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Little waves make a big ocean!

NETWORK OF EUROPEAN BLUE SCHOOLS

## The Network of European Blue Schools

### *Find the Blue*

European Blue Schools bring the ocean into the classroom. On the journey to becoming a European Blue School, teachers and pupils will improve their understanding of the ocean and develop a sense of responsibility towards our shared planet. Creating awareness and a feeling of responsibility for our ocean (so-called Ocean Literacy) encourages students to become more active and responsible European and global citizens. The program challenges schools to *Find the Blue* and explore their connections to the ocean while creating networks all across Europe. The Network of European Blue Schools is an initiative of the European Commission, supported by DG MARE and was developed by the EU4Ocean Coalition partners.

### **Why become a European Blue School?**

Schools that take up the *Find the Blue* challenge shall identify an ocean-based topic that is relevant to their students, and collaborate with their pupils to create a school project. The aim is to make the ocean a relevant part of the school curriculum through project-based learning. Student ownership, collaborations with other organizations and people involved with the ocean and creating a community with the same passion will be key values of these projects. By successfully completing the *Find the Blue* challenge, schools will receive a European Blue School certification.

All certified European Blue Schools become part of the **Network of European Blue Schools**, where teachers and students:

- become agents of change for ocean sustainability;
- share experiences with teachers and students from other schools;
- connect to the wider ocean literacy community.

### **How to become a European Blue School?**

Every project that a school submits to become a European Blue School should achieve the following **five compulsory criteria**:

#### **1. Develop a project with interlinked activities:**

A project consists of several complementary activities under the umbrella of one central topic. Enable students to gain more in-depth knowledge and skills by working for an extended period of time to explore and investigate an ocean topic, question or problem.

#### **2. Produce a clear output:**

The initiative encourages students to be active learners and develop a product, object, event or service that can be exhibited or used as a tool for communication. Be resourceful and start creating.



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### 3. **Involve all students:**

Students play an active role in all phases of the project. The teacher facilitates learning and guides students to become independent workers, allowing them to show what they can do.

### 4. **Collaborate with a local partner:**

Collaborative work is key to success. Invite an expert, marine scientist, NGO, science centre, maritime company and/or government body to help facilitate the creation, implementation and communication of the project.

### 5. **Communicate project results:**

Let students improve their communication skills and feel more engaged with their local community by talking about the project in a meaningful and informed way, starting with their own social environment.

After successfully completing the project in line with the five compulsory criteria, schools will receive the **European Blue School certification**. We are happy to accept applications for a range of projects, but do encourage teachers to think about developing more complex project ideas that include e.g. participation with other teachers in the school or international collaborations that provide your students with the opportunity to make real impact and increase the authentic learning experiences beyond the classroom walls. Below you can find **five optional criteria** for teacher who wish to take their project to the next level:

### 1. **Provide authentic learning experiences:**

Provide the students with opportunities to *Find the Blue* both in the classroom and in real-life settings. This initiative allows pupils to apply what they learned in class in hands-on projects with real-life relevance and impact.

### 2. **Work in a multi-disciplinary manner:**

Explore your topic through many school subjects, allowing access for students with different strengths, viewpoints and interests. Multi-disciplinary projects provide learning opportunities beyond science. You can incorporate aspects of e.g. languages, history, (water) sport, art or economy.

### 3. **Mobilize beyond the classroom:**

This initiative allows you to move beyond your classroom by offering opportunities for collaboration among teachers of different disciplines, diverse age groups and numerous subjects. The project creates an opportunity to work as a school, and not just a class.

### 4. **Foster land-sea interaction:**

Schools from coastal areas are invited to collaborate with inland schools to exchange experiences and information on the differences and similarities they observe in their environments, economies or culture. Cooperation is facilitated via eTwinning.

### 5. **Bring in a European dimension:**

This initiative facilitates cultural exchange amongst European schools, allowing students to see themselves and their work in a European context and collaborate with peers from across the Union. The initiative offers the opportunity to connect with different partner schools via eTwinning, travel abroad via a funded exchange programme, or develop more permanent collaborations.



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## Are you up for the challenge? Submit your application!

Is your school ready to take on the *Find the Blue* challenge? Here are the steps you need to take to start your ride on the wave of change:

Your first step is to download the Handbook for Teachers. The Handbook outlines the teaching principles behind the European Blue School initiative and the European Blue School certification process. It includes a step-by-step guide for developing your own blue project, ideas and tools that can help you get started, as well as a variety of inspiring projects from all over Europe.

European Schoolnet has published a complementary curriculum analysis on oceans-related initiatives in schools in Belgium, France, Portugal, Croatia, Greece, Romania, Germany, Finland and the UK.

The European Blue School initiative is open to all schools within the European Union. These schools can apply to receive the certification and can take part in the online European Blue School Community.

By submitting your project to become a European Blue School, you will gain access to the online **European Blue School community**, where you will soon find:

1. Professional development seminars for teachers
2. Access to resources from the members of the EU4Ocean Platform
3. Q&A discussion forum
4. News and updates
5. Funding opportunities
6. Calls for collaboration
7. Partner schools

## Follow these steps to submit your application

### Step 1: Create your EU Login

The Network of European Blue Schools is hosted on the official Maritime Forum website of the European Commission. You will require a EU Login and password to submit your application and participate in our online community.

*If you already have an EU Login, you can request direct access to the Maritime Forum website and skip steps a & b.*

- a. Go to the page <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/cas/login> and click on "Create an account" on the EU Login main page. Fill in the provided form with your personal details (on behalf of the school, as its representative).
- b. You will receive an email from the EU Login automated password service. Follow the instructions to set your password.
- c. Before you can login with your EU Login to the Maritime Forum website, you need to choose **your verification method**. Go to <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/cas/login> and log in with your chosen password. Once successfully authenticated, move the mouse over the gear in the top right corner to display the menu and select "My Account". Click on "Manage my **mobile phone numbers**". Click on



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"Add a mobile phone number". When clicking "Add", an SMS is sent to your mobile device. The SMS contains a code that you need to type in. Click on "Finalize".

- d. After you have set your password and verification method, open the [Maritime Forum website](#) and log in by clicking on "EU Login". Choose "Mobile Phone + SMS" as a verification method and type in the code that will be sent to your mobile phone number.
- e. After you have logged in to the Maritime Forum website for the first time, your account needs to be activated by an administrator. This might take up to one or two days in some cases. After your account has been activated, you will receive an automated email. You can now submit your application form (step 2).

If you have any problems or questions regarding the EU Login process, please take a look at the [website user manual](#) or [contact the support](#) of the European Commission.

### Step 2: Fill out the online application form

The application form is available as from 1<sup>st</sup> March 2020 in English only.

### Step 3: Get on board

Your application is evaluated by reviewers of the Network of European Blue Schools. You will receive the certification if your application matches the above-mentioned five compulsory criteria for projects valid for European Blue School certification. Should the project not fulfil the requirements for certification, we will contact you with further information.

Applications are reviewed twice a year.

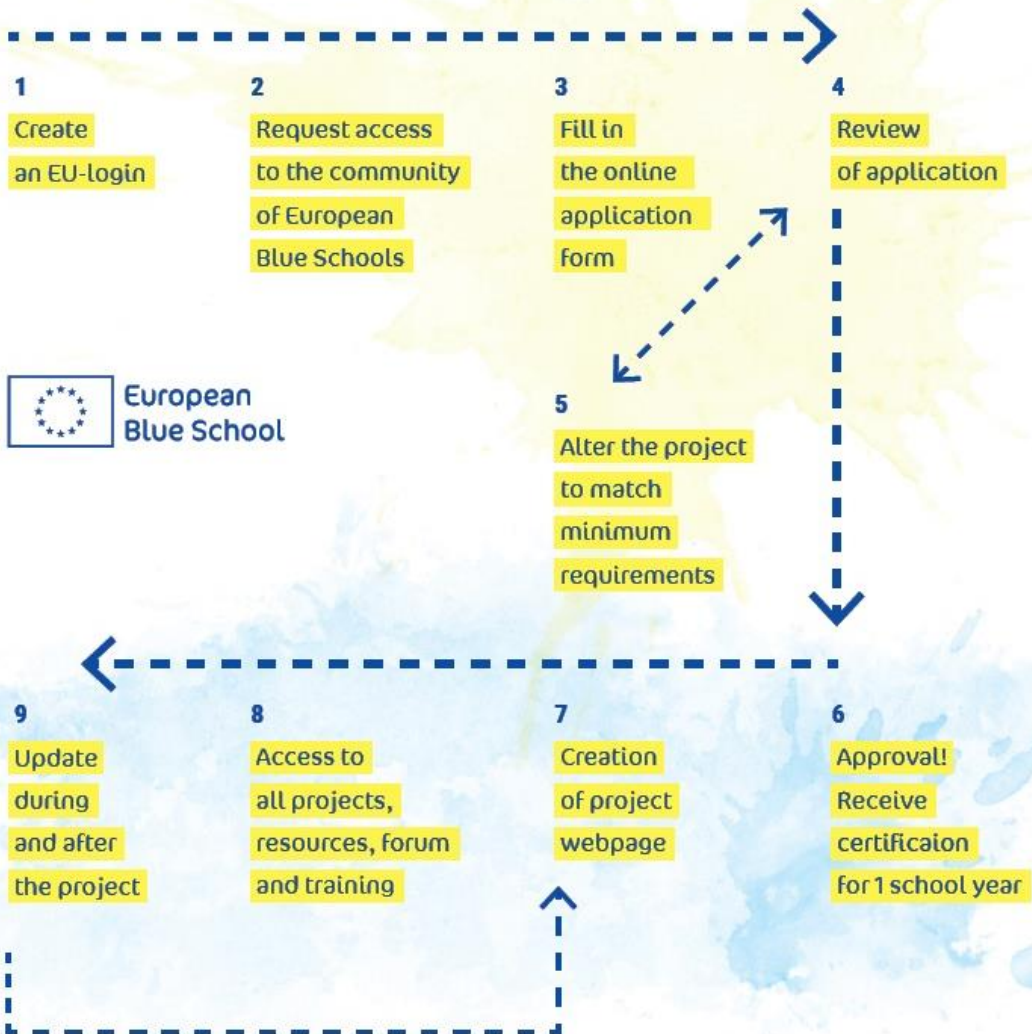
- Submissions for the 1st semester are accepted between 15 August and 15 November. Certification is granted in January.
- Submissions for the 2nd semester are accepted between 15 January and 15 March. Certification is granted in April.

Successful applications will be showcased on the map of European Blue Schools. Every school will have its own webpage that you can manage and update.

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## Apply for the European Blue School certification



*We are happy to have you on board!*