

Blue Change Makers Volunteering Camp

Raising Awareness of Aquatic Ecosystems and Litter Pollution Through Digital Storytelling

General Objective

Blue Changemakers is a hands-on volunteering camp designed to bring together students from EUNICE universities, IHCantabria researchers and educators, and professors from EUNICE partner universities (two professors, one per week) to explore the importance of aquatic ecosystems and the growing problem of litter pollution in rivers, estuaries and coastal areas. The programme combines scientific knowledge, field experience, science communication and digital content creation. Participants will learn about different aquatic environments, develop communication and storytelling skills, and work in teams to create short videos aimed at raising public awareness through social media.

Blue Changemakers is built around a hands-on Storytelling Challenge that guides participants through five stages: DISCOVER – UNDERSTAND – TELL – INSPIRE – ACT.

- DISCOVER: Participants will first discover different aquatic ecosystems through scientific training and field experiences.
- UNDERSTAND: They will then understand the environmental challenges they face, with a particular focus on litter pollution and its consequences.
- TELL: Working in teams, they will tell their stories by developing creative and scientifically accurate content for social media.
- INSPIRE and ACT: Their aim will be to inspire wider audiences to value and protect aquatic ecosystems, and ultimately to encourage action and more responsible behaviour among citizens and decision makers.

The Storytelling Challenge will run throughout the camp, connecting scientific sessions, communication training, field activities and video production workshops.

Expected Outcomes

The final outcome will be a collection of short, engaging social media videos created by the students. Participants will have the opportunity to share their videos through their own social media channels, if they wish, and the videos will also be disseminated through IHCantabria communication channels, giving visibility to their stories and messages beyond the campus.

Methodology:

Blended Intensive Programme (BIP) combining online and on-site learning activities.

- **Online Phase:** The online phase will provide participants with a common scientific foundation on aquatic ecosystems, coastal and freshwater environments, and litter pollution. The live sessions will be delivered by IHCantabria researchers and recorded for participants who are unable to attend synchronously.
- **On-site Phase (June 2027, dates to be confirmed):** The two-week on-site phase in Santander will bring together students, researchers and communication experts in a hands-on learning experience. Through field activities, communication workshops and collaborative video production, participants will put their knowledge into practice and take part in the Blue Changemakers Storytelling Challenge.