

## MASTS Small Grant: Laura Wicks

### *Report on*

With the funding from MASTS, we hosted an outreach event at Our Dynamic Earth, Edinburgh, as part of National Science and Engineering Week. The event was titled 'Changing oceans: From coral reefs to renewable energy. Meet the experts working to conserve Scotland's seas', and gave the public the chance to not only hear about the threats facing our oceans today and see stunning high definition footage of Scotland's coral reefs, but also to meet the Scientists working to understand these threats and find solutions. The event focused on the fact that Scotland is at the forefront of the development of marine renewable technologies and ocean energy exploitation, and thus we discussed why investments are being made in this area. The presenters at the event included MASTS member, Prof Murray Roberts, and expert from universities across the MASTS network.



We used high definition footage from the Changing Oceans Expedition, and a brief video introduction to ocean acidification and cold-water corals by Sir David Attenborough. Following the talks, we opened up for discussion, allowing the public to ask questions about ocean acidification, the renewable energy technologies being developed and why the research we do is important. By incorporating a range of disciplines, we hope we engaged the Scottish public with their marine environment, raising awareness of the value of renewable energy schemes, and demonstrate the integrative approach taken by scientists to protect the environment and build a better future.

The event was sold-out, with over 70 people attending, and positive feedback from all attendees. The event was tweeted and appeared on the British Science Association, Heriot-Watt and MASTS websites.

This engaging event and associated promotional material highlighted the important research of MASTS members, and Scotland's prominence in marine science research, and we thank MASTS for their generous support. We hoped to do a follow-up event for NSEW 2014, but I was on maternity leave and thus not available. For 2015, we hope to organise multiple events during NSEW involving members of the MASTS network, connecting with a range of audiences.