

AIMM

ASSOCIAÇÃO PARA A INVESTIGAÇÃO DO MEIO MARINHO  
MARINE ENVIRONMENT RESEARCH ASSOCIATION

# INTERNSHIPS



# ***The Practical Guide***

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# Welcome

## Bem-vindo !

Welcome to your Practical Guide to navigate AIMM Internship programme in southern Portugal. This document collects all the information necessary for you to understand what is expected of you and how our project works. You can also find helpful information to plan your trip to Portugal.

If you have further questions after carefully reading this document feel free to direct them to [interns@aimmportugal.org](mailto:interns@aimmportugal.org)

AIMM team



AIMM was founded in 2010 and is based and conducts its main projects in the region Algarve, more specifically in Albufeira. It's a non-governmental association, non-profit organisation with international scope. Our main field

of activity is related with marine mammals in their natural environment. AIMM has the goal to be a reference for research, education and conservation of the environment in Portuguese waters, promoting activities and partnerships, which empower our understanding of marine related issues, identifying threats and mitigate their effects on marine wildlife. AIMM works closely with sea agents, like whale-watching companies, administration and authorities, other sea-related associations and organisations and public environmental institutions. Together we develop scientific research in environmental topics and try to promote a healthier and safer environment for marine species.

Through field work, education and research, AIMM gives space, time and room, to the participants in our programmes, to face working in real ocean conditions, while learning the methodological skills of working with marine mammals in the wild. Participants will have the opportunity to exchange research and work with experienced marine biologists, which enables them to broaden their perspectives and actively play a role in the future conservation of marine habitat.



# Join us

Many of our participants are motivated, hard-working, young individuals of different nationalities with a common interest for the sea and willingness to contribute to its conservation. While participating in a small/long-term internship and working in a familiar and friendly environment, they'll enhance their marine scientific skills, knowledge on species, threats, social behaviours and sea methodologies to collect and analyse data.

In the future, AIMM hopes to continue to collaborate with sea stakeholders, marine students and scientists and will explore new areas of study, while trying to deliver a greater value to all parties involved.

AIMM wants to say thank you to all those committed individuals that have worked with us throughout the years, to drive our projects and our mission of ocean conservation forward.



## The Project

The distribution and population dynamics of whale and dolphin species (cetaceans) that inhabit the south of Portugal are poorly known. Cetaceans are top predators playing a very important role in their ecosystems, and they also attract people's attention, making them great ambassadors of marine environment conservation efforts. These are the two main reasons why AIMM decided to focus most of its research efforts on the occurrence, distribution, and abundance of cetaceans in the southern coast of Portugal, in terms of species and habitat use. This data will help us verify their conservation status as well as assess the potential threats they face.

# Join us

## The project

The main recorded species of cetaceans in this region are the short-beaked common dolphin (*Delphinus delphis*) and the common bottlenose dolphin (*Tursiops truncatus*). Less frequent is the threatened harbour porpoise (*Phocoena phocoena*), as well as the Risso's dolphin (*Grampus griseus*), the killer whale (*Orcinus orca*), the striped dolphin (*Stenella coeruleoalba*), the minke whale (*Balaenoptera acutorostrata*) and the fin whale (*Balaenoptera physalus*). But you will also have the opportunity to see some species of sharks, sea turtles, fishes and marine birds.

[Check our Southern Portugal Species Online Guide to learn about them all.](#)

## Conditions of participation

Due to the nature of the work, **participants should:**

- Be 16 years-old or older;
- Stay for at least 1 week (7 days);
- Speak enough English to be able to communicate with the team and the other participants;
- Be in good health and without physical conditions that prevent you to do the fieldwork;
- Be able to swim and feel comfortable on a boat;
- Tolerate hot weather and long periods of exposure to the sun.



Although previous experience is not required, **preference will be given** to those who have:

- Work experience with marine mammals;
- Experience in research and/or whale-watching boats;
- Experience with photo-identification;
- Professional photographic cameras that can be used for photo-identification;
- Availability to stay for longer periods of time.

# Join us

## Dates and fees

Our season starts on the **1<sup>st</sup> of April and ends on the 31<sup>st</sup> of December**. From previous experience we suggest our participants to stay for a minimum of two weeks and arrive preferentially on Sunday afternoon of the first day and departure the day after the internship finishes.

Our **minimum stay is 7 days** and the work is planned on a weekly basis, but we can have some flexibility in order to meet your travel arrangements.

**A participation fee is paid to take part in this programme. We share some of the reasons why with you:**

- Income to bear the administrative/ accommodation expenditures of the association: rent, energy, water, internet, equipment, fuel, etc.;
- Income to bear food expenditures, as you'll be provided three meals per day in the accommodation;
- Income to support on-field activities and professional training.

AIMM is continuously working towards the goal of funding our activities through environmental grants and sponsorships, in order to expand the sources of income for the association.

If you want more information about the fee send an email to:

[interns@aimmportugal.org](mailto:interns@aimmportugal.org)



**Not included in the fee:**

- Transport to/from Albufeira;
- Meals out in restaurants or snack-bars (including the restaurants at the marina);
- Free time activities;
- Personal insurance (all participants must have health/travel insurance);
- Personal expenses.

# Join us

## Application process

- 1** Send us an email with: CV with photo, motivation letter (why you want to join **AIMM** and what are your expectations), your preferred period for the internship, with 2 options for the start, [or fill out this form on our website](#);
- 2** You will receive an email from **AIMM** confirming that your application was received;
- 3** After consideration and evaluation of your application we will send you an email with the result of your application;
- 4** To ensure your place in the programme you should then pay the deposit (**non-refundable**), or if you prefer, the full amount (**refundable until 30 days prior to arrival**), and send the proof of payment to us. You should also send us a copy of your Passport or National Identity Card;
- 5** Book your flight to Faro and arrange valid health/travel insurance for your entire stay with **AIMM (mandatory)**;
- 6** Pay the remaining fee no less than 30 days prior to your arrival (**thereafter non-refundable**) and send the proof of payment and travel insurance to the programme coordinator;
- 7** Once we have received the fee, a confirmation email will be sent to your registered email.



### Details for bank transfer (international):

Beneficiary name: AIMM – Associação para a Investigação do Meio Marinho

Address: Rua Maestro Frederico de Freitas, N15 – 1, 1500-399 Lisboa, Portugal

IBAN: PT50 0018 0003 2272 0882 0201 5

SWIFT code: TOTAPTPL

Bank: Banco Santander Totta, SA

Bank address: Largo Frei Heitor Pinto, 7 A/B 1700-000, Lisbon, Portugal



# What to expect

## About the programme



We have a fully dedicated person to organise the logistics of the internship programme, and we have several researchers and research assistants who provide the practical and theoretical knowledge on specific topics you'll learn during your time with us.

The workload of our Internship is divided into two parts:

- The theoretical component, which consists of classes, presentations, round tables and office work;
- The practical component, which consists of fieldwork and methodologies.

You will have opportunities to participate in several dedicated survey trips on our research vessel Ketos, and on the boats of the whale-watching companies that collaborate with us. You'll also be able to take part in our new project, namely land-based surveys.

Your first days will be dedicated to the introduction to the team, the house, our current projects, work methods and also our whale-watching partners in the marina.





# What to expect

## About the fieldwork



The practical component of the internship **usually begins at 8:00 or 9:00 am**, with the teams starting at Albufeira's marina and at the vantage point for our land-based project. It can vary **between 2 to 8 hours daily at sea**, according to the boat availability and the weather conditions.

With our whale-watching partners you'll have the opportunity to go on trips aboard the tour boats, accompanied by one of our research team members who will train you in the observation techniques and data collection (e.g. behaviour, group composition, GPS tracking, weather

conditions, reaction of the animals to the boats around, etc.).

This partnership plays a double function, promoting a responsible code of conduct from the tourists and the company's staff, while creating the chance to collect important opportunistic data about cetaceans in the region. At the end of each day you'll introduce the trip data into our database, which you will be taught by one of our team members. With the experience of inputting data you'll get familiarised with **databases, GPS information and the photo-identification method and analysis**.

During the field season, April to December, the temperature will vary on **average between 17°C and 29°C**. We are exposed to the sun on a daily basis, without protection from the elements, so participants should come prepared for it. However, even on hot days, it can get cold and windy at sea so it is advised to bring warmer clothes.



Although the sea conditions are generally relatively calm, we can get some water spray. Also, sometimes it may get choppy, where we experience light to moderate impacts on board. For this reason, **the fieldwork is not very appropriate for people with serious back problems**.

# What to expect

**Below you can see an EXAMPLE of a typical WEEKLY PLAN**

(During your stay the scheduling is weather-dependend and will be planned on a weekly basis.)

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
08:30	field work	field work	DAY OFF	data analysis	field work	classes	field work
17:00							
17:00	data entry	equip. cleaning		data entry	equip. cleaning	data entry	equip. cleaning
18:00							
18:00	free time	cleaning time		cooking time	chickens duty (feed - clean)	free time	farm duty
20:00							
after 23:00	sleeping time	sleeping time		sleeping time	sleeping time	sleeping time	sleeping time

## In the Field Station



**We split the house chores between the team and interns at the time**, so the office work is combined with the house work at the end of the day. Since some days can get quite long and tiring, all the activities are distributed equally by the internship coordinator to avoid any work overload.

**You will have 1 day off during the week**, to relax, enjoy and to get the chance to do some exploring. On the rest of the days, when all the tasks have been completed, participants have some free time. The Field Station has a TV with USB reader so participants can

bring movies or TV series to watch. If there aren't any available places on the whale-watching boats, or in case of bad weather, the day can change to be an off or office day. It will be the internship coordinator's decision according to the project's needs.

Albufeira is a very touristic city with famous beaches, cultural events, beautiful surroundings, amazing weather and food, and close to other interesting places like the natural reserve of Ria Formosa or the ancient castle of Silves, just to name a few.

# What to expect

## Accommodation

Accommodation will be provided to all participants and will be shared by the whole team: participants, research assistants and researchers. The Field Station is a small farm in Ferreiras, Algarve.

The house is equipped with Wi-Fi, TV, laundry room and everything needed for a working kitchen. Participants will share 3 rooms, 3 bathrooms, living room, dining room, kitchen, office and garden area with a swimming pool. The rooms are mixed gender, however whenever possible the distribution will be arranged as to have separate gender rooms.

The atmosphere is very informal and usually quite familiar. It provides a great environment for brainstormings and experience exchange among the whole team. It is very important to keep in mind that as an international team **we'll be mostly speaking in English** and some communication obstacles may arise as each person has different levels of English, so it's expected that everyone respects and shows tolerance towards each other.





# What to expect



Scuba, the fluffiest teammate





# What to expect

Maré, the youngest teammate





# What to expect

## Vegetable farm

With the goal of following a more sustainable and healthy way of living we began to **grow and eat our own vegetables** in a little farm, watering and harvesting the vegetables daily. We also have a mini-flock of **chickens to provide us with fresh eggs**. Every day we clean, gather the eggs and let them out of the hen house.

In their free time, interns are welcome and encouraged to help us taking care of the chickens and the farm.



## Meals

The internship programme fee covers the food prepared at home, including breakfast, lunch and dinner. Meals out will be considered a personal expense, as well as special treats, snacks and beverages. Our team's cook is responsible for the preparation of lunch and dinner, but help from the interns is always welcomed and appreciated. Everybody is in charge of their own breakfast and generally always welcome to help themselves to any food items provided. All **special dietary requirements will be respected** (veganism, vegetarianism, intolerances, allergies, etc.), however it is important to **inform us about any of these requirements** when applying.



# What to expect

## Participation certificate

In the end of your experience with us **you'll be sent a participation certificate** and, if you wish for curriculum purposes, a detailed description of your activities, including hours at sea and main species/goals targeted in the investigation. Also, you'll be given an **AIMM researcher t-shirt**.



# Travel planning

## Insurance

All participants are **required to have health insurance**. European citizens are entitled to free healthcare or eligible to the payment of only a very small fee. The European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) gives access to this healthcare and is free, so we advise participants to get one ([+ info click here](#)). The non-European participants will need some other type of insurance that covers medical care.

Although not mandatory, **we recommend getting a travel insurance** for the duration of the stay, to cover for repatriation, alteration of travel plans, etc. You can inform yourself about this insurance in a travel agency.

## Arrival & rendezvous

### Contact Person:

Dr. Joana Castro  
(00351) 912 596 211

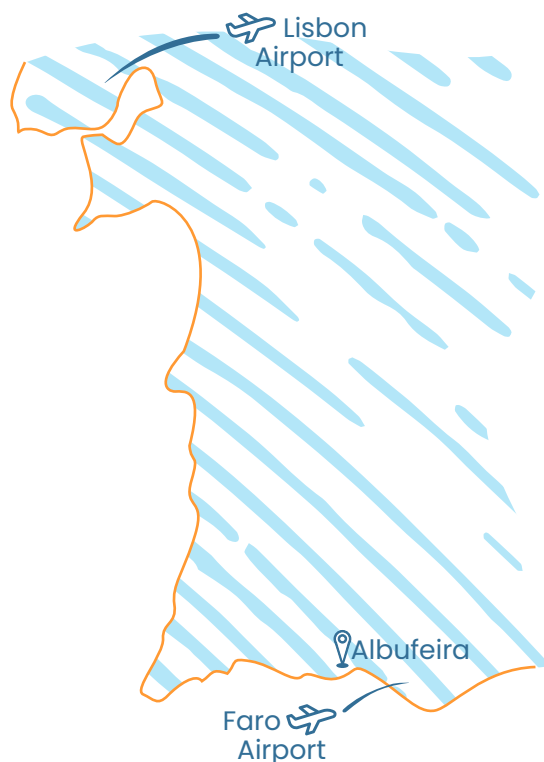
Participants are responsible for making their own travel arrangements to the rendezvous site, [AIMM Field Station](#). Times of arrival can be arranged with the internship coordinator to better suit travel plans and in very specific occasions we can pick up interns at some locations.

**We advise flying to Faro**, as that's the closest airport. Lisbon airport is also an option, especially for flights outside of the EU.

From Lisbon, you can catch a direct bus or train to Albufeira.

If coming from Faro Airport, participants need to take a bus that leaves from the airport and stops at the train station. The **bus is called Próximo** and the number 16 makes that connection, the ticket should be about 2,35€ ([+ info click here](#) or for the [timetable click here](#) - but the information is only presented in Portuguese).

Another option we recommend is that you take an Uber, or similar service, from the airport directly to our Field Station. The costs are around 30€ to 42€ (depending on the service availability).





# Travel planning

## Arrival & rendezvous

There are several **ways to get to Albufeira: train, bus and transfers**. All of the means of transportation are less regular on weekends, and might not work on Sundays, so keep that in mind when booking flights.

### Bus

It is very easy to get a bus to Albufeira from Faro. The journey lasts between **55min to 1h30min** depending on the type of bus and the tickets are around **4,70€**. You can look for tickets, prices and online bookings [here](#).

### Transfer

This would be **the most expensive way** to come to Albufeira, but it's the easiest one. There are a lot of private shuttle companies that make the connection between Faro airport and Albufeira, in minicars/minibuses, and can usually drop passengers in a chosen place. Our Field Station can be found when inputting ["AIMM Portugal"](#) into Google Maps/Uber.

Companies we recommend:

- [Polotur](#)
- [Yellowfish](#)
- [Sunline Transfers](#) (recommended)

If you choose to use [Sunline Transfers](#) your destination address when booking online should be the following:  
**N269 222A, Guia, Portugal**

The road number where the house is situated is N269 and our house number is 222A.

### Train

There are regular trains from Faro city centre to Albufeira-Ferreiras.

There are 3 types of trains in Portugal: Alfa-Pendular, Intercidades and Regional. The first two are long distance fast trains, they get to Albufeira in about **20 min** but tickets are much more expensive (**12€**). Ask for the Regional train, the journey lasts about 40 min and the price should be around 4€. You can look for tickets, prices and online bookings [here](#).





# Travel planning

## Packing list

We prepared a list of items that we recommend you bring with you:

### ESSENTIALS

- Copies of your passport, flight itinerary and credit cards in case the originals are lost or stolen (remember to pack them separately from the originals)
- Passport/National ID Card
- Personal insurance document
- Driver's license (optional)

### PERSONAL ITEMS

- Bath towel (although AIMM provides them)
- Toiletries (gel, shampoo, tooth brush, etc.)
- Personal medications
- Ear plugs
- Adapter EU standard for electronic equipment (optional)
- Charger for electronic equipment (cell phone, camera, earphones, laptop, etc.)
- USB pen drive (to take home photos or other interesting files)
- Computer (optional, but helpful for the work as the project has limited laptops)

### FIELD WORK

- T-shirts / long-sleeved shirts
- Quick drying trousers and/or shorts
- Warm jackets or sweater
- Comfortable shoes (ideal if boat adapted, sandals or flip-flops)
- Wind stopper/rain coat
- Sunglasses with UV protection (preferably polarised)
- Hat (one that won't fly off)
- Watch (preferably waterproof)
- Sunscreen (minimum SPF 30)
- Medium backpack
- Sealable bag if you want to carry any electronic equipment to the boat (i.e. camera, cell phone)

### FREE TIME

#### suggestions

- Pocket money
- Night out clothes
- Warmer clothes for the evening
- Hiking boots
- Binoculars
- Beach items (swim suit and towel)

# Travel planning

## Useful Information about Portugal

### LOCAL CURRENCY

Euro € – check [here](#) for exchange rates

### SAFETY

Portugal is considered to be a **very safe and hospitable country**. Nevertheless, you should be aware of your belongings and watch out for pickpockets, especially in the more touristic areas.

### ELECTRICITY

The electrical supply in Portugal is **220–240 volts with a two-pinned plug**.



### PERSONAL FUNDS

Participants **should bring enough money for transportation to and from Albufeira**, free time activities, drinks and meals at restaurants and for souvenirs. The major banks have branches in Albufeira and there are also currency exchange offices.

### LANGUAGE

Portugal's official language is Portuguese. However, the Algarve being a very touristic region, **almost everyone speaks English**. All of AIMM's research team member speak very good English.

### TIME ZONE

UTC +00:00 with one hour ahead during the summer season.

## So now what?

It's time to start thinking about dates and send us your information!

APPLICATION PROCESS PAGE

We hope you can  
join us and be part of  
**AIMM** for this season !



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MARINE ENVIRONMENT RESEARCH ASSOCIATION

SEE WHAT WE ARE UP TO



Have any questions or suggestions?

Send us an e-mail: [interns@aimmportugal.org](mailto:interns@aimmportugal.org)

[www.aimmportugal.org](http://www.aimmportugal.org)

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