



NSF Convergence Accelerator's 2021 Cohort Phase 1 Award

Project Title

Data Governance to Support an Equitable and Sustainable Blue Economy

Awardee

Multiplier

Award/Contract

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R&D

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NSF Funded Program

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PROJECT ABSTRACT

Led by Multiplier, the 'Data Governance to Support an Equitable and Sustainable Blue Economy' project will aim to improve data governance in the Blue Economy and to expand access to essential ocean data. Using human-centered design and a multidisciplinary team—comprised of attorneys, scientists, and policy experts—the team will create a suite of open-licensed tools and products focused on increasing data stewardship capacity in three groups: start-up and early-stage ocean businesses, early career researchers, and coastal communities. The ocean provides a wide array of critical ecosystem services, from seafood production to storm protection, and supports a \$1.5 trillion global Blue Economy. With the growing demand for ocean space and resources, communities and decision-makers need access to trusted, comprehensive data to prioritize and invest in ocean activities. The barriers that exist in the public and private sectors, universities, and ocean start-ups are making access difficult to obtain critical data to participatory science programs. While some of these data barriers are purely technical, others reflect failures in data governance: the policies, practices, and common understandings about how data will be shared and used. Data governance sits at a convergence of fields including law, data management, information technology, and science.

While the content and format of the training materials will be shaped by the discovery process, the team expects to address key topics such as data ethics and data sharing to support sustainability targets and public decision-making. The team will also pilot the materials through a 10-12 member peer learning network. Final materials and summary reports will be publicly disseminated and available under a CCby4 attribution license. The ultimate goal of this effort is to see widespread use of data governance best practices in all ocean sectors, reducing data gaps and bottlenecks and enabling innovations and decisions for an equitable and sustainable Blue Economy.

Using a multidisciplinary approach, use-inspired research, and innovation processes, the National Science Foundation's Convergence Accelerator provides an opportunity to accelerate solutions into practical application and to provide a positive societal impact.