

Discover the Mysteries of the Deep

Founded in 1930, the WHOI is the largest independent oceanographic research institution in the U.S., with staff and students numbering about 1,000. For student group travelers with an interest in science or marine biology, the WHOI offers a fascinating world of ocean research. Its research departments include Ocean Physics and Engineering, Biology, Marine Chemistry, Oceanography, and Geology. The facility's four Ocean Institutes have an ambitious agenda for future ocean research to benefit society and include the Coastal Ocean Institute, Deep Ocean Exploration Institute, Ocean and Climate Change Institute, and the Ocean Life Institute. WHOI also operates four main research vessels: Atlantis, Knorr, Oceanus, and Tioga.

Students touring the WHOI's Ocean Science Exhibit Center learn about the ocean science research programs and the vessels and tools developed by engineers and scientists for that research. Short videos provide an introduction to WHOI, show a day in the life of the deep submersible Alvin, and highlight the discovery and exploration of the wreck of the Titanic.

Students then step into a full-size model of the inner sphere of Alvin and imagine life at the ocean floor while watching vivid footage taken at deep-sea hydrothermal vent sites. Interactive exhibits feature whale and dolphin research and explore the roles sound and hearing play in the lives of marine mammals. Other exhibits and videos feature the life forms and natural processes of the deep sea. Student groups visiting the WHOI Exhibit Center can enhance their visit with a presentation by a docent. A group presentation provides visitors with an overview of what they will see and learn throughout the center.

During the summer months, WHOI volunteers guide visitors on free walking tours through the WHOI dock area and other restricted village facilities. The one-hour tours provide background on the research conducted at WHOI and on the history of the institution. Tours run from late June through early September, Monday through Friday at 10:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m.

Combined with a visit to WHOI, students may opt to continue their marine world experiences at the New England Aquarium in Boston. The Caribbean Coral Reef Exhibit is a 200,000-gallon tank and the centerpiece of the aquarium. The reef accommodates not only sharks, sea turtles, and barracuda, but also hundreds of smaller exotic tropical fishes, and is one of the most accurate recreations of its kind.

During their visit to the aquarium, students can also explore the world of penguins, sea dragons, seals, freshwater fish, and much more. Whale watching cruises whisk students to whale feeding grounds, just 30 miles east of Boston. The aquarium's giant IMAX screen takes students on journeys to the bottom of the sea, outer space, and everywhere in between.

The New England Aquarium's scientists and explorers travel the world's ocean to uncover mysteries, from sunlit coral reefs to the unexplored depths. The aquarium was one of the first in the world to create a Conservation Department and has been a leader in creating an appropriate conservation plan for aquariums.

About the Author

[travel adventures](#) Travel Adventures is a student tour provider staffed by educators who understand the needs of teachers. It has served over one half million students since 1987 and its mission is to "empower teachers to create change by expanding the classroom to the world."

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