

Scope Statement for Bridge Collections

Organization Description:

The Bridge (www.marine-ed.org/bridge) is a focused web portal site for ocean sciences education resources. It is supported by Sea Grant and the National Marine Educators Association, and is a partner in the national Centers for Ocean Sciences Education Excellence program. The Bridge is managed by the Virginia Sea Grant Marine Advisory Program at the Virginia Institute of Marine Science, College of William and Mary.

Sea Grant, a NOAA program, is a national partnership linking academia, state, and federal government. The national network of 30 Sea Grant programs connects more than 200 academic institutions and sponsors national, regional, and local programs, supporting marine research, advisory services, and education. Sea Grant educators have a national and regional network of clientele that includes teachers, students, informal educators, and numerous agencies and organizations. Sea Grant's structure provides unique access to accurate and timely marine science information.

The National Marine Educators Association (NMEA) is a private, non-profit corporation, and is the only major national professional organization specifically for marine and aquatic educators. The organization has a membership of approximately 1100 nationwide. NMEA is formally affiliated with the National Science Teachers Association (NSTA), the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS), and the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS).

The Virginia Sea Grant Marine Education Program at VIMS has been active in marine education nationally for more than thirty years. VIMS marine education staff has worked on many curriculum development and teacher training projects, are active in national marine education programs and projects and have developed several large collections of marine education resources, among these the national Marine Education Materials System and the ChesSIE collection. VIMS is a CORE institution and is a member of the Mid-Atlantic Research Consortium for Oceanography, the National Association of Marine Laboratories, and the Southern Association of Marine Laboratories, and the Virginia Marine Science Consortium.

Collection Purpose

The Bridge collections encompass the Bridge Resource Collection and the Bridge News Collection. As educator-reviewed collections of selected on-line ocean science education resources, the Bridge collections provide access to on-line ocean sciences education materials with particular emphasis on K-12 audiences. In addition to instructional materials, the Bridge collections provide links to information about professional development opportunities for teachers, informational materials useful in educational settings, marine careers, student opportunities, aquaria, research institutions, announcements and more. There is a strong focus on research data and its use in teaching. The Bridge collections provide educators with a source of accurate and useful information on global, national, and regional ocean science topics, and give researchers a contact point for educational outreach.

Bridge Objectives:

- Provide educators nationwide with convenient access to quality-assured, current marine information, data, and educational resources.
- Enable the ocean science research community to reach teachers more effectively with current informational products and data.
- Develop broad-based, long-term partnerships.
- Support improved communications and exchange among educators and researchers.
- Inform educators nationwide about the Bridge

Collection policy

The Bridge seeks out on-line resources that are based on accurate, current science and are used and valued by classroom teachers and informal educators.

A four step process leads to approval of a site for the Bridge.

- Consideration begins with site nomination, usually submitted by science educators or researchers. An on-line form is provided for nominations on the Bridge.
- Bridge staff scrutinizes each nomination using the Bridge review criteria. A team of teacher reviewers also contributes to review at this level with on-line reviews.
- Questions about scientific content are researched by the Bridge staff. The Bridge maintains a list of volunteer scientists who assist with content questions and issues.
- All sites on the Bridge are open to follow-up review. Should lack of maintenance cause the content of a site to become out-of date, or if scientific or pedagogical issues emerge, that site is reevaluated and may be deaccessioned.

Criteria that the Bridge uses in selecting sites include:

Educational value

- Practical for instruction, curriculum development, reference, or professional development.
- Appropriate scientific and instructional level for intended audience.
- Enhances learning experience - inspirational, motivational, and engaging.
- Consistent with currently accepted best practices and educational standards of excellence.

Content value

- Useful, important information - interprets basic research or significant current issues or research.
- Covers topic adequately.
- Scientific merit and credibility.

Usability

- Complete instructions, links, contacts, documentation as needed.
- User friendly, well organized, good navigation, well written and edited.
- Quality persists over time.
- Technology is appropriate and enhances content.
- Accessible to those with disabilities, conforms to best practices in web-based communications.

Collection contacts

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Resource terms of use

Bridge webpages are partially or completely a result of research sponsored by NOAA Office of Sea Grant, U.S. Department of Commerce, under federal grants to the Virginia Graduate Marine Science Consortium and the Virginia Sea Grant College Program, and the Department of the Navy, Office of Naval Research. The U.S. Government is authorized to produce and distribute reprints for governmental purposes notwithstanding any copyright notation that may appear within. VIMS/Sea Grant makes no warranty, express or implied as to the accuracy, completeness, or utility of this information, nor does the fact of distribution constitute a warranty. Unless otherwise noted, the pages offered at this site do not represent official statements, views, policy, or position of the Government or of the Virginia Institute of Marine Science, School of Marine Science, The College of William & Mary, its faculty or staff. No official endorsements should be inferred. Unless otherwise noted, Bridge webpages may be reproduced for non-profit educational use provided Sea Grant, the Virginia Institute of Marine Science, and the National Marine Educators Association are credited.

Many Bridge webpages contain links to sites containing copyrighted material. And many resources in the Bridge collection are held by third parties. Therefore Bridge is not authorized by these sites to represent their copyright policies. Bridge users are encouraged to go directly to the cataloged resource to obtain current and accurate copyright and terms of use information for a resource.

Metadata terms of use

Metadata are copyrighted 2006 by the Virginia Institute of Marine Science located at the College of William and Mary. DLESE may modify, reformat and redistribute metadata to function within DLESE systems and services.

Resource quality assurance

Bridge resources made accessible through DLESE adhere to DLESE guidelines, and are carefully reviewed and monitored by project staff. Review policies are overseen by project directors and are a key component of the contractual obligations described in Bridge grants.

Metadata quality assurance

Metadata records come from the Bridge database, which has been revised to reflect DLESE best practices. Metadata is overseen by project directors, and the project's contractual relationships with funding agencies specify management of data using DLESE protocols. All Bridge metadata are generated and managed by the Bridge staff.

Persistence plan

The Bridge is funded via a renewable grant to Virginia Sea Grant from the National Sea Grant Program. It is an important part of Sea Grant's suite of marine education activities, and continuing funding is expected. Supplemental funding from a variety of partners enhances various components of the Bridge.