

Call for Papers

We are pleased to invite you to the “Widening the Big Blue Horizon” International Conference, which introduces Innovative Technologies & Sustainable Strategies for the Protection and Management of Underwater Cultural Heritage. The Conference will take place between December 4th and 6th 2024 in Volos, Greece and is organized by the [BCThubs](#) Horizon Europe project.

The Conference aims to bring together experts and stakeholders from academic and research institutes, the maritime research and innovation industry and the public sector, aspiring to build a constructive forum for knowledge and experience exchange and the discussion of current approaches in support of the research, preservation, accessibility and management of Underwater Cultural Heritage. In this context, it will be an opportunity to present state-of-the-art technologies, results and lessons learnt of research projects and enhance capacity building for the protection and valorization of Underwater Cultural Heritage (UCH).

The conference programme will cover 5 main topics:

1. Innovative Technologies in Maritime Research. This topic focuses on the technologies assisting maritime archaeological research and other relevant fields of research, including surveys, excavation, documentation, protection, monitoring, accessibility as well as the non-destructive methods and technologies for the in situ and in vitro preservation of the sites. In addition, it discusses the technological approaches and methods to make Underwater Archaeological Research greener.

2. Enhancing Access to Underwater Cultural Heritage. Key challenges, best practices and technological opportunities for sustainable blue tourism economy development. This topic concentrates on practices for the preservation of UCH sites, including location and monitoring, management and operational services, as well as enhancing physical and virtual access to UCH. It will cover the key challenges and current technological opportunities in preserving these sites, particularly in the context of sustainable and regenerated blue tourism approaches for tourism development.

3. Maritime Spatial Planning and Environmental Protection. This topic focuses on the role of marine spatial planning in the protection of the marine environment and Underwater Cultural Heritage. It will explore how spatial planning and adaptive technologies to climate change can serve as tools for the preservation of marine areas, ensuring that development and activities within marine spaces do not adversely affect the UCH sites, and, on the other hand, how the accessibility of UCH can contribute to the protection of the marine environment.

4. Scientific Diving and Maritime Archaeological Research. Status and prospects. This topic draws attention to the new environment created by the forthcoming introduction of the ISO standards for scientific diving. It highlights the need to attract new scientists in underwater archaeological research and other fields by sharing training material and organizing workshops to impart fieldwork experience and cultivate new skills.



5. Citizens and Community Engagement in the Protection, Research, and Sustainable Management of Underwater Cultural Heritage as well as in advocacy for policy changes. This topic highlights the role of citizens and community active involvement in the protection and sustainable management of Underwater Cultural Heritage, through actions such as Community-Led Monitoring and Conservation Efforts (volunteers in monitoring underwater sites, community-led cleanup and conservation projects), Citizen Science, Educational Programs and Public Awareness, Advocacy and Policy Development, Sustainable Tourism and Economic Benefits, Emergency Response and Disaster Preparedness etc. It will discuss relevant projects and how public participation and community engagement can contribute to the above, complementing professional archaeological and conservation efforts.

The Conference will be in a hybrid format with physical attendance and live streaming for the online participants, with no registration fee.

Key Dates & Information:

Participation: oral & poster presentations

Abstract submission deadline: ~~31st May 2024~~ **July 15th 2024**

Notification on acceptance after blind review by: 30th July 2024

The Conference Proceedings will be published online.

Paper guidelines: TBA

Registration opening: TBA

Conference Language: English

More information and updates about the conference are available on www.bcthubs.eu/conference

