

EUROPEAN HERITAGE AWARDS/ EUROPA NOSTRA AWARDS 2025

AWARD

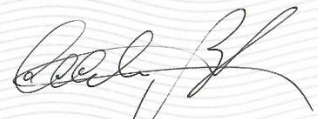
CATEGORY
**CITIZENS'
ENGAGEMENT
& AWARENESS-
RAISING**

Baltic Sea 3D Wrecksite Ontology
Finland

BRUSSELS, 13 OCTOBER 2025



Glenn Micallef
European Commissioner for Intergenerational
Fairness, Youth, Culture and Sport



Cecilia Bartoli
President of Europa Nostra



Co-funded by
the European Union





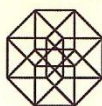
ALFRED KORDELININ SÄÄTIÖ

SUOMEN MERIARKEOLOGINEN SEURA RY

TSV:n tiedepalkinto myönnetään
Suomen meriarkeologiselle seuralle
pitkäaikaisesta ja monitieteisestä merenalaisen
kulttuuriperintötyön edistämisestä

10 000 euroa

Helsingissä 24.3.2025



**Tieteellisten seurain
valtuuskunta**

Alfred Kordelinin säätiö on yksityinen yleishyödyllinen apurahasäätiö, joka tukee tiedettä ja kulttuuria vuosittain noin viidellä miljoonalla eurolla. Tieteellisten seurain valtuuskunnan 100-vuotisrahasto on yksi kuudestatoista Kordelinin säätiön kaupunki- ja kohderahastosta.

EUROPEAN UNION PRIZE FOR
CITIZEN SCIENCE
2025



Honorary Mention

**Baltic Sea 3D Wrecksite Ontology.
Volunteers establishing digital
twins of the soon lost maritime
cultural heritage**


Gerfried Stocker
CEO Ars Electronica


Markus Jandl
CEO Ars Electronica

This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon WIDERA 2021-ERA-01 Research and Innovation Programme under Grant Agreement No 101058677.



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email: info@maritimearchaeologytrust.org
www.maritimearchaeologytrust.org

March 2024

To whom it may concern,

I am writing as the Chair of the UNESCO accredited NGO group for the 2001 Convention on the Protection of Underwater Cultural Heritage and Director of the UK's Maritime Archaeology Trust in support of the Maritime Archaeological Society's (MAS) applications for funding to sustain the great work they undertake.

The underwater cultural heritage is a finite resource that is under continual threat from the environment and human activities. The attention given to these cultural assets off the coast of Finland by MAS has resulted in high standards of recording and diver engagement that has both raised awareness within Finnish society and produced irreplaceable baseline data. In particular, the photogrammetry training and recording of wrecks that MAS deliver is creating a catalogue of high resolution, three dimensional digital wreck models. These models provide a framework against which change in both the material remains and the cover of benthic flora communities can be measured. The cultural and marine biological information this provides reflects the environmental health of the site and the local area.

This data, when combined with similar records from around the globe, can contribute to a broad understanding of oceanic change. But this is only possible where the recording is carried out, repeated for monitoring purposes, and then made openly available and accessible for inclusion in international studies. This is something that MAS are doing and will continue where they are supported to do so. This work is of great maritime archaeological significance and in line with the outcomes of the UN Decade of Ocean Science. As such, this is something that the Accredited NGOs support and wish to see continue. Accordingly, we endorse further applications to ensure thus valuable work is sustained.

With best regards,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Garry Momber', is positioned above the printed name.

Garry Momber

Chair: UN 2001 Convention Accredited NGOs.
Director: Maritime Archaeology Trust

President: Nigel Atkinson Esq, HM Lord-Lieutenant of Hampshire
Vice-Presidents: Commander John M Bingeman, CEng, MIMechE, RN, FSNR • Aldred Drummond • Major General Sir Martin S White, CB, CBE, JP
Mrs Susie Sheldon JP, HM Lord-Lieutenant of the Isle of Wight
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UNIVERSITY OF HELSINKI

Archaeology
Faculty of Arts, Department of Cultures
University of Helsinki

Endorsement for the Maritime Archaeological Society of Finland

To whom it may concern

The Maritime Archaeological Society of Finland (MAS) is the sole representative of the discipline of maritime archaeology within the Learned Societies of Finland (TSV). This officially recognized NonGovernment Organisation status positions MAS among the most important research and education partners of the academic maritime archaeology in Finland, as defined in the Finnish law 938/2006 about TSV societies.

The supportive role of MAS is particularly important in providing underwater fieldwork opportunities for students in maritime archaeology. MAS is annually organizing fieldwork camps and research expeditions, where the students have the possibility on a voluntary basis practice their underwater fieldwork skills and get inspiration in their own pursuit of suitable research topics. In addition, MAS is also involved in both academic and public lectures about citizen science and its management within maritime archaeology thereby further promoting the field. The society publishes field reports, popular scientific articles, and works towards scientific publications. The society is regularly giving statements for the matters related to maritime archaeology. MAS is also among the lead organizers of IKUWA7 in Helsinki, the largest international conference of maritime archaeology to be organised in 2022. Up to date, MAS has almost 200 volunteers, and the financial value of their annual efforts is hundreds of thousands of euros, if measured against commercial operators.

Therefore, as the representative of academic maritime archaeology at the University of Helsinki, I warmly endorse MAS for its role and actions in maritime archaeology and support MAS applications for funding and other resources.

Kristin Ilves
Tenure-track Professor in Maritime Archaeology
01.11.2021



ENDORSEMENT

11.05.2021

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Maritime Archaeological Society of Finland
Markku Luoto, Ykköstie 2
02820 ESPOO

Finnish Maritime Archaeological Society, recommendation

The Finnish Maritime Archaeological Society was founded in 1995 to promote maritime archaeological research, education and recreational activities.

The Society operates in the field of maritime archaeology in a diverse manner, bringing together divers interested in historical wrecks and other underwater cultural heritage. The Society regularly organises training for maritime archaeology enthusiasts. It maintains and develops the Porkkala Wreck Park in Kirkkonummi, opened in 2018, which promotes the accessibility and protection of underwater heritage. The Society's field work camps organised at historical wreck sites around Porkkalanniemi are open to all divers. The Finnish Heritage Agency considers the Society to be an important community archaeological actor that spreads a positive attitude towards underwater cultural heritage and increases understanding of the information content of historical wrecks.

The Society is also active in maritime archaeological research. It produces basic information about underwater cultural heritage by dating and photographing historical wrecks around Porkkalanniemi and the Archipelago Sea, for example. By developing techniques for dating sampling, the Society promotes research. Refining the wreck imagery into 3D models promotes wreck research and is also useful for shipwreck monitoring. The club openly shares the information it produces.

The Finnish Maritime Archaeological Society plays a significant non-profit role in the field of Finland's underwater cultural heritage. The National Board of Antiquities welcomes supporting the activities of the Society.

Intendentti

Maija Matikka



25 September 2025

To Whom It May Concern,

I write in strong support of the Maritime Archaeological Society of Finland (Suomen Meriarkeologinen Seura Ry, or MAS). I am a professor of Maritime Studies at East Carolina University (ECU), a research-intensive institution in the United States. Recently I collaborated with MAS to deliver a field institute for ECU graduate students in maritime archaeology and history. This program brought together MAS volunteers, ECU faculty, and students at Porkkala, Finland, a place of maritime significance from the bronze age to the present day.

MAS is a global leader in citizen science and a recent recipient of the prestigious Europa Nostra award. The society stands at the forefront of exploring and recording shipwreck sites, many of which are threatened by sea ice and modern maritime industries. For the ECU institute, MAS opened many doors. The organization provided its research ship *Stella*, made scuba and survey equipment available to our team, and gave recommendations for terrestrial and underwater sites suited to graduate research. MAS also facilitated interaction with Finnish scholars, volunteers, and students; supplied historical and archaeological reference materials; and coordinated with national authorities for permitting and reporting of finds. They organized a day-long conference to discuss recent scholarship in maritime history and archaeology, and they served as a liaison to secure accommodations, transportation, and excursions in Finland. The institute would not have been possible without the generous support and assistance of the Maritime Archaeological Society of Finland. I believe the recent collaboration will lead to a lasting relationship between MAS and ECU Maritime Studies in future years.

For these reasons, I strongly endorse the work of the Maritime Archaeological Society of Finland. Their dedication to maritime heritage is exemplary, and their partnership has already made a lasting impact on students, faculty, and the wider scholarly community. I look forward to continuing cooperation with MAS and to seeing their contributions recognized internationally.

Regards.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Eric Oakley", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Eric Oakley, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor
Department of History
Program in Maritime Studies
East Carolina University

24 September 2025

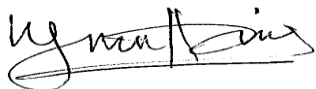
To whom it may concern:

I am writing as a professor in the Program of Maritime Studies in the History Department at East Carolina University (ECU), USA to recommend the outstanding work of the Maritime Archaeology Society (MAS) in Finland and strongly endorse their applications for funding to continue this valuable contribution to maritime heritage management and research in the future.

Our ECU core Maritime faculty are active, publishing scholars who engage regularly in maritime fieldwork initiatives with students. We are also members of a History Department with two dozen historians who provide additional instruction and guidance. The underwater archaeology faculty teaches a broad range of courses including material culture, excavation, conservation, archaeological principles, and history. In September 2025 MAS partnered with our Program in Maritime Studies' annual 3-week underwater archaeology field school for fourteen MA graduate students, three faculty, and one diving safety officer. Their logistical support, knowledge of the cultural heritage, and ontology dataset, compiling hundreds of shipwrecks, was remarkable. It contributed towards a highly enriching academic experience for both our faculty researchers and students alike. The research vessel *Stella* was one of the most efficient bases for large group scientific work with the benefit of a very competent captain. Generous sharing of their 3D models of hundreds of shipwrecks provided baseline data and a starting point for our students to collect further archaeological and historical information. For example, about changes in shipwreck integrity, site transformation processes, vessel construction, technology history and ship biographies. Our student work could potentially contribute reports and valuable research to their database. We are hopeful that we can continue this partnership and working relationship with MAS in future years either through summer (June) or fall field (September) schools, MA thesis research projects, or faculty research on specific shipwrecks when convenient to MAS scheduling.

The newly formed Maritime Archaeology Institute initiated by MAS recently would further serve our ECU academic needs for facilitating collaboration not only with these outstanding MAS citizen scientists, but also with maritime archaeologists in the Finnish Heritage Agency and the University of Helsinki. Our Program in Maritime Studies Program will have the opportunity to utilize its full member international status as a UNESCO UNITWIN member <https://unitwinunderwaterarchaeology.net/> that brings together University programs, research centers, societies, and museums dedicated to increasing capacity and enhancing the protection of underwater cultural heritage. Finland offers field opportunities beyond the "typical" domestic site in North Carolina (i.e. cold water, open sea, iron age to present). Foreign experience makes our graduates more competitive for employment on the world stage (and training in foreign collaboration). Furthermore, building a long-term collaboration is useful to ECU because field schools are a recurring element of our program.

Sincerely,



Lynn B. Harris, Ph.D. Professor
Program in Maritime Studies

Admiral Ernest M. Eller House #200
East Carolina University
Greenville, NC 27858-4353
Office: 252-328-1967
Email: harrisly@ecu.edu
Websites: ECU Program in Maritime Studies | Maritime Studies | ECU



November 13, 2025

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing this letter in strong support of the Maritime Archaeological Society of Finland (Suomen Meriarkeologinen Seura Ry, or MAS). I am a professor of maritime archaeology at East Carolina University (ECU). In September 2025, I co-directed a joint MAS/ ECU field school in Porkkala, Finland. I can categorically state that our fieldwork never would have happened without the support of MAS and its Chairman, Markku Luoto. Archaeological fieldwork always entails a great deal of preparation, and Mr. Luoto proved invaluable in arranging accommodations and securing permits long before anyone from ECU arrived in Finland. Given the size of our project – 14 graduate students, 3 faculty, and 1 dive safety officer – this was a herculean task. Once in Finland, MAS helped transport gear, facilitated communication, and performed all of the other small tasks that keep a field project running. They also provided their research vessel, *Stella*, as a platform for underwater work. MAS is the only organization in Finland with the capability to do all of these things. The support of MAS is therefore critical for any underwater archaeology projects that plan to include partnerships with foreign universities.

In addition to spearheading underwater fieldwork, MAS is facilitating research into Finland's maritime cultural landscape. During our recent project in Porkkala, we conducted an archaeological survey of the Pampskatan peninsula along with several of its offshore islands. This work will help link seafaring to terrestrial activities along Finland's southern coast, and thus has the potential to contribute to broader themes in Finnish history. The work we did would not have been possible without MAS, as they contributed the small boats that are required for transport to the offshore islands. MAS also loaned us metal detectors and other equipment. We plan to continue this project with another MAS/ECU field school in 2026; this work will entail archaeological survey of additional islands and will not be possible without MAS support.

To summarize, MAS is the leading Finnish maritime archaeology organization. Whether working under water or on land, MAS provides much-needed equipment, administrative support, and expertise. I plan to continue conducting joint field research projects with MAS for many years to come.

Sincerely,

David J. Stewart, Ph.D.
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