

INSTITUTE OF  
**MARINE**  
Engineering, Science & Technology

# IMarEST Awards and Funding Application Guidance



# Contents

Foreword .....	2
About the IMarEST.....	3
What Are Awards, Bursaries, and Grants?.....	4
Why This Guide Matters .....	4
Common Barriers Students and Early Career Professionals Face.....	4
Requirements: What Do I Need to Submit?.....	5
Writing Guide: How to Write an Effective Application.....	5
Content Tips .....	5
AI Use .....	6
Submission Guidance: How to Submit Your Application.....	6
Follow up Guidance: What Happens Next? .....	6
Next Steps & Support .....	6
Resources .....	7
Process Flow.....	8
Fictional Exemplars.....	9
Exemplar 1.....	10
Exemplar 2.....	14

## Foreword

At the Institute of Marine Engineering, Science & Technology (IMarEST), we believe that opportunity should be open to all, and that the advancement of marine science, engineering, and technology relies on the equitable participation of diverse, passionate, and prepared individuals. Whether you are a student, early-career professional, or an emerging innovator, navigating the world of funding can be challenging, especially when access to mentoring or experience with formal applications is limited.

This guide was developed to bridge that gap. Drawing on our own professional and voluntary roles across the IMarEST community including mentoring, grant assessment, and United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for sustainable development engagement, we've created a practical, supportive resource to help applicants succeed. Our goal is to make the application process more accessible, transparent, and empowering, so that more people can contribute their skills and ideas to the future of the marine sector.

We also hope this guide will encourage confidence and strengthen professional development skills that go far beyond any funding call. Applying for awards and grants is not only a way to access resources, it is also a valuable opportunity to clarify your vision, communicate your potential, and shape your own career journey.

We're proud to contribute this guidance as part of IMarEST's wider mission and in support of the UN Ocean Decade. We look forward to seeing the future projects and achievements this guidance may help unlock.

Ashleigh Kitchiner  
Former Chair, Sea Your Future | IMarEST

Niru Dorrian  
Ambassador to the UN Ocean Decade | IMarEST



## About the Authors

Both authors are active mentors and awards assessors within the IMarEST community. Through their professional roles and voluntary contributions, they are committed to supporting equity, diversity, and inclusion in marine science, engineering, and technology.

Drawing on their experience in capacity development, professional mentoring, and assessment of funding applications, Niru and Ashleigh have prepared this guide to help students and early-career professionals navigate funding opportunities and build confidence when applying for awards, bursaries, and grants.

## About the IMarEST

The IMarEST is the international professional body and learned society for all marine professionals. Established in 1889, the Institute has more than 135 years of history in advancing marine engineering, science, and technology across academia, industry, and policy.

With a global membership of over 12,500 individuals in more than 120 countries and supported by a network of over 52 active branches worldwide, the IMarEST connects professionals working across diverse marine sectors, including engineering, environmental science, offshore energy, shipping, marine biology, and ocean technology.

The Institute hosts 21 Special Interest Groups (SIGs), each focused on key topics within marine science, engineering, and technology. These SIGs promote knowledge sharing, professional collaboration, and capacity development on both a regional and global scale.

As a Decade Implementing Partner for the UN Ocean Decade, the IMarEST is an active contributor to global efforts aimed at advancing sustainable ocean management and addressing critical marine challenges. As a non-profit organisation, registered charity and royal chartered body it is ensuring its members' expertise helps shape international marine policy and decision-making processes.

Central to the IMarEST's mission is the promotion of lifelong learning, professional development, and ethical practice. The Institute offers a range of awards, bursaries, and grants to support students, early-career professionals, and established experts in developing their skills, advancing their careers, and making meaningful contributions to the future of the marine sector.

## What Are Awards, Bursaries, and Grants?

The IMarEST is committed to supporting lifelong learning and recognising both those at the beginning of their careers and those at the forefront of new developments. It offers a range of awards, bursaries, and grants to support students and professionals at various stages of their careers.

These funding opportunities are designed to:

- Recognise academic or professional excellence
- Support research, innovation, and fieldwork
- Provide financial assistance for training or development activities
- Empower emerging professionals in line with IMarEST's commitment to inclusivity, equity, and global knowledge sharing

These opportunities also align with the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development and the IMarEST Special Interest Groups (SIGs), with a shared mission to build career resilience and encourage global collaboration in the marine sector.

## Why This Guide Matters

Many students and early-career professionals face barriers when applying for funding due to a lack of experience, limited access to mentoring, or unfamiliarity with how to draft a strong application.

At the IMarEST, we are committed to supporting all applicants regardless of background, nationality, or financial circumstances, in line with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the UN Ocean Decade focus on inclusive capacity development.

This guide is designed to help you:

- Understand funding processes
- Overcome common barriers
- Strengthen your applications
- Access fair opportunities to progress your career

## Common Barriers Students and Early Career Professionals Face

- Lack of knowledge of funding schemes
- Limited experience with technical writing
- Uncertainty about budgets or project planning
- Low confidence in "selling yourself"
- No access to professional mentors for feedback
- Financial constraints limiting time or resources to focus on applications
- Lack of knowledge of criteria and eligibility

## Requirements: What Do I Need to Submit?

Most of the IMarEST awards require a written application that includes:

- A clear statement of purpose (why you're applying)
- Evidence of eligibility (such as proof of study or project involvement)
- A description of how the funding will be used and the expected outcomes
- Reflection on how this opportunity supports your development and contributes to the wider marine community

Optional supporting documents may include:

- CV or resume
- Letter(s) of support
- Budget breakdown

Even if small, break down your budget. Example categories:

- Travel
- Accommodation
- Equipment or materials
- Conference or training fees
- Subsistence (food, local transport)

Clearly demonstrate how the proposed work aligns with marine engineering, science, or technology themes.

## Writing Guide: How to Write an Effective Application

Writing a compelling application is a skill and one that reflects your professionalism. Here are some tips:

- Think about your style & structure.
- Write in clear, concise paragraphs avoid single-line answers.
- Use a professional and positive tone. Be aspirational but grounded in reality.
- Address each question or section fully do not leave blanks.
- Stay within the word count limits (if provided), but aim to fill the space meaningfully even if no limit is set.

### Content Tips

- Be specific. Outline how the award will help you and the wider field.
- Show commitment. If you've already started the work or planning, explain what you've done so far.
- Reflect values. Consider how your project aligns with the IMarEST values (e.g. sustainability, innovation, inclusivity).

## AI Use

You may use generative AI tools (like ChatGPT) to assist in drafting, but:

- Ensure authenticity, the content must represent you.
- Edit and personalise AI generated content to reflect your voice and experience.
- Do not submit unedited AI output; applications lacking personal insight are unlikely to succeed.

## Submission Guidance: How to Submit Your Application

- Applications must be submitted via the platform or email specified on the website: [awards@imarest.org](mailto:awards@imarest.org).
- Use the correct file format (usually PDF or Word).
- Label your documents clearly (e.g., "YourName\_IMarEST\_Award2025.pdf").
- Submit before the deadline; late applications are usually not accepted.

## Follow up Guidance: What Happens Next?

You may be contacted for further information or clarification. Once the awards assessors have completed their review and confirmed the results internally, all applicants will be notified of the outcome.

Successful applicants may be asked to provide:

- A short report or update on how the funding was used.
- A testimonial or photo for use in IMarEST communications.
- We encourage all applicants successful or not to view this as a learning experience. Feedback may be available to help you improve future applications.

## Next Steps & Support

This guide is part of our commitment to help all applicants, especially those from underrepresented backgrounds, feel equipped and empowered to access opportunities.

If you're unsure where to start or want advice on your application, we're here to help.

**Contact us:** [awards@imarest.org](mailto:awards@imarest.org)

# Resources

We recognise that many talented individuals applying for IMarEST bursaries and awards come from non-English-speaking backgrounds. While the application process is conducted in English, this should not be a barrier to showcasing your skills, aspirations, and achievements.

To support non-native English speakers, we recommend the following tools and strategies:

## Language Tools and Support

- Grammarly ([www.grammarly.com](http://www.grammarly.com))  
A free tool that helps you improve grammar, spelling, and sentence structure.
- DeepL Translator ([www.deepl.com](http://www.deepl.com))  
An advanced translation tool offering more natural phrasing than many standard translators.
- Google Translate ([translate.google.com](http://translate.google.com))  
Useful for quickly understanding instructions and reviewing your own translations.

## Writing Support Resources

- The British Council ([learnenglish.britishcouncil.org](http://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org))  
Free resources on academic writing, grammar, and vocabulary building.
- Plain English Campaign ([www.plainenglish.co.uk](http://www.plainenglish.co.uk))  
Guides to help make your writing clear, simple, and effective—ideal for applications.
- Academic Phrasebank ([phrasebank.manchester.ac.uk](http://phrasebank.manchester.ac.uk))  
A useful source of sentence starters and formal phrases, especially for applications or research writing.

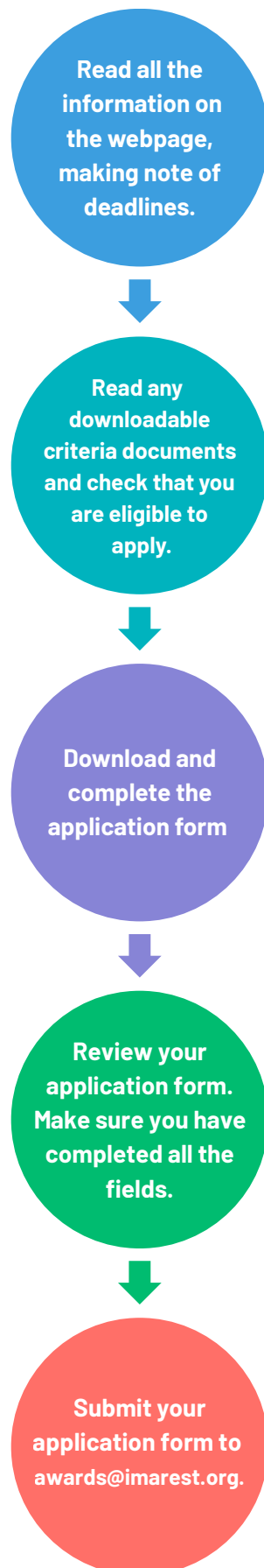
## Tips for Strong Applications

- Plan in your own language first. Write down your ideas and structure in your native language before translating into English.
- Ask for feedback. Reach out to a mentor, teacher, or peer to review your draft.
- Avoid using complex vocabulary unless you're confident. Clear, simple English is preferred in professional applications.
- Practice with past or example applications. Reading good examples can help you build confidence and improve your style.

We are committed to making the application process as inclusive as possible. If you're unsure about wording or need help reviewing your application, don't hesitate to contact the IMarEST team or reach out to a mentor through our networks.

**Remember:** It's your *ideas, goals, and passion* that matter most—clear communication is the key, not perfect English.

## Process Flow



# **Fictional Exemplars**

## **For Guidance Purposes Only**

This exemplar is a fictional application created solely to demonstrate the expected standard, structure, and level of detail required for an IMarEST Student Bursary submission. It is intended to guide applicants and illustrate the minimum level of clarity, completeness, and professionalism expected in a strong application.

IMarEST bursaries support undergraduate and postgraduate students, apprentices, and cadets who are studying or working in marine engineering, marine science, marine technology, or a closely related field. The bursaries aim to help Student Members undertake technical research or community projects that contribute to the marine profession.

# IMarEST Student Bursary Application Form



IMarEST bursaries are targeted at undergraduate and postgraduate students, cadets and apprentices studying or working in marine engineering, marine science and marine technology and related topics. The purpose of the bursaries are to encourage and support IMarEST Student members to work on technical research projects or community based projects.

To apply an individual must be:

- Current IMarEST Student (SIMarEST) member
- Enrolled in a full time undergraduate or postgraduate course or undertaking a cadetship or apprenticeship at time of application
- Studying topics or working (if an apprentice) in a field related to marine engineering, science or technology

Please complete this form online and send us the saved completed form via e-mail to [awards@imarest.org](mailto:awards@imarest.org)

## SECTION 1 – PERSONAL DETAILS

### 1.1 Contact Information

Surname/Family Name	Doe
Forename(s)	Jane
SIMarEST Number	800123456
Daytime Telephone Number	+44 7700 000000
Email Address	janedoe@exampleemail.com

Address	148 Seawind Crescent, Harbourview
County/State/Province	Devon
Postcode/Zipcode	AB0 1CD
Country	United Kingdom

## 1.2 Education

Current Course	MSc Marine Science and Technology
Institution	Northshore Institute of Marine Engineering
Date Started	25 September 2025
Course Duration	One year (full time)
Performance Indicator (please provide modules studied and grades received)	Advanced Oceanography: 71 Marine Robotics: 73 Autonomous Survey Systems: 68 Research Methods: 70 Offshore Surveying: to be confirmed Coastal Systems Management: to be confirmed
Previous Qualifications	BSc Marine Biology (First Class Honours) University of South Coast A Levels in Biology, Physics and Mathematics (A, A, B)

## SECTION 2 – PROJECT DESCRIPTION

*Please give a brief overview of your project or activity including statement of purpose, method, and impact.*

**Project Title: Assessing the Operational Performance of Compact Autonomous Surface Vehicles in Nearshore Benthic Habitat Surveys.** Autonomous systems are becoming increasingly important for modern coastal monitoring. They offer safer and lower emission alternatives to traditional vessel-based surveys. However, there is limited practical understanding of how compact autonomous surface vehicles perform in dynamic nearshore environments.

**Access to the autonomous surface vehicle used in this project is provided through the Coastal Robotics and Surveying Laboratory at the Northshore Institute of Marine Engineering. The Laboratory has agreed to support the work by supplying the vehicle, technical oversight, and pre-deployment training. The operational and maintenance costs of the vehicle are covered by the Laboratory’s research budget. As a result, the bursary is required only for travel, accommodation, and essential deployment logistics at the survey sites.**

This project will evaluate the reliability, accuracy, and operational practicality of a compact autonomous surface vehicle that is equipped with side scan sonar and environmental sensors. The purpose is to assess how well the system collects benthic habitat data under different environmental conditions.

Two coastal sites have been selected for this investigation. St Brides Bay in Wales provides a moderately exposed environment with mixed sediment types. Portree Sound on the Isle of Skye offers a more sheltered setting with stronger tidal movement and varied seabed characteristics. Together, these locations provide an effective comparison for assessing real-world performance.

The project will collect data on acoustic imagery, environmental conditions, navigation behaviour, battery endurance, and operational stability. These results will be compared with conventional small vessel survey methods to identify strengths, limitations, and recommendations for using compact autonomous systems in routine coastal habitat work.

This research supports the mission of the Institute to advance marine engineering, science, and technology and encourages safe, modern, and sustainable approaches to marine data collection.

## SECTION 3 – APPLICANT PERSONAL STATEMENT

### 3.1 Purpose of funding

*Please give details of how you intend to use the funding and how the project supports the IMarEST mission and vision*

Funding is required to support travel, accommodation, and local operational costs for the two field deployments. The bursary will contribute to fuel, equipment transport, accommodation, and harbour or launch fees.

Both survey trips are essential for generating a complete dataset. Without financial support, I would only be able to complete a single local deployment, which would significantly reduce the scientific value and comparative insight of the research.

The project aligns strongly with IMarEST objectives. These include sustainable marine practice, responsible technological innovation, and supporting the professional development of those entering the marine sector. It also supports the aims of the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development by supporting low carbon and responsible monitoring methods.

#### Budget Summary

Site	Return Distance	Estimated Cost	Notes
St Brides Bay Wales	410 miles	£312	Fuel, two nights accommodation, launch fee
Portree Sound Isle of Skye	684 miles	£507	Fuel, three nights accommodation, equipment transport
Total Estimated Cost		£819	

I understand that the IMarEST bursary award provides up to £500 for applicants in Group A countries and that any amount awarded will significantly support the successful delivery of this project.

### 3.2 Candidate Statement

*What does this award mean to you and, if awarded, how will it help you? Please provide any additional information or statements if applicable.*

My academic background and practical experience reflect my strong interest in marine science and technology. I have developed a particular passion for the use of autonomous systems to support safe, efficient, and environmentally considerate monitoring of the marine environment.

This bursary would allow me to gain valuable field experience with an emerging technology and contribute original findings that will benefit the scientific and professional community. The project will also support my long-term aim to work in offshore environmental monitoring and marine robotics.

As a Student Member of IMarEST, I value the role the Institute plays in developing early career professionals. I am committed to sharing my work with the community and supporting wider knowledge exchange.

### 3.3 Outreach

Please give details of how, if funded, you will present the outcomes of your project to IMarEST members  
If I receive this bursary, I will share the outcomes of my research with the IMarEST community through the following activities:

- A presentation to relevant IMarEST Special Interest Groups
- An article for The Marine Professional
- A blog contribution to Sea Your Future
- A short webinar on the use of autonomous surface vehicles in sustainable marine surveying

These outputs will ensure that the findings benefit other students, early career professionals, and the wider membership.

### SECTION 4 – REFEREE DETAILS

Note to referee – by signing this form you hereby state that you are in support of the candidate’s application for an IMarEST Student Bursary and believe all information given to be correct. Please note that you may be contacted to provide a written statement in support of this application.

Title	Dr
Full Name	Eleanor Hart
Job Title	Senior Lecturer in Marine Technology
Institution	Northshore Institute of Marine Engineering
Email Address	ehart@example.com
Signature	<i>Example signature</i>

### SECTION 5 – APPLICANT DECLARATION

Have you ever applied for an IMarEST award before?

 Y N

Give details (if applicable) N/A
-------------------------------------

I confirm that I have met the criteria for this award and all information given in this application and any supporting documents is correct. I hereby apply for an IMarEST student bursary.

Signature:

*Example signature*

Date:

1 January 2026

# IMarEST Student Bursary Application Form



IMarEST bursaries are targeted at undergraduate and postgraduate students, cadets and apprentices studying or working in marine engineering, marine science and marine technology and related topics. The purpose of the bursaries are to encourage and support IMarEST Student members to work on technical research projects or community based projects.

To apply an individual must be:

- Current IMarEST Student (SIMarEST) member
- Enrolled in a full time undergraduate or postgraduate course or undertaking a cadetship or apprenticeship at time of application
- Studying topics or working (if an apprentice) in a field related to marine engineering, science or technology

Please complete this form online and send us the saved completed form via e-mail to [awards@imarest.org](mailto:awards@imarest.org)

## SECTION 1 – PERSONAL DETAILS

### 1.1 Contact Information

Surname/Family Name	Doe
Forename(s)	Giannis Michael
SIMarEST Number	800123457
Daytime Telephone Number	+30 690 000 0000
Email Address	giannismdoe@exampleemail.com
Address	7 Paralia Street
County/State/Province	Athens
Postcode/Zipcode	123 45
Country	Greece

## 1.2 Education

Current Course	BSc Marine Biology
Institution	Athens Institute of Marine Engineering & Science
Date Started	01 September 2024
Course Duration	Four years (full time)
Performance Indicator (please provide modules studied and grades received)	Marine Vertebrate Biology: 71 Marine Ecology: 68 Oceanographic Processes: 72 Marine Conservation Biology: 67 Field Research Skills: to be confirmed Mediterranean Marine Systems: to be confirmed
Previous Qualifications	Apolytirio Lykeio (General Lyceum Certificate) Biology, Chemistry and Mathematics concentration Final Grade: 18.7 out of 20

## SECTION 2 – PROJECT DESCRIPTION

*Please give a brief overview of your project or activity including statement of purpose, method, and impact.*

**Activity Title: Attendance at the 37th Annual European Cetacean Society Conference, Dundee, Scotland, 20 to 24 April 2026**

The European Cetacean Society Conference for 2026 will take place in Dundee, Scotland, from 20 to 24 April 2026. The programme includes student training workshops, keynote presentations, oral and poster sessions, technical events and professional networking opportunities focused on cetacean research, monitoring techniques and wider marine conservation topics.

I intend to participate in the full programme and have submitted an abstract for a student poster presentation on marine mammal presence in the Saronic Gulf using acoustic recordings collected through my undergraduate research. Attending ECS 2026 will allow me to expand my scientific knowledge, develop professional networks and explore new approaches to cetacean science that are relevant to Mediterranean ecosystems.

I am also an active member of the IMarEST Marine Mammals Special Interest Group. In addition to attending the event and presenting my work, I will record my experience at the conference and interview speakers and delegates. This digital media content will be produced for IMarEST to support student engagement, outreach and promotion of professional development opportunities. I will also prepare a written blog for the Marine Mammals Special Interest Group to highlight key insights from the event.

## SECTION 3 – APPLICANT PERSONAL STATEMENT

### 3.1 Purpose of funding

*Please give details of how you intend to use the funding and how the project supports the IMarEST mission and vision*

I am requesting support to cover travel from Athens to the United Kingdom, rail travel to Dundee, four nights of accommodation, conference registration and essential local transport. These costs represent a significant financial challenge for a full time student based in Greece.

Attending ECS 2026 will allow me to access advanced knowledge, present my research and contribute creatively to the IMarEST community through digital media and written outputs.

I will cover the remaining balance of the total cost through personal savings and income from my part time employment. I work approximately twelve hours each week during the academic period, which allows me to contribute towards academic and professional development opportunities. Support from the IMarEST bursary will make attendance at ECS 2026 possible by reducing the financial impact.

#### Budget Summary

Item	Estimated Cost
Return flights Athens to Edinburgh	£260
Rail travel Edinburgh to Dundee (return)	£42
Conference registration (student rate)	£250
Accommodation in Dundee (4 nights)	£380
Local transport and subsistence	£80
Total Estimated Cost	£1,012

I understand that the IMarEST bursary provides up to £500 for Group A applicants and that this contribution will support my attendance.

### 3.2 Candidate Statement

*What does this award mean to you and, if awarded, how will it help you? Please provide any additional information or statements if applicable.*

My degree in Marine Biology has given me a strong foundation in ecology, species monitoring and environmental science. I have developed a particular interest in marine mammals and acoustic research methods that support conservation in the Eastern Mediterranean. My current project focuses on the analysis of acoustic recordings to identify the presence and behaviour of dolphins and porpoises in the Saronic Gulf.

Attending the ECS Conference will enhance my knowledge of cetacean research methods and provide valuable opportunities to receive feedback on my work. Presenting my poster will help build my confidence and communication skills.

In addition to academic benefits, I will create digital media for IMarEST to support student engagement. This work aligns with my interests in science communication and broadens the impact of my participation. Producing video content and interviewing researchers will help inspire more students to become active within IMarEST and consider attending future scientific conferences.

This bursary will support my ambitions to work in marine mammal conservation or offshore environmental monitoring in Greece or internationally.

### 3.3 Outreach

Please give details of how, if funded, you will present the outcomes of your project to IMarEST members

If awarded the bursary, I will share the outcomes of my experience with the IMarEST community and my institution through the following actions:

- A seminar at the Hellenic Institute of Marine and Environmental Studies
- A blog for the IMarEST Marine Mammals Special Interest Group
- Filmed digital media content, including interviews with speakers and delegates, produced for IMarEST to support outreach and member engagement

These contributions will support students and early career professionals across the IMarEST community.

### SECTION 4 – REFEREE DETAILS

Note to referee – by signing this form you hereby state that you are in support of the candidate’s application for an IMarEST Student Bursary and believe all information given to be correct. Please note that you may be contacted to provide a written statement in support of this application.

Title	Dr
Full Name	Vasilis Petropoulos
Job Title	Senior Lecturer in Marine Technology
Institution	Athens Institute of Marine Engineering
Email Address	vpetropoulos@example.com
Signature	<i>Example signature</i>

### SECTION 5 – APPLICANT DECLARATION

Have you ever applied for an IMarEST award before?

 Y N

Give details (if applicable)

N/A

I confirm that I have met the criteria for this award and all information given in this application and any supporting documents is correct. I hereby apply for an IMarEST student bursary.

Signature:

*Example signature*

Date:

24 February 2025