

SA-4 Policy Guide & Application for Conducting Scientific Studies

at the Oregon Coast Aquarium



Goals of the Aquarium's Scientific Program:

The goals of the scientific program at the Aquarium are to collect, evaluate and disseminate scientific data, to act as a resource for academic study, to carry out in-house and field research when possible, and to evaluate educational and visitor services. This policy guide is designed to help direct and support work to encourage and pursue scientifically sound, basic and/or applied investigations that meet one or more of the following criteria:

- Contribute to the conservation and survival of threatened or endangered species.
- Contribute to the development and improvement of husbandry or veterinary protocols and procedures in regards to caring for the plants and animals housed at the Aquarium.
- Contribute to the understanding and interpretation of captive behavior, biology, physiology, psychology and the behavior in the wild of current collection animals or those that may be part of the collection in the future.
- Contribute to the understanding of the interactions between visitors and the animals and/or exhibits.
- Contribute to the training of students in animal care and natural sciences.

Components of the Scientific Program:

The five types of scientific studies that can be pursued at the Aquarium are as follows. Upon application, check which field your proposal falls into:

Collaborative study conducted with other Aquariums or Zoos, members of the education community and/or state and federal agencies

Study conducted by Aquarium staff

Study conducted by other qualified investigators or agencies

Provision of biological samples needed for approved study

Short study proposed by instructors for the purpose of training their students

Factors Influencing Consideration of Proposals

All proposals that meet at least one of the criteria under the Goals of the Scientific Program will be considered. The factors listed below will influence the acceptance of proposals.

Studies that have been identified as research priorities by an American Zoo and Aquarium Association affiliate or other international zoo or conservation group will generally be given priority. Conservation Breeding Specialist Groups, Taxon Advisory Groups and Species Survival Plans are examples of groups that would be given priority or projects so identified.

Studies that require substantial modification of an animal's routine will be considered only if the knowledge gained is judged to be of extreme importance to the animal's care and conservation in the wild.

Studies which require the use of drugs, medications other treatment chemicals or consulting veterinarian's time beyond their normal time commitments to the Aquarium must be individually

reviewed and approved in writing by the appropriate consulting veterinarian in addition to any committees.

Proposals for Student Projects

Proposals for student projects need to originate from the student's instructor. In general, these projects should be short term and primarily observational in nature. Other proposals that may influence the animal's behavior or require modification of normal animal care routines will require documentation of previous studies of the behavior or animal care practice beyond that required for observational projects.

Request for Biological Samples

Approval of proposals from investigators asking only for biological samples will be based on how the sampling will impact the individual animal and the animal collection. These proposals must satisfy at least one of the criteria listed under Goals of the Scientific Program.

Full Proposals

For a study to be considered by the Aquarium, a written proposal must be submitted to the Research Review Committee at least 90 days prior to the proposed start date for the study. The completed proposal should include the curriculum vitae for the principal investigator or investigators, including a list of publications. If the principal investigator is a student, include also vitae of the person under whose auspices they are working. Generally, this would be the instructor for the course that the research is being conducted; any letters of endorsement from aquarium, zoo or conservation groups; a bibliography of related work including brief abstracts of important studies related to the proposed study; and any supplemental documentation that would indicate support for the research from other sources. Examples would be notices of funding received or approval by a sponsoring facility or institution.

Review Process

All received proposals that meet at least one of the criteria of the Goals of the Scientific Program will be formally reviewed. The Scientific Review Committee will review the following aspects of each study:

- Relevance to the Aquarium's stated goals and study criteria
- Compliance with the Animal Welfare Act.
- Significance to species conservation and husbandry
- Soundness of the study design
- Qualifications of the investigator(s)
- Feasibility of the study
- Impact on the plants and/or animals involved
- Impact on Aquarium operations, facilities, and visitors
- Expected outcome and benefit versus resources needed to complete the study
- Known risks inherent in the study

Upon reviewing the proposal, the Scientific Review Committee will pass on proposals that need to be reviewed by the Animal Care and Use Committee. If animals are not involved, the Scientific Review Committee will make a decision to accept, return for revision, or reject the proposal. The chairperson of the Scientific Review Committee will convey this decision to the principal investigator.

Further Conditions for Conducting Scientific Studies

Funding:

At present, the Aquarium is unable to provide funding for studies conducted by individuals not employed by the Aquarium. All studies that involve direct costs must have funding sources identified and documented before the study begins.

Publication:

Where a study consists of a short visit or series of visits to the Aquarium for data collection only, or where the Aquarium has provided samples for a study, the investigators will be expected to specifically acknowledge the cooperation of the administration and staff of the Aquarium in any publication or presentations resulting from the study. In addition, the investigator(s) must provide two reprints of any publication to the Aquarium.

Where the major research activity will be carried out at the Aquarium or will involve animals, plants, or facilities of the Aquarium in any way, the investigator will agree in writing, prior to the undertaking the study, to grant pre-publication review and critique of any and all manuscripts and presentations emanating from the study to the Aquarium. Where the research or any findings thereof is published, two reprints of each publication resulting from the study will be provided to the Aquarium. In addition, three reprints will be provided to each of the coauthors from the Aquarium. Preliminary determination of authorship of papers resulting from such studies at the Aquarium will be made prior to beginning the study; final decisions will be made at the completion of manuscript preparation. All determination of authorship will be made based on consulting among the principal investigator(s) and involved Aquarium staff. The determination of authorship will depend on the degree of scientific contribution and amount of work done during both the study and preparation of the manuscript. If the results of any study are not submitted or accepted for publication, the investigator agrees to provide a written report of the study to the Aquarium within one year of completing the study. This report should include any and all results obtained and conclusions tentatively reached. It must be available to the Aquarium for dissemination as needed. The Aquarium will acknowledge the report's preliminary nature and authorship.

Presentation of results to Aquarium members, the public and staff:

Where the major research activity will be carried out at the Aquarium or will involve the animals, plants, or facilities of the Aquarium the investigator(s) may be asked to agree in writing prior to the study to make one or more informal public presentations of the results to Aquarium members, the public, and/or Aquarium staff at appropriate venues to be decided by the Aquarium. As an alternative, the Aquarium may request agreement to prepare an article for Waterlines.

Regardless of ownership, or possession of, any samples or specimens obtained from the Aquarium, the Aquarium retains the right to royalties which may accrue from present and yet to be discovered commercial applications from such specimens or samples. Specifically, clones, genes or products of specimens or samples remain the intellectual property of the Aquarium. Researchers with particular interest in developing commercial applications based on specimens or samples from the Aquarium are encouraged to discuss their interest with the Aquarium at the earliest possible date any desired transfer of intellectual property rights.

Current Committee Members

Jim Burke, Director of Animal Husbandry

Caroline Emch-Wei, Curator of Fish and Invertebrates

Evonne Mochon-Collura, Assistant Curator of Fish and Invertebrates

Brittany Blades, Curator of Marine Mammals

CJ McCarty, Curator of Birds

Dr. Anna Wepprich, Veterinarian

Dr. Julianne Vickstrom, Veterinarian

Dr. Dan Lewer, Veterinarian

Dr. Tim Miller-Morgan, Veterinarian

Margot Langdon, Vet Tech

Shea Steinglass, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, Marine Mammal Program

Animal Keeper (a senior keeper from the appropriate area will be asked to join)

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In addition to the following signature and information, applications must include relevant documentation and information as required in the above policy for proposals. Applications failing to do so will automatically be denied.

A signature is required on all applications. By signing, one agrees that they have read this policy guide and will adhere to all of the rules and conditions herein. The Aquarium reserves the right to cancel any study at any time for any reason.

Name of Applicant

Name of Organization (if applicable)

Contact Email

Contact Phone

Signature of Applicant

Date of Application