



Southampton  
**SOLENT**  
University

## Research funded to support seafarers' welfare

Researchers from Southampton Solent University have received £70,000 funding from the ITF Seafarers' Trust to examine why so few women choose a career at sea.

Kimberly Karlshoej, Head of the ITF Seafarers' Trust says, "There are a plethora of factors that influence the wellbeing of seafarers. With only a tiny percentage of the seagoing workforce made up of women, identifying and properly exploring these factors is urgently needed - both so that women are encouraged to become seafarers, and so that female seafarers feel safe, valued and respected while at sea. The Seafarers' Trust is therefore delighted to sponsor this timely research."

Currently, only 2% of the world's seafarers are female and of these women 94% work either on cruise ships or passenger ferries\*. The research project led by Southampton Solent in collaboration with the University of Greenwich, China Maritime Centre, aims to examine seafarers' welfare, focussing on gender issues arising from multi-cultural crews and isolation and develop appropriate tools to help support women within the industry.

Dr Kate Pike, Senior Research Fellow at Southampton Solent and research lead on says, "This project aims to improve the welfare and working conditions on-board for all crew by empowering and supporting women who may be experiencing discrimination and harassment. It will identify gaps in current knowledge and raise awareness of the wider issues surrounding multicultural crews so that women can play a fuller role on board ships and beyond."

The research will draw on unique access to data from current and former students from Solent University's world-leading Warsash Maritime Academy, as well as comparable data from China's Shanghai Maritime University and Nigeria's National Maritime Academy.

The data will help to establish patterns relating to the welfare of seafarers, particularly women, and how they are treated in today's multi-cultural working environment. It will seek to identify welfare issues that prevent women from continuing their training, leaving the industry early or not entering it at all.

The final phase of the project will look at utilising a variety of methods to share the research findings with those who have the greatest potential to bring about change in the industry - e.g. policy makers, maritime educators and future students.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT THE MEDIA OFFICE ON 023 8201 3040 or [press.office@solent.ac.uk](mailto:press.office@solent.ac.uk)

### About Southampton Solent University

Southampton Solent University offers more than 19,000 students over 200 qualifications ranging from HND to PhD, in subjects such as maritime education and training, fashion and design, media and television, music, health, sport and leisure, business, IT and technology. The University was awarded the 2013 Quality Assurance kitemark for quality and standards of teaching and learning. Solent was voted one of the most creative universities in the UK in a Which? University 2014 poll of students. Solent Business School has been awarded the Small Business Charter Award, which is supported by the Association of Business Schools and the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills and 'gold approval' by the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA).