

## Ocean Legacy Foundation launches EPIC Academy

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**VANCOUVER, BC (April 20, 2021)** – Ocean Legacy Foundation (OLF), a Canadian non-profit organization that develops and implements worldwide plastic pollution emergency response programs, with the goal to end ocean plastic pollution, today announced that they have launched EPIC Academy. EPIC Academy is a free online educational platform providing worldwide communities with essential knowledge regarding ocean plastic pollution, cleanup efforts, and solutions for creating plastic-free lands and waters. This digital OLF curriculum includes 10 unique lessons pertaining to ocean plastic pollution, the environmental impact of plastic pollution, and how different communities across the globe can take action managing plastic waste and solving the ocean plastic pollution crisis. OLF's goal for EPIC Academy is to provide any individual, business or organization interested in learning more about ocean plastic pollution with an easily accessible and free resource to start the learning journey; ultimately building a global community working to advance plastic pollution cleanup efforts, evidence-based policy expansion and infrastructure development to better manage plastic resources.

EPIC Academy is available in French, Spanish, and English and each of the 10 online lessons takes approximately 90 minutes to complete. Level 1, beginner lessons 1 – 5, is targeted towards the individual learner and includes special guidance for high school teachers (i.e., classroom guides and assignments) to help them lead their students through the lessons. Level 2, advanced lessons 6 -10, is targeted towards individuals and organizations, especially local leaders and waste management and recycling professionals, who are concerned about plastic pollution and want to learn how to take action to stem the flow of plastics into the environment. Once participants have completed each lesson, they receive an EPIC Academy digital badge that can be shared on social media. At the completion of Level 1 and completion of Level 2 they receive an EPIC Academy Certificate of Completion.

## Level 1 Courses

### Introduction: The Ocean Plastics Issue

- 1) Introduction to Ocean Plastics
- 2) What are Microplastics?
- 3) The Journey of Plastics to the Ocean
- 4) Why is Plastic Pollution a Problem?
- 5) Creating a Circular Economy for Plastics

## Level 2 Courses

### Advanced Learning: Ocean Plastics Action & Advocacy

- 6) Ocean Plastics 201 – A Deeper Dive into the Ocean Plastics Issue
- 7) Moving to Action – Encouraging Behaviour Change
- 8) Taking Action – Creating a Plastics Recycling System
- 9) Using Policy to Make a Difference
- 10) Advocating for Change

“Communities around the world have specific environmental and emergency needs when managing ocean plastic pollution. EPIC Academy can provide essential knowledge regarding plastic pollution and solutions for communities to create plastic-free lands and oceans”, explains Chloé Dubois, President and co-founder of OLF. “During our cleanup efforts we see single-use disposable plastics, cigarette butts, derelict fishing gear, and polystyrene littered all over the coastlines. Without intervention, global ocean plastics are expected to double by 2035. If practices remain unchanged there will be more plastic than fish in the ocean, by weight, by 2050. OLF believes that every action towards eliminating ocean plastic pollution counts, and EPIC Academy is a step in that direction.”

OLF is recognized as an international leader in ocean plastic pollution reduction, collection and processing and continues to collaborate with community organizations and businesses around the world to reduce and process plastics collected from ocean plastic cleanups. Since OLF’s inception, they have been creating accessible platforms to assist with the restoration of critical natural ecosystems for improved human and wildlife health, as well as assess and develop long-term plastic collection, processing infrastructure and policy to mitigate oceanic plastic pollution sources. In 2019, in collaboration with Nestlé Waters Global, OLF rebranded its existing integrated approach, naming it EPIC, which combines Education, Policy, Infrastructure and Cleanup. EPIC Academy is OLF’s latest EPIC project.

Plastic debris can be found on every beach in the world and recent studies have found that marine plastic pollution have been ingested by 100 per cent of marine turtles, 59 per cent of whales, 36 per cent of seals and 40 per cent of seabird species examined. Ocean plastic pollution causes the deaths of more than a million seabirds and 100,000 marine mammals every single year. Plastics have also been found in drinking water, beer, seafood, table salt, and in the human body.

EPIC Academy curriculum can be found at <https://edu.oceanlegacy.ca>.

## **About Ocean Legacy Foundation**

Founded in 2014, Ocean Legacy Foundation (OLF) is a Canadian, internationally recognized, non-profit organization that develops and implements worldwide plastic pollution emergency response programs, with the goal to end ocean plastic waste. We combine sustainable technologies, education, and skills training to convert plastic pollution into economic value while providing local communities with the tools they need to prevent plastic pollution and protect their local environment. OLF works to identify, cleanup, and prevent plastic waste from entering tributary and marine ecosystems by developing an integrated approach that combines Education, Policy, Infrastructure and Cleanup. This approach and solution-based platform in combatting plastic pollution is called EPIC. We have collected over 85,000 kilograms of plastic waste from over 146 kilometers of shoreline around the world and have engaged hundreds of thousands of individuals in plastic pollution cleanup, education, and recycling activities. Together, we believe we can leave an ocean legacy that can sustain the health of our waterways for present and future generations. For more information visit [www.oceanlegacy.ca](http://www.oceanlegacy.ca)

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