



STUDENTS ON ICE
FOUNDATION • FONDATION

Written Submission for the Pre-Budget Consultations in
Advance of the Upcoming Federal Budget

Submitted by:
Students on Ice Foundation
President & Founder,
Geoff Green C.M., C.Q., PhD (Hons), FI'03, FRCGS

Natural Heritage Campus | 1740 Pink Road | Gatineau, QC, Canada J9J 3N7

t 819-827-3300 | **tf** 1-866-336-6423 | **f** 819-827-9951

www.studentsonice.com

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Recommendation 1: That the government provide funding in the amount of \$35 million over 5 years for the **Blue Futures** program.

What is Blue Futures?

Canada has the longest coastline and greatest freshwater resources in the world. We are extraordinarily unique and blessed to be an Ocean Nation, a Water Nation, and a Polar Nation. However, we have largely taken all of this for granted and mismanaged these natural assets over many decades. We have a staggering blind spot when it comes to how this all shapes our identity, and our past, present and our future.

Blue Futures (2021-2025) will help Canada and Canadians become global leaders in many of these spaces, in particular the Sustainable Blue Economy (SBE), the Conservation Economy, Indigenous Protected Areas, and Ocean & Water Literacy. **Blue Futures** will help Canada to reach its targets of being net-zero by 2050, protecting 30% of our lands and waters by 2030, being a global climate leader, and much more.

There is a tremendous need and opportunity here for Canada. Yet we need to overcome identified gaps in reaching our full potential. To help achieve this, we are proposing to create a dynamic expedition ship program to serve as a uniquely Canadian platform for conservation, science, education, training, collaboration and communication.

The SOI Foundation planned and led the enormously successful Canada C3 expedition, a Canada 150 signature initiative in 2017, which proved the effectiveness of having a dedicated vessel capable of connecting diverse Canadians and organizations, forging new partnerships, raising awareness and understanding, and being a catalyst for great initiatives and ventures. The 150 day, 25,000km journey from coast to coast to coast reached millions of Canadians and is widely considered the most impactful Canada 150 initiatives. Hundreds of legacies continue to grow.

We have an opportunity to acquire the same vessel we used for Canada C3, the MV Polar Prince, a Canadian-built and flagged 230ft icebreaker (formally the CCG Sir Humphrey Gilbert) to use as the Blue Futures platform beginning in 2021. We have negotiated with the owners of the vessel a purchase price of \$1. We are seeking operational and program funds for the next 5 years (\$7 million a year). Additional funding for Blue Futures will come from the private sector.



Blue Futures is founded and built upon rich and diverse partnerships. In particular, partnerships with Indigenous peoples, organizations and communities. After all, they have been the guardians of our lakes, rivers and coastlines, and have had 'sustainable blue economies' for millennia.

During the Canada C3 journey, we were reminded firsthand from the time we left the tip of Newfoundland until we arrived almost 4 months later to the tip of Vancouver Island, that we were exclusively in Indigenous communities. That represents 70% of Canada's coastline. The relevance of the ocean and cryosphere to Canada and particularly to Indigenous peoples cannot be over-emphasized.

Who are we?

The Students on Ice Foundation (SOIF) is a renowned and respected global leader in ocean, polar and environmental education. We are a non-profit registered charity in Canada (CRA 836648766 RT0001) based in Gatineau, QC. Our headquarters are housed within the Natural History Campus of the Canadian Museum of Nature.

20 years of experience has made SOIF a pioneer in experiential education, youth engagement, cross-cultural learning, and empowering leadership that serves a sustainable future.

Organization websites

www.studentsonice.com

www.canadac3.ca

With our outstanding track record of delivering complex programs, we are uniquely suited to lead Blue Futures, as an Ambassador vessel and program for Canada's coastlines, and springboard into the SBE's vast education, economic, entrepreneurial, conservation and career opportunities through:

- An extensive network of partners and stakeholders including governments, businesses, Indigenous organizations, youth, alumni, and communities in every province & territory and throughout the world.
- 20 years of experience operating expedition and research vessels in remote regions of the world
- Robust communications with a wide-reaching global, digital audience to enable our programs to flourish.
- SOIF also has a strong history of working with Indigenous organizations and peoples. We are partnered with both the AFN and ITK. In 2019, over 50% of expedition participants were Indigenous and we continue to support youth and partners in the Indigenous communities through access to tools and platforms.

Some important and relevant facts:

Many countries around the world with a coastline have developed a Blue Economy or Blue Growth policy, program or statement.

The “blue” portion of any economy depends on water. For example, some island nations have economies that depend heavily on fishing, shipping, aquaculture or tourism. For larger countries with longer coastlines, Blue Economies may also include underwater resources, renewable energy, Marine Conservation Areas, and scientific research. Either way, the Blue Economy provides food, jobs and water, and is a source of economic growth—and it is poised to expand, especially in the Arctic as climate change opens up shipping passages and creates new opportunities and challenges. It is critical that we do this all in smartest and most sustainable ways. Life on land needs a healthy ocean.

SUSTAINABILITY CHALLENGES AND GLOBAL RESPONSE

Our oceans face major challenges. Almost a third of the world’s fish stocks are over fished. Marine and coastal ecosystems and infrastructure are affected by warmer temperatures. Pollution threatens the ocean’s health and biodiversity. Every other breath we take comes from the ocean.

If we are to rely on the Sustainable Blue Economy as a source of economic growth and employment in the future, we have to ensure we are using its resources sustainably. The good news is that the global community is responding. The first ever United Nations Ocean Conference in 2017, the G7-meeting in Canada in June 2018, and the Blue Economy Conference in Kenya (co-hosted by Canada) in December 2018 are indications that the world is stepping up.

THE SUSTAINABLE BLUE ECONOMY: TRENDING

- The United Nations has proclaimed a Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021 to 2030).
- Canada made the Blue Economy a cornerstone of its G7 presidency and co-hosted the first global Sustainable Blue Economy Conference in Nairobi, with more than 18,000 participants from 184 countries.
- Also in 2018, the European Commission, European Investment Bank, World Resources Institute and WWF launched the world’s first global framework to finance a sustainable ocean economy.

“By 2050, the world’s population is projected to be at least 9 billion, with corresponding demands for food, jobs, energy, raw materials and economic growth...The potential of the ocean to help meet these requirements is huge, but the ocean is already under stress from overexploitation, pollution, declining biodiversity and climate change. Care needs to be taken to

increase the sustainability of the ocean economy while harnessing its benefits.” (OECD Innovation for a Sustainable Blue Economy, 2016 & 2019).

The OECD anticipates that advances in these emerging SBE sectors could result in a doubling of the ocean industry’s contribution to Gross Value Added to USD 3 trillion by 2030, and an additional 40 million full-time equivalent jobs.

WWF, the UN and the World Bank state that in order to qualify as components of a Sustainable Blue Economy (SBE), activities need to:

- Provide social and economic benefits for current and future generations;
- Restore, protect, and maintain the diversity, productivity, resilience, core functions, and intrinsic value of marine and freshwater ecosystems;
- Be based on clean technologies, renewable energy, and circular material flows.

BLUE FUTURES PARTNERS

SOIF has many existing and new partners that are interested in supporting Blue Futures, including:

1. ArcticNet
2. Assembly of First Nations (AFN)
3. Canada Goose
4. Canadian Coastguard (CCG)
5. Canadian Ice Service (CIS)
6. Canadian Museum of Nature (CMN)
7. Canadian Ocean Literacy Coalition (COLC)
8. Canadian Wildlife Service (CWS)
9. Chantier Davie Shipyard
10. Community Foundations of Canada (CFC)
11. Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO)
12. Environment & Climate Change Canada (ECCC)
13. Eco Canada
14. Fednav
15. Indigenous Leadership Initiative (ILI)
16. Institute for Ocean Research Enterprise (IORE)
17. Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (ITK)
18. Land Needs Guardians Program
19. Live It
20. Marine Institute at Memorial University (MI)
21. Meopar
22. Mitacs
23. NSERC

24. Oceans North
25. Ocean Supercluster
26. Parks Canada
27. POLAR Knowledge Canada
28. Prince's Trust
29. Qikiqtani Inuit Association (QIA)
30. RBC
31. RCGS
32. SSi Canada
33. TakingItGlobal (TiG)
34. University of British Columbia (UBC)
35. Youth Climate Lab

Polar Prince Icebreaker

FAST FACTS

The Polar Prince is equipped with:

- **60 Berths**
- **12 Crew**
- **Communications, science and research infrastructure**
- **High-power satellite internet dish**
- **Wet & dry labs**
- **As a Canadian flagged icebreaker, the Polar Prince has a range of 10,000 nautical miles (19,000 km) at 12 knots (22 km/h)**
- **In class with DNV GL, and meets Polar Code requirements**
- **Presently docked in Lunenburg, Nova Scotia**

During Canada C3, a Canada 150 signature project, the SOIF operated the MV Polar Prince as the Canada C3 expedition vessel. During this unique 150-day journey from Toronto to Victoria through the Northwest Passage, the MV Polar Prince proved itself as a unique, effective and collaborative platform for education, science and communications. Adding the MV Polar Prince as an education, training and communications platform to the Blue Futures program offers an exciting opportunity to expand and further strengthen the Blue Futures program.

While sailing along Canada's coastline the Polar Prince will host teams of 30 to 35 diverse Canadian youth, innovators, business leaders, Indigenous leaders, scientists, guardians, artists, and journalists for journeys that provide participants with hands-on introductions to issues, local knowledge, research, SBE career opportunities. Supported by a team of Sustainable Blue Economy professionals, scientists and educators, participants will get first-hand experience with the life of a professional mariner, participate in ocean research and science projects and receive in-situ introductions to organizations, institutes and companies that play a key role in Canada's Sustainable Blue Economy.

During frequent stops in coastal communities participating Canadians will explore traditional and new players in the SBE, including Harbour authorities, research institutes, fisheries, national parks, marine protected areas, conservation organizations, Guardian programs, etc. Community visits will offer local people the opportunity to visit the Polar Prince and learn about the Sustainable Blue Economy and the associated opportunities.

Each year over 500 youth from all provinces and territories will have the opportunity to participate in a Blue Futures Journey. In addition, thousands of Canadians of all ages will have the opportunity to visit the ship, engage in the online portal, and will be encouraged to enroll in the overall Blue Futures program.

The opportunity to participate in a Blue Futures journey will provide a unique catalyst to the Blue Futures program. Blue Futures will spark the interest and imagination of millions of youth across the country. The journeys, visits and lessons learnt by the participants will provide engaging content for the national Blue Futures media and communications campaign and generate further awareness of the opportunities the SBE has to offer.

The success of Blue Futures will be the start of a sea change in our nation's attitude towards the Sustainable Blue Economy. Canada needs this platform. We can make it happen in 2021.



We really look forward to moving forward together on this important initiative with the meaningful support of the Government of Canada.

Merci beaucoup,
Geoff

Geoff Green, C.M., C.Q., PhD (Hons), FI'03, FRCGS
Founder & President,
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