INTERNATIONAL MARITIME ORGANIZATION

NextWave Seafarers

A global partnership to grow the next generation of seafarers

IMO invites governments, shipping companies, and maritime partners to join the **NextWave Seafarers Global Workshop** at IMO Headquarters in London on **20 November 2026**. The workshop will share lessons from the pilot project and seek industry input on expanding onboard training opportunities and shaping a sustainable global partnership model. Representatives from headquarters or London-based offices are equally welcome to attend.

To express interest in attending, please email tcid@imo.org by 10 November 2026.

The maritime industry needs a steady supply of qualified seafarers. Attracting people to the profession is only part of the challenge. Future officers also need access to quality onboard training opportunities to complete their qualifications and begin their careers. Through the NextWave Seafarers (NWS) Programme, IMO is bringing governments, shipping companies and maritime partners together to help address this challenge.

Phase 1 of NextWave Seafarers was initiated as a partnership between IMO, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA), and Bahri. Building on this pilot phase, NWS is exploring how to develop a scalable global model for cadet training. Phase 2 will expand opportunities for cadets from developing countries, with particular attention to Least Developed Countries (LDCs), Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs), while seeking wider engagement from shipping companies and other partners globally.

Why a collective approach?

Providing sufficient sea-time opportunities for future seafarers is a challenge that no individual company, country, or institution can address alone. IMO can bring partners together to coordinate their efforts globally. The intention is not to duplicate successful initiatives already under way, but to learn from them, build on existing experience, and explore where coordination through IMO could add value.

By bringing industry and governments together, NWS offers an opportunity to:

- increase the number of training berths available to cadets;
- explore where greater coordination could simplify participation and reduce unnecessary duplication and administrative effort;
- share practical experience between participating companies and countries;
- address barriers that make placements difficult; and
- build a model that allows more companies to participate over time.

The aim is to make it easier for the maritime community to invest collectively in its future workforce.

How can shipping companies contribute?

Beyond attending the workshop, shipping companies are encouraged to contribute to the programme in two ways:

- **Provide opportunities:** Consider providing training berths or onboard placements, particularly for cadets from LDCs, SIDS and LLDCs.
- **Help shape the model:** Industry experience is essential to developing a practical model. Companies are invited to identify barriers to placements, suggest ways to make participation easier, share approaches that are already working, and explore what partners could achieve collectively that individual companies cannot easily achieve alone.

Join the conversation

The workshop will bring together Member States, shipping companies, and other maritime partners to share experience and help shape the next phase of NextWave Seafarers.

We particularly want to hear from industry: what works already, what barriers prevent companies from providing more training berths, and where could collective action through IMO make a practical difference?

The immediate objective is to expand onboard training opportunities. The longer-term ambition is a sustainable global partnership that helps the maritime community invest collectively in its future workforce.