

## **What are the current challenges and pinch points in deep submergence science, and what initiatives should DeSSC focus on?**

**Funding and Resource Accessibility:** Need for increased funding for deep-sea research (MORE ASSETS), access to deep-sea technology and ships. Desire for more low-cost technology, cost-effective vehicle operations, and funding opportunities for instrument development.

**Limits for Current Research Capabilities:** Access to polar regions as well as the need to facilitate time series studies and long-term monitoring. Increasing the number of samples and replicates in research projects. Lots of specific sampling needs mentioned (eDNA, water sampling, live animals).

**Training and Education:** Need for training and education in deep-sea engineering and instrumentation for non-engineers, hands-on training opportunities, and chief scientist training and mentoring.

**Opportunities for Early Career Researchers:** Proposed modest grants specifically for ECRs to develop ideas and pilot data, as well as advocating for better funding models that support ECRs to act as Principal Investigators without facing financial constraints from funding agencies.

**Information Accessibility and Coordination:** Suggestions were made to improve accessibility to information online, such as lists of accessory equipment with each facility and planning tips, instead of having to just call individuals.

## **What ideas do you have to increase the opportunities to address DEIJ in Deep Submergence Science?**

**Diversity and Inclusion:** Many suggestions revolve around increasing diversity and fostering inclusivity within deep sea science, such as providing opportunities for underrepresented groups, ensuring gender-inclusive accommodations, and collaborating with minority-serving institutions.

**Accessibility and Equity:** There is a strong emphasis on making deep sea science more accessible and equitable, including providing financial support for students to participate in cruises, offering training on networking and funding acquisition, and promoting non-academic career paths.

**Community Engagement and Collaboration:** Suggestions involve reaching out to local communities, indigenous groups, and stakeholders, both to involve them in deep sea research efforts and to explore opportunities for collaboration and exploration in non-US EEZ areas.

**Education and Training:** Many responses focus on educational initiatives, such as K-12 outreach, engineering and tech workshops, mentorship programs, and training opportunities for both students and professionals in various aspects of deep-sea science.

**Policy and Culture Change:** Suggestions include advocating for policy changes, such as zero-tolerance policies for sexual harassment at sea, promoting diversity in leadership positions, and actively working to change the culture within the deep-sea science community to be more inclusive and supportive.