

OCEANS 2019 Seattle Focused on Blue Economy



More than 1700 people attended [OCEANS 2019 Seattle](#), October 27th through 31st, at the Washington State Convention Center and the new Hyatt Regency in downtown Seattle. The area's unique history of forward-thinking ocean research, technology development, federal agency and Navy presence, and focus on the Blue Economy combined to make this a great place to host OCEANS this fall.

Co-sponsored by the Marine Technology Society and IEEE Oceanic Engineering Society, this year's meeting was themed 'Blue Sky, Blue Sea, Blue Tech. The conference attracted professionals and students from 38 countries representing industry, academia, and the public sector to exchange information and ideas on developing next-generation

technologies to work in the oceans for science, resource extraction, and remediation. For those who couldn't attend Steve Holt, Publicity Chair for the IEEE Oceanic Engineering Society (OES), sent us a summary of the event.

Technical Program Track for Exhibitors

The local organizing committee, in partnership with the societies and the conference event planner, presented new features at OCEANS 2019 Seattle including a Technical Program track for exhibitors in both oral and poster formats; a Start-Up Pavilion in the Exhibit Hall so innovators could catch the eyes of established makers and service providers; and, moving the tutorials, workshops, and demonstrations to Thursday. All met with significant success, engaging many people and companies in ways new to them and valuable to all.

Successful activities from prior OCEANS continued – lunches in the Exhibit Hall where over 120 entities displayed the latest in research and observational tools for the marine environment. The Innovation Theater space in the Exhibit Hall – a feature introduced in 2018 – was available to companies as well as the societies to bring special activities right to the heart of the space. As a special feature, local research institutions and private researchers gathered a small fleet of research vessels at Seattle's waterfront marina for tours on Monday.

Marine Debris and Plastics

Some of the popular features of the conference continued, including the Office of Naval Research and Integrated Ocean Observing Systems sponsored Student Poster Competition (see article elsewhere in this edition), several special Town Halls on key topics such as marine debris and plastics, and a Gala reception at an iconic location – the Frank Gehry-designed Museum of Popular Culture (MoPOP) at The Seattle Center.

The local organizing committee particularly focused on students and young professionals, with several programs aimed to foster their participation beyond the traditional poster competition and student reception. The Canadian government sponsored a group of young women to attend the conference, and several exhibitors volunteered to lead small groups of students around the exhibit floor to introduce them to colleagues and the technology shown there. Further, a number of students participated in the relatively new General Poster session offered as part of the main Technical Program, as well as presenting papers.

Building a New Submarine from Carbon Fiber

The plenaries offered a selection of new things, from Stockton Rush on building a new submarine from carbon fiber to Lisa Vollbrecht on why we all should help design new technology for aquaculture to a panel of scientists and engineers from the University of Washington on how the area offshore the Pacific Northwest is being instrumented to give us warning for the next major earthquake coming from the Cascadia subduction zone. The various society awards programs followed those each day before the first coffee break and the thrice-daily paper presentations started up.

As usual, the Technical Program featured content across the board of topics for marine technology, from best practices in deploying instruments to best techniques for analyzing data, from key considerations for vehicle design to key attributes of vehicle guidance and control systems, and from results of open-ocean deployments to results of model and lab experiments. There were high-quality talks during our 67 sessions presenting over 230 papers, and six-panel sessions.

All photos are courtesy of Rick A. Smith, www.rickspix.biz, volunteer photographer for the OCEANS 2019 Seattle LOC.