
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Miss Nikola Piesinger	N/A
Mrs. Danielle Pinder	Recent Grad
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Miss Sandra Powell	MSc student looking for work
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