



TERMS OF REFERENCE

Science Programme & Operations Manager

Location: Remote working position - strong preference for candidates in the Southern Africa region or based in a GMT+2 compatible time zone

Duration: Full-time, 1-year fixed term contract; independent contractor

Reports to: Mission Blue Chief Scientist

Position Summary

The Science Programme & Operations Manager is a mid-to-senior level independent contractor role designed to be the operational anchor of Mission Blue's global Science Initiative. Reporting to the Chief Scientist, this individual will bridge the gap between scientific strategy and field execution by synchronizing efforts across GIS, Communications, Advancement, and Hope Spot teams. This is a high-impact, desktop-based position responsible for maintaining the momentum of multi-year initiatives, such as the Bioacoustics and Biodiversity Mapping programmes, while managing the complex logistics, international accreditations, and partner relationships that turn scientific data into global ocean protection.

This is an Independent Contractor role subject to extension based on funding available. The Science Programme & Operations Manager is not an employee of Mission Blue or our employer of record. The Independent Contractor is responsible for withholding and paying any applicable taxes and to self-insure, as appropriate.

Key Responsibilities

1. Programme Management & Operational Continuity

- **Project Oversight:** Manage the end-to-end lifecycle of science deployments, focusing on timelines, documentation, and partner tracking.
- **Programme Coordination:** Support the Chief Scientist with the coordination of existing and new programmes, working with the Hope Spots team on grant management and the Communications and GIS teams on integrated campaign delivery.
- **Desktop Operations:** Ensure smooth daily operations and long-term continuity for multi-year science programmes, ensuring progress does not stall during periods of leadership travel or peak organisational demand
- **Procurement & Assets:** Lead the procurement of scientific equipment and manage the inventory and maintenance of assets deployed to international sites.

2. Strategic Accreditation & Global Policy

- **UN Decade of Ocean Science:** Serve as the primary lead for the application and management process to achieve Mission Blue's accreditation as an Action of the United Nations Decade for Ocean Science.
- **Compliance:** Coordinate the development and execution of MOUs and Data Sharing Agreements with global partners and research institutions.
- **International Alignment:** Ensure all scientific activities remain aligned with IUCN motions and the One Ocean Partnership.

3. Cross-Functional & Partner Liaison

- **Internal Integration:** Collaborate with the Esri (GIS) team on biodiversity mapping products and the Advancement team to provide data for donor engagement.
- **Hope Spot Support:** Serve as the central operational point of contact for Hope Spot Champions, translating their local scientific needs into field-ready plans.
- **Leadership Assistance:** Support the Chief Scientist in maintaining relationships with the College of Experts and other global scientific partners.

4. Field Coordination & Logistics

- **Logistics Management:** Oversee complex international shipping, customs clearance, and import/export requirements for field kits.
- **Expedition Support:** Coordinate logistics for focused field activities, such as the Quirimbas Archipelago Mini-Expedition, including participant documentation and on-site science-to-storytelling alignment.

Qualifications & Personal Attributes

- **Education:** Bachelor's degree in a relevant scientific field (e.g., Marine Science, Ecology); Master's degree preferred.
- **Programme Management:** Demonstrated experience managing complex, multi-country logistics and stakeholder relationships under time pressure.
- **Interpersonal Skills:** Strong interpersonal skills with proven credibility to engage confidently with senior scientists, academic institutions, international funders and teams.
- **Communication:** Excellent written skills with the ability to translate technical science into compelling narratives for various non-scientific audiences.
- **Technical Familiarity:** Comfort in working with GIS platforms (Esri) and field technologies such as eDNA or Bioacoustics advantageous.
- **Cultural Awareness:** Proven ability to work effectively with diverse partners across global time zones and cultural contexts.
- **Independent Worker:** A 'high-trust, low-maintenance' professional with a strong bias toward execution and the ability to operate with autonomy and judgment.

Remuneration

Total remuneration for this contract will not exceed \$50,000 USD. No benefits are included with the position. This is an Independent Contractor role subject to extension based on funding available. The Science Programme & Operations Manager is not an employee of Mission Blue or our employer of record. The Independent Contractor is responsible for withholding and paying any applicable taxes and to self-insure, as appropriate.

Working Conditions

- **Remote Focus:** This is a remote, desktop-based position requiring disciplined self-management and digital fluency.
- **Flexibility:** Willingness to work outside standard business hours to support global partners and international deployments.
- **Travel:** Occasional international travel for field-based pilots, workshops, or expeditions.

How to Apply

To apply for this position, please submit your CV and a brief cover letter outlining your relevant experience to Kate Morrison at kmorrison@missionblue.org

As this is a remote working position, please also confirm your current location and availability to work within a GMT+2 compatible time zone.