

PartArt4OW Sailing Lab is setting sail

press release

Rome (Italy), 01.02.2026

The initiative is bringing together Europe's ocean communities working at the intersection of participatory art, science, and society

The EU Horizon project “PartArt4OW. Participatory Art For Society Engagement with Ocean and Water” announces the launch of the **PartArt4OW Sailing Lab**, a research and documentation sailing boat crossing the Mediterraneum in summer 2026 to connect artists, scientists, civic society actors, and local communities across Europe, strengthening participatory approaches to ocean and water sustainability.



What is PartArt4OW

PartArt4OW is a EC Mission Ocean project, endorsed by the *United Nations Decade of Ocean Science*, that promotes a paradigm change in the relationship between society and oceans and inland waters, supporting their sustainable governance through participatory art and creative processes. The project creates an experimentation space in which artists and creative-sector teams develop intersectoral and participatory projects. Through open calls, a multidisciplinary accelerator, and ecosystem-building initiatives, PartArt4OW supports 19 transectorial and transdisciplinary artistic and creative projects called **Participatory Art Initiatives (PAIs)** (<https://partart4ow.eu/pais>). These projects foster

sustainability, ocean literacy, awareness raising, and maritime resilience by bringing together scientists, creative practitioners, citizens, associations, institutions, and businesses across Europe. Supported initiatives are showcased through public festivals, while the Sailing Lab travels to connect communities to these projects, fostering discovery, dialogue, and shared learning.

PartArt4OW Ecosystem (<https://partart4ow.eu/ecosystem>) includes key actors, research activities, projects, initiatives, and cultural products across Europe in the field of art

The PartArt4OW Sailing Lab

As part of the project activities, PartArt4OW partnership is operationalising the Sailing Lab that will visit some of the Participatory Art Initiatives.

The **PartArt4OW Sailing Lab** (<https://partart4ow.eu/sailing-lab>) is a fully equipped sailing boat dedicated to ecosystem building, dissemination, research, and visual documentation. It fosters connections between artists, scientists, civic society actors, and coastal and inland communities by cruising European seas and documenting ongoing Participatory Art Initiatives and the multiple forms of community engagement with ocean and water health. The Sailing Lab functions as both a physical and conceptual bridge, offering a space for engagement, creativity, and knowledge sharing. While reaching selected locations where PAIs are taking place or have taken place, the Sailing Lab will host and present the results of other initiatives, offering local communities access to projects developed in different waters, territories, and cultural contexts. The PartArt4OW Sailing Lab activities are coordinated by Raw-News Visual Production Agency and Sapienza University of Rome in collaboration with the PartArt4OW partnership. It operates on a Beneteau Cyclades 50.5, provided by **Altura** company, and hosts researcher, documentarists, sailors and media to document and make publicly available the PAIs and the networked communities along the **nord-west Mediterranean shores** for about one-month in **Summer 2026**.

To complement dissemination and ecosystem-building activities, the Sailing Lab will connect creative communities engaged in PAIs with relevant stakeholders and initiatives; conduct video interviews with experts, artists, scientists, and engaged citizens; conducting research on mediterranean communities socio-cultural engagement with the ocean and the major issues the ocean & society relationships are facing today.

The Sailing Lab **navigation plan** will be circulated in early spring 2026. Institutions, researchers, artists, media representatives, and local actors interested in connecting, visiting the Sailing Lab while it is in harbour or in organising activities upon its arrival are invited to get in contact. The Sailing Lab will reach the **PartArt4OW Demo-day in Badalona (Barcelona)** on 26 June 2026.

All media products will be available [here](https://partart4ow.eu/sailing-lab) (<https://partart4ow.eu/sailing-lab>).



The Sailing Lab concept

The Sailing Lab was conceived as a nomadic soft infrastructure for conducting transdisciplinary and cross-sectoral research and producing situated documentation. It allows researchers and practitioners to immerse themselves in the generative processes of the ocean, enabling respect and awareness to emerge through direct sensory experience rather than abstract knowledge. It has been conceptualised by CO>SEA — Co-Laboratorium for Socio-Environmental Analysis of the Ocean (Sapienza University of Rome - MEMOTEF Department and Raw- News Visual Production Agency). This allows interdisciplinary, intersectoral, and international Marine Social and Visual Research. Documentation strategies has been used in international and local research projects, endorsed by the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science and supported by the European Commission's Citizen Science Award 2024. Information are available at CO>SEA (chiaracertoma.net/cosea/) and a video presentation of the adopted methods is available [here](https://www.raw-news.net/blue-kinship-documenting-ocean-relationships/) (<https://www.raw-news.net/blue-kinship-documenting-ocean-relationships/>).

The PartArt4OW Sailing Lab infrastructures has been tested in may 2025 (<https://chiaracertoma.net/2025/09/24/cosea-partart4ow-sailing-lab-testing/>).

Sailing the Generative Ocean

The PartArt4OW Sailing Lab is grounded in the vision of the generative Ocean as the engine that produces life on Earth. The ocean fuels global biogeochemical flows and spreads life through the circulation of seeds and nutrients. In perpetual motion—through currents, tides, winds, microorganisms, plants, animals, rocks, and sand—it is the environment from which primordial life emerged. Immersion in the generative processes of water allows people to experience, through their bodies and senses, matter that cannot be controlled, owned, or fully regulated, but only tuned into. Being physically present at sea is therefore crucial as the ocean's materiality disrupts conventional theoretical and practical investigative approaches and requires situated, embodied research practices. By observing the sea from the sea and the land from offshore, the Sailing Lab operates in dynamic interstitial environments where ocean and land meet. This approach supports the analysis of socio-natural interactions in coastal, tidal, and open-sea contexts, together with their cultural dimensions and ecological impacts.



The Sailing Lab reclaims sailing as an ancient, accessible, and sustainable way of moving through and engaging with the Earth's most pervasive environment, challenging perceptions of sailing as exclusive activity. It shapes how environmental challenges are perceived and understood, while contributing to the decarbonisation of access to the ocean.

An international networks of researchers, activists, creative and sailors

PartArt4OW SailingLab gathered the discussion group **Sailing4Research** to connect researchers exploring sailing as a tool, object, or context for scientific research. Professionals, practitioners and scholars from all disciplines and sectors are invited to exchange on aims, methodologies, practices, and results of conducting research through, on, and about sailing. A brief presentation and contacts are available [here](https://chiaracertoma.net/sailing-for-research/) (<https://chiaracertoma.net/sailing-for-research/>)

Moreover, researchers and practitioners interested in the intersection of science, art, and participation in and about the ocean and water are invited to join **SAP&O – Science + Art + Participation in & about the Ocean**, an observatory at the edge of science, art, and civic engagement (<https://chiaracertoma.net/sapo/>).

Both the groups are open for proposals and members.

Get in contact:

Federico Fornaro, PartArt4OW SailingLab coordinator, federico.fornaro@raw-news.net

Chiara Certomà, PartArt4OW coordinator, chiara.certoma@uniroma1.it

Carolina Dopico, PartArt4OW communication and media manager, dopico.carolina@gmail.com

Paolo Melodia, PartArt4OW SailingLab skipper, paolo@alturavela.com

Info

<https://partart4ow.eu/>



PartArt4OW has received funds from the European Union's Horizon Europe Mission Ocean Programme HORIZON-MISS-2023-OCEAN-01 Under Grant Agreement No 101058677.