

Ocean Business 2023: an event for collaboration and innovation



The National Oceanography Centre in Southampton hosted the largest ever Ocean Business exhibition and conference last week, attracting more than 5,000 people from over 80 countries. The event showcased cutting-edge ocean science and technology and had over 300 exhibitors and nearly 150 hours of live demonstrations. The conference programme brought together an

international cohort of technology pioneers, game-changing manufacturers and innovative service providers.

Returning to its spring slot post-Covid, the Ocean Business event exceeded all expectations, with record crowds and positive feedback from participants. Exhibitors reported brisk business and the classrooms and dockside demonstrations were packed out, indicating that people enjoyed meeting both inside and outside the main exhibition spaces.

Product launches and new partnerships

During the three-day event, companies showcased their ever more sophisticated ocean robotics, and several companies took this fitting opportunity to launch new products. For example, Kongsberg unveiled its new business, [Kongsberg Discovery](#), dedicated to delivering advanced ocean robotics and sensor technology, which received a positive response. [Valeport](#)'s SWiFT profiler, capable of measuring depths of up to 6,000m, [Blue Robotics](#)' BlueBoat USV, known as 'the planet's most affordable robotic surface vessel', and [Sonardyne](#)'s next-stage Acoustic Doppler Current Profilers with an integrated modem for communications and positioning were some of the products launched at the event.

Collaboration was a key theme, with Kongsberg's Richard Mills stating that "we have to work together because there is no one company that can do everything." New partnerships formed at the event included [Saildrone](#) and the Nippon Foundation and GEBCO-backed [Seabed 2030](#), who signed an MOU to collaborate on the effort to map the entire ocean floor. Innovate UK Edge hosted the popular B2B matchmaking event, the biggest to date.

Exchanging knowledge

In addition to the exhibition and demonstrations, speakers and expert panels drawn from across the sector shared ideas to help shape the future of ocean technology. [PopEye Labs](#)' team of five from the University of Pennsylvania flew in to present their breakthrough technology, the first step towards autonomous anchoring for large commercial vessels, and the Society for Underwater Technology hosted a 'Routes for Innovation in the Defence Market' session.

Ocean Business provides an opportunity for industry professionals to come together, share knowledge and network. This year's event demonstrated the rapid pace of development in the ocean science and technology industry and the importance of collaboration to achieve innovative solutions.

The next [Ocean Business event](#) will return to the National Oceanography Centre in Southampton from 8–10 April 2025.



Ocean science and technology experts from around the world descended on Southampton from 18-20 April 2023 for the biggest ever Ocean Business exhibition and conference.