



#EU4Ocean  
#Youth4Ocean  
#EUBlueSchools



# Why and how to be a Mentor for a Young Ocean Advocate



# About the EU4Ocean Coalition

The [EU4Ocean Coalition](#) is a project funded by the European Commission and implemented by a consortium of 13 partners across Europe. The EU4Ocean Coalition is also supported by a group of associated networks and the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO (IOC/UNESCO).

The Coalition gathers all ocean literacy stakeholders who are committed to strengthening the network of initiatives around Europe and contributing to a healthy ocean that sustains us all. The EU4Ocean Coalition is composed of three communities working together towards common goals, namely: the **EU4Ocean Platform**, the **Youth4Ocean Forum**, and the **Network of EU Blue Schools**.

## Who are the Young Ocean Advocates?

The **Youth4Ocean Forum** is not only a place for young people passionate about the ocean to connect, exchange, and learn together, but also a place for young project leaders to get recognition and visibility for their work and their projects.

Young Forum members who have an idea or are already implementing a project get the chance to be accredited by the European Commission as a **Young Ocean Advocate (YOA)**. This opens up many doors to them, as they get offered opportunities to showcase their project at European and international ocean events, and benefit from the support and expertise of all three EU4Ocean communities.

YOA projects range from arts, sports, and education to developing innovative solutions in the blue economy. The Youth4Ocean Forum welcomes projects at different stages of implementation and from diverse domains. [Get to know the Young Ocean Advocates and their projects here!](#)

## The Mentorship Programme

The Youth4Ocean Forum facilitators aim to support the Young Ocean Advocates' projects and involve YOAs in capacity- and skills-building activities. An important part of these activities is represented by the Mentorship programme: YOAs are paired with one (or more) expert(s) who will make themselves available to help them with professional development and project implementation. Young Ocean Advocates thereby get access to tailored resources and training to gain the skills they need to develop their projects further.

**If you are reading this, it means that someone from the Youth4Ocean team has either contacted you because you have filled the online form to show interest in becoming a mentor, or because we have actively reached out to you because your expertise and experience aligns well with one of our YOA projects.**

You might have a few questions about your role as a potential mentor. We got you covered!

## The benefits of being a mentor

While the YOAs will benefit from the Mentoring Programme through the advice and support they will receive for their project and professional developments, mentors will also gain a lot from their participation in the Mentorship Programme, for example:

- Meeting knowledgeable, talented, passionate, creative young people who have great ideas;
- Learning about the projects developed by Young Ocean Advocates and supporting them in the implementation of their projects to deliver great impact;
- Sharing their experience and expertise;
- Expanding perspectives through interesting and insightful discussions;
- Identifying potential future partnerships and cooperation.

## FAQ

### 1. How much time will I have to dedicate to mentoring?

The time commitment for mentoring can vary depending on your Young Ocean Advocate's needs, but it should not exceed one online meeting and a few email exchanges per month. This process begins with an initial meeting, arranged by the Youth4Ocean facilitation team, where you and your mentee can get to know each other and set expectations. You can decide on the communication channels and the frequency of your interactions, whether ad-hoc or on a regular schedule (e.g., monthly or bi-monthly). Alternatively, the mentor can choose to carry out their mentoring activities by recording short seminars for the mentee.

### 2. What kind of support could I provide as a mentor?

We define the needs for mentoring based on requests expressed by Young Ocean Advocates. This can include support in a wide diversity of fields including, for example, scientific expertise (e.g. current understanding about a specific scientific topic); technical expertise (e.g. support with coding), communication (e.g. ways to communicate about the project, how to publish a book, advise on social media management), local community engagement (e.g. guidelines, good practices), networking, science mediation, finding projects partners, fundraising and searching for European funding opportunities. As a mentor, you do not need to know everything there is to know about the subject. What the Young Ocean Advocates are interested in is your expertise and experience on the subject, what you may know that can help them, your advice on where and how to get further support or information, what works and what does not.

### 3. How can I support my YOA best?

To support your Young Ocean Advocate effectively, actively listen to their ideas and goals, provide constructive feedback, and share your expertise and resources. Be available for regular check-ins, encourage their progress, and help them navigate challenges. Tailoring your support to their specific needs and maintaining open, supportive communication can make a significant impact on their project. Small actions can go a long way, such as keeping an eye out for opportunities for their project, or sharing resources (articles, webinars etc.) related to their project.

### 4. What do I gain from being a mentor and how can I communicate about my contribution to the Mentorship Programme?

Great question! We hope the Mentorship Programme is mutually beneficial. Our Young Ocean Advocates have amazing, creative projects that can inspire and motivate you. Knowing you played a part in advancing their projects and advocating for ocean protection and conservation is rewarding in itself. Additionally, you can highlight your volunteer engagement on your CV or LinkedIn profile, listing [Youth4Ocean Forum](#) as the affiliated organisation. If you are a researcher, your participation in this programme could fit your research project's required volunteering and educational activities - in that sense, we can provide a written declaration of your efforts as a mentor when required.

### 5. What happens if my availability changes and I cannot be a mentor anymore?

If your availability changes and you can no longer continue as a mentor, please inform us as soon as possible. We understand that circumstances can change, and we will work to reassign your mentee to another mentor. Your early communication will help ensure a smooth transition and continued support for the Young Ocean Advocate.

### 6. What happens if I feel like my mentee and I are not a good match?

No worries, it happens! If you find that your expertise does not align with the project or you struggle to connect with your mentee, just let us know. We can reassign you to another Young Ocean Advocate if you are open to that.

### 7. Is this a paid position?

No, this is a voluntary position. We cannot offer any compensation for your engagement as a mentor.

# Contacts

The Youth4Ocean Forum facilitation team is always there if you have any further questions about the Mentorship programme. Please don't hesitate to **reach out by email to [sarah@yeenet.eu](mailto:sarah@yeenet.eu)**.