**Khaled bin Sultan Living Oceans Foundation Fellow: Benthic Ecologist**

The Khaled bin Sultan Living Oceans Foundation (KSLOF) seeks to sponsor a graduate fellowship for a Master’s or PHD level researcher with an interest in studies that supports conservation, management and restoration of coral reef ecosystems. The fellowship is open to candidates of all nationalities who meet the minimum qualifications required.

Beginning in 2014, a dedicated and hardworking individual will have the opportunity to participate in a multidisciplinary Global Reef Expedition (GRE), with specific research opportunities during 2014 in The Coral Sea, Solomon Islands, Marshall Islands, and 2015 in Palau, Philippines, Indonesia and other locations. The primary objectives of the cruise are to characterize coral reef ecosystem health across gradients of human and natural disturbance, determine global and local processes that control the functioning of coral ecosystems, identify and predict impacts across gradients, and identify strategies to mitigate impacts. The Fellow will be responsible for conducting benthic surveys using a point count transect method as also analysis of photoquadrats to determine cover of major organisms and substrate types.

LOF wishes to sponsor a graduate student that will develop a Master’s level thesis using benthic coral reef community data to be collected by the applicant on research cruises. In addition to a good understanding of coral reef ecology, the successful candidate should demonstrate:

1. Sound coral taxonomy skills, with the ability to identify Pacific corals to a minimum of Genus; knowledge of functional groups of algae and certain dominant macroalgal taxa; the ability to identify common benthic invertebrates such as sponges, soft corals and gorgonians.
2. A minimum of one year field experience.
3. Familiarity with a variety of underwater survey methods, including the use of point intercept transects and quadrats to assess community composition.
4. Proficient SCUBA diving skills.
5. Familiarity with common Microsoft programs (e.g. Excel, Word, PowerPoint).
6. Ability to analyze photoquadrats using Coral Point Count (CPCE) software, including identification of organisms (to genus and/or functional group) and substrate categories, and measure size (planar surface area) of corals.
7. Knowledge and practical experience using basic statistics.

The Living Oceans Foundation (KSLOF) Fellowship will provide up to US$15,000 for a Master’s candidate and $35,000 for a Ph.D. candidate to cover legitimate educational and research expenses such as research field-work expenses per year. The fellowship recipient will be known as the “Khaled bin Sultan Living Oceans Foundation Research Fellow”. Fellows may receive up to 3 continuous years of financial support based upon adequate progress. The Fellows must participate in all of the expeditions conducted during the GRE, approximately 4-5 missions per year, each for up to 30 days. Travel expenses and on-board lodging and meals are covered by LOF.

Candidates must demonstrate proficient oral and written English communication skills, and have the knowledge and expertise needed to develop a dissertation topic related to the mission of the Foundation and its role in marine conservation. Candidates must also meet the requirements of graduate programs at accredited universities. Applications must originate from an accredited university.

Applications should include:

1. An up to date Curriculum Vitae.
2. Proof of enrollment or admissions in an accredited university.
3. Copies of undergraduate and graduate transcripts to date.
4. An essay (maximum 1000 words) outlining coral reef resilience principles and the type of information a research team should collect to characterize the resilience of reefs.
5. A two page research proposal, detailing how you intend to make use of benthic community survey data in your thesis.
6. Two letters of recommendation.
7. Written endorsement of your established, or prospective academic advisor.

Note: Only complete applications will be accepted for consideration.

Please see <http://www.livingoceansfoundation.org> and click on “fellowships” for more information.

Applications can be submitted by email to Bruckner@lof.org or by mail: Andy Bruckner, Living Oceans Foundation, 8181 Professional Place, Suite 215, Landover, MD 20785

\*Deadline for application: February 28, 2014. The Fellow would need to be able to join the research missions beginning in April 2014.