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# Exploring creative approaches to integrate Ocean Literacy into virtual communication designed for diverse age groups and integrated across disciplines.

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- Loretta Needham, Croí na Gaillimhe Resource Centre of St. Vincent de Paul, Galway
- Vicky Smith, Visual Artist and Arts Educator, Galway.



Making Space (MS) is a science public engagement project designed to bridge the gap between underrepresented groups (socially, economically and educationally disadvantaged) and astronomy.

Young Hearts , which was run as part of this project, was led by Croí na Gaillimhe a Resource Centre of St Vincent de Paul in Galway since 2010, in conjunction with the School of Physics, National University of Ireland, Galway, Ireland.



# Aims

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The programme aims to broaden and deepen the breadth of knowledge by weaving it into outreach with diverse communities .

Our aim was to create an environment in which everyone, regardless of their background or previous knowledge, could benefit.

# CHALLENGES DURING PANDEMIC

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Participants group

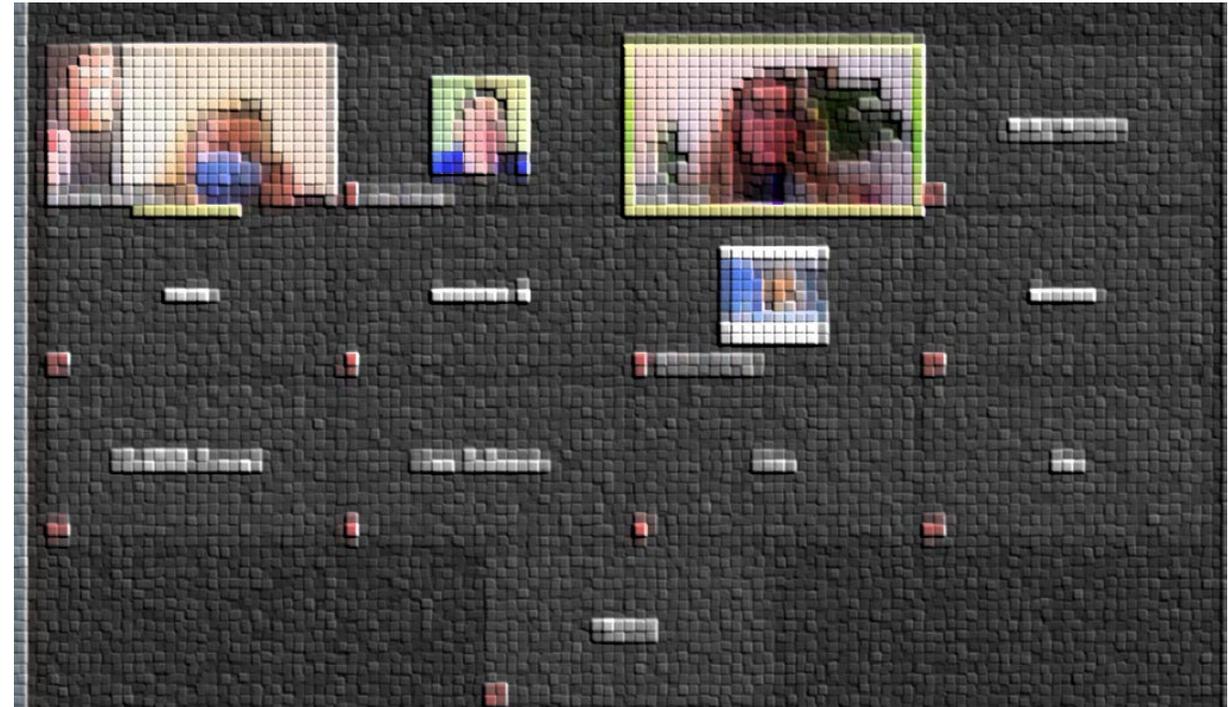
School and community centre closures

University guidelines

Online teaching and learning

Remote art classes

Engagement and Communication



# SOLUTIONS

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Discussion with participants

Inclusion of new science partners

Development of a new programme

Exploration of other types of art

Adaptation of the scientific content

Provision of technical support





In 2020/2021 we explored the potential of combining arts and **ocean literacy** in this community-based programme, which had two main objectives:

- (i) to investigate the use of approaches that valued the importance of exchange and collaboration among participants
- (ii) to explore the use of art as a powerful way to engage a diverse community with marine concepts and the topic of remote sensing in an informal learning environment.



Our main activity was based around an intergenerational programme, in which a group of teenagers and members of a local active retirement group meet once a week to learn together through arts.

Remote sensing and the use of satellite technology in marine monitoring and astrology was merged through art by local artist Vicky Smith and imagery provided by the course tutors.

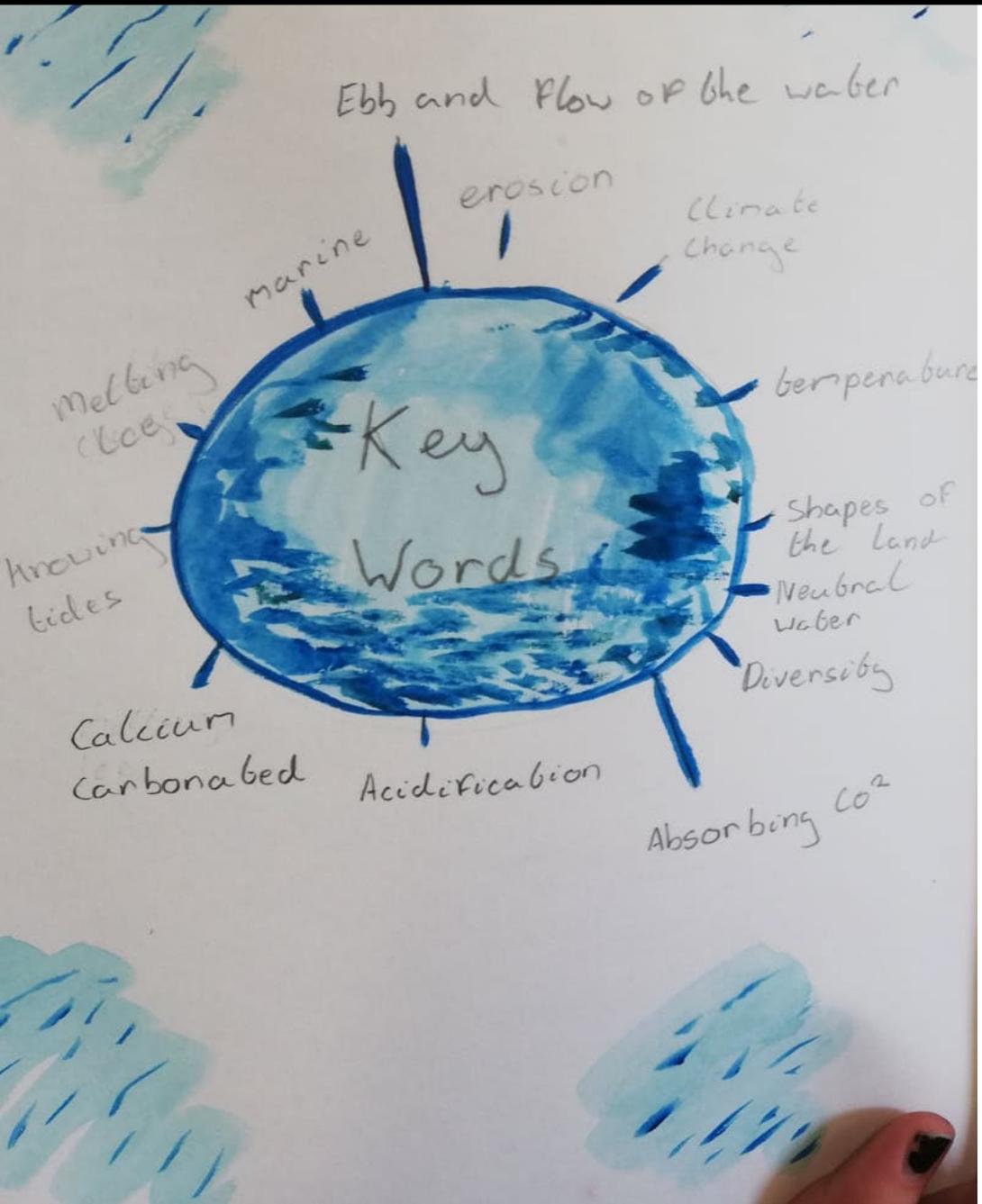


Course content was designed using initial assessment of the participants' interests and prior content knowledge.

Participant's feedback was collected at regular intervals through interviews and used to plan upcoming content as the programme developed.

Classes were carried out primarily through zoom with a small number of face-to-face engagements where possible.

Breakout rooms were used for coordinating intergenerational group activities.



## Marine Topics included

- Ocean literacy principles,
- The history of remote sensing and ocean exploration
- The importance of seabed mapping
- Deep Sea Exploration and conservation
- Ocean colours
- Monitoring the marine environment from space
- The Ocean and Climate Change

# Participant Stories



Recordings	
1	
2	
3	
4	

Interview by Lorna Siggins, AFLOAT, with some of the project participants:

<https://afloat.ie/blogs/wavelength-podcast/item/51617-marine-is-a-theme-for-galway-bay-transition-year-students-working-with-senior-citizens>

## **Participant Feedback**

- Interactive content recommended to bring groups together
- More open ended discussions, simpler topic
- Be mindful of vocabulary
- Be careful of pace - online content needs longer time for sharing/ discussion
- More fieldwork if possible
- Enjoyed breakout rooms/ quizzes / games
- interested in more content on Climate Change and new sustainable practices

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**More info:** <https://makingspaceprogramme.wixsite.com/>



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