I studied economics at undergraduate level and I wanted a placement that could incorporate my knowledge in this area. After discussions with employees at the Isle of Man Department of Forestry, Agriculture and Fisheries, I proposed a project that would try to put an economic value on the social benefits of a Marine Nature Reserve. My project was largely based on the results of a carefully designed questionnaire but required extensive consultation with both members of the public and with the appropriate management authorities. As such the project not only developed my technical capabilities but also my collaboration and communication skills.

But the Summer Placement does not have to be about just one project. Whilst in the Isle of Man I also got the chance to take part in some by-catch monitoring on board a scallop trawler, I helped Manx Basking Shark Watch and Manx Whale and Dolphin Watch with their effort based monitoring and helped organize the first international conference on Basking Sharks.

Whether you go with an NGO, a government, a corporate organization or another academic institution, the Summer Placement is a chance to see firsthand how the marine environment is actually managed - and of course it’s a great way to add interest to your CV.

Ben Diamond