Ph.D. Research Assistantship: University of Miami – RSMAS

Following the award of a grant from the Living Oceans Foundation, the Rosenstiel School of Marine and Atmospheric Science (RSMAS), situated within the University of Miami, is advertising a Ph.D. Research Assistantship, as follows.

RSMAS invites applicants for one 5 year fully funded Ph.D. Research Assistantship. Though the position is available immediately, we anticipate for it to be awarded in spring 2017, with a start date on or before August 2017. A full stipend (starting around $30K/yr.), tuition and health insurance are covered for 5 years, subject to satisfactory performance.

The successful applicant will be supervised by Professor Sam Purkis, Professor in Marine Geosciences, and there will be flexibility in the choice of graduate program and courses to be taken.

BACKGROUND: Under the auspices of the Global Reef Expedition (GRE), over five years (2011-2015) the Living Oceans Foundation circumnavigated the globe aboard a 220 ft. research vessel, M/Y Golden Shadow, to survey some of the most remote coral reefs on the planet. Motivated by the “coral reef crisis”, the primary goals of the GRE were to map and characterize coral reef ecosystems, identify their current status and major threats, and examine factors that enhance their ability to resist, survive and recover from major disturbance events.

THE DATASET: The GRE has generated an unrivaled dataset spanning more than 25 reef provinces spread across the Atlantic, Pacific and Indian oceans. Beyond global scope, the GRE data are immensely broad, encompassing 95,000 sq. km of state-of-the-art aircraft and satellite imagery processed to seabed and bathymetric maps, surveys of faunal and genetic diversity, an exhaustive suite of water chemistry and sediment samples, geophysical surveys and assessments of ocean climate - perhaps the most comprehensive example of “big data” yet compiled for coral reefs.

THE PROJECT: With the collection phase of the GRE complete, the project is embarking on the work-up/write-up phase. With full access to the GRE dataset, the Ph.D. student will be expected to examine regional and global trends in coral reef health and resilience with the overarching aim of converting the data into actionable insight.

We seek a highly numeric candidate and view favorably a background in computer science and modeling. Key factors in our hiring decision will be creativity, motivation and productivity.

APPLYING: Information about being a student at RSMAS, including the application procedure, is located behind this link.

For further information, contact Prof. Sam Purkis (spurkis@rsmas.miami.edu).