D4.3 – Model Templates of Learning Labs



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Executive Summary

This report documents and analyses the WIN-BIG sea-basin events as a central part of the project's capacity-building approach for women in the Blue Economy. WIN-BIG is designed to map gender status and capacity gaps across sea basins and blue sectors, and to respond to those gaps through female- and basin-tailored training, networking, and visibility actions. Its capacity-building strand explicitly combines tailored training modules, Learning Labs and MOOCs to strengthen women's capacities in entrepreneurship, innovation, and career development across the Blue Economy.

Within that framework, the WIN-BIG events are not stand-alone conferences. They are structured as practical sea-basin interventions that bring together knowledge sharing, visibility of women's roles, peer exchange, and targeted skills development. The Mediterranean, Baltic and Atlantic events were conceived as part of a series of three regional sea-basin events aimed at strengthening gender inclusivity in the Blue Economy, addressing barriers faced by women, fostering knowledge transfer, and supporting career progression through conference sessions, networking moments, Learning Labs, and women-focused reflective spaces.

The document is structured in three main sections. The first section consists of the **individual event reports** for the WIN-BIG sea-basin events. These reports document what was delivered in each event, including the conference and panel components, networking activities, participant profiles, and the implementation of the Learning Labs. They also assess each Learning Lab from both a pedagogical and an operational perspective and compile the available survey evidence from participants. In this way, each event report creates a structured evidence base on what happened, who participated, what methods were used, and how the activities were experienced in practice.

The second section builds on these individual reports to identify **cross-cutting lessons learned and recommendations**. By comparing the different event experiences, this section draws out recurring strengths, challenges, and enabling factors in the design and delivery of Learning Labs. It considers not only which topics proved relevant, but also which formats, facilitation methods, levels of interaction,

participant support mechanisms, and organisational choices were most effective. This comparative analysis is essential for moving beyond simple event reporting and towards a more strategic understanding of what makes Learning Labs meaningful and useful within the WIN-BIG context.

The third section translates this evidence into a **WIN-BIG Model Template for Learning Labs**. This model template is intended as a practical replication tool for future organisers, projects and institutions that wish to implement similar learning formats in other sea basins or on other Blue Economy topics. Rather than prescribing fixed content, it captures the core architecture of the WIN-BIG model: how to connect Learning Labs to identified needs, how to embed them within wider event formats, how to organise facilitation and participation, how to collect evidence, and how to ensure that event-based learning can later be consolidated into more scalable resources such as MOOCs. In this sense, the model template is both an output of the report and a mechanism for extending WIN-BIG's impact beyond the project itself.

Taken together, the report therefore moves through a clear progression: from documenting each event, to extracting lessons across events, to producing a transferable model for replication. Its purpose is not only to record what WIN-BIG has done, but also to make visible how these experiences can inform future Learning Labs for women in the Blue Economy in other regional and thematic contexts.



SECTION 1 – WIN-BIG EVENTS



WIN-BIG Events

Mediterranean Event

The **WIN-BIG Mediterranean Event**, held in **Rome, Italy** on **26–28 March 2025**, was the first regional sea-basin event of the WIN-BIG series and was organized to enhance professional opportunities for women while facilitating cross-border knowledge exchange and networking across various maritime sectors across the Mediterranean Blue Economy, establishing a replicable framework for other regions.

The event was designed as a **three-day format** combining a high-level conference, practical skills development, and intimate powerful session for women's empowerment. Its structure moved from broad regional dialogue at the **Campidoglio – Sala della Protomoteca (City Hall) – Day 1;** to hands-on capacity-building – **Day 2**; and personal reflection – **Day 3**, at the **Federazione del Mare** premises, creating a comprehensive program that addressed the professional lifecycle of women in the Blue economy sector.

The **Conference Day**, titled "Win-Big Conference Day," focused on four main thematic panels preceded by the Welcome and Opening session. **Panel 1, "WIN–BIG Status of the project and preliminary results"** presented early findings on the gender status and barriers within the Blue Economy to set a data-driven foundation for the event. **Panel 2, "Love for the oceans: Experience from Women's Eyes"** shifted to a personal and professional perspective, featuring testimonials from women, who highlighted the power of solidarity and teamwork in high-performance maritime environments. **Panel 3, "Leveraging Women in BuE,"** focused on institutional initiatives and policy frameworks promoting inclusion, while **Panel 4, "Women in science, research, innovation in BuE emergent sectors"** explored opportunities in marine biotechnology, underwater robotics, and sustainable aquaculture. These panels provided a comprehensive overview of strategies complemented by compelling personal narratives of women advancing within the Mediterranean Blue Economy sectors.

The **Learning Labs** formed core of the Day 2, provided tangible tools for professional growth. **Learning Lab 1, "Sustainability and Innovation in the Blue Economy"** led by CORILA, demonstrated how innovation and sustainability can drive market growth. **Learning Lab 2, "Business Plan Development"** introduced participants to the fundamentals of financial feasibility, revenue projections, and market strategies. **Learning Lab 3, "Communication Skills for the BuE"** focused on presentation techniques and effective storytelling to help women articulate their value in professional settings. Finally, **Learning Lab 4, "Blue Career**

Management" utilized self-reflection exercises and goal-setting tools to help participants assess career satisfaction and navigate the specific challenges of the sector.

Beyond the formal sessions, the event focused Day 3 personal resilience and connection through the **Women's Retreat Day**. This final day moved away from technical topics to focus on **"Voice Activation" and "Inspirational Story Sharing,"** where participants engaged in "Fish in the Pond" ice-breakers and shared personal struggles in a supportive, intimate environment. By concluding with this retreat, the WIN-BIG Mediterranean Event ensured that the regional dialogue was not only about industrial growth but also about building a lasting, resilient community of female leaders capable of driving the future of the Mediterranean Blue Economy.

Baltic Event

The **WIN-BIG Baltic Event**, held in **Kiel, Germany on 5–6 November 2025**, was the Baltic sea-basin event of the WIN-BIG series and was organised under the title **"Empowering Women in the Baltic Blue Economy: Innovation, Growth, and Connection."** The event was designed as a two-day in-person format that combined discussion, skills development, visibility, and community building for women active in the Blue Economy. Its structure brought together a **conference**, **four Learning Labs**, a **documentary screening**, a **Women Ocean Champions exhibition**, and a **Women's Retreat**, creating a programme that moved from regional dialogue to practical capacity-building and reflection.

The **conference component** focused on three main themes. **Panel 1, "Women entering the Blue Economy,"** addressed barriers to entry and progression, the importance of policy support, diversity tools, networks, and role models, and women's opportunities in blue sectors. **Panel 2, "Blue bioproducts, the female perspective,"** explored women's leadership and innovation in marine biotechnology, food and feed, mariculture, and research-to-market pathways. **Panel 3, "Citizen engagement,"** highlighted how storytelling, community dialogue, education, and creative communication can strengthen public participation and make ocean issues more accessible and inclusive. Together, these panels gave the event a strong mix of structural reflection, practical insight, and inspiring examples from across the Baltic blue-economy landscape.

The **Learning Labs** formed the practical core of the event. **Learning Lab 1, "Intellectual Property: Your Ideas, Your Power,"** introduced participants to copyrights, trademarks, patents, and trade secrets in relation to blue-economy innovation. **Learning Lab 2, "The Negotiation Game,"** provided negotiation tools, role play, and gender-aware strategies for professional and entrepreneurial contexts. **Learning Lab 3, "Funding Fundamentals: Innovation vs. Research,"** helped participants navigate funding pathways and better

understand the shift from research to innovation and impact. **Learning Lab 4, "How our background shapes the way we communicate,"** focused on communication styles, storytelling, bias awareness, and bridge-building across different cultural and professional backgrounds. Taken together, the Learning Labs addressed concrete capacities linked to women's professional development, leadership, innovation, and confidence in the Blue Economy.

Beyond the conference and Learning Labs, the event also placed strong emphasis on **visibility, inspiration, and community-building**. The screening of the documentary **"Women from the Sea – Azores"** added a reflective and storytelling-based dimension to the programme, while the **Women Ocean Champions exhibition** showcased role models from the Baltic Sea region and highlighted women's contributions to ocean conservation, blue innovation, sustainable marine practices, and community engagement. The **Women's Retreat** further deepened the event's supportive dimension by creating space for confidence-building, creativity, mentorship, and meaningful connection among participants.

Atlantic Event

The **WIN-BIG Atlantic Event**, held in **Málaga, Spain on 25–26 March 2026**, was the Atlantic sea-basin event of the WIN-BIG series and was organised under the title ***"Empowering Women in the Atlantic Blue Economy: Innovation, Skills & Connections."*** As the final event in the series, it built upon the Mediterranean and Baltic experiences, consolidating a **two-day in-person format** designed to combine policy dialogue, skills development, visibility, and networking. The programme integrated a **conference**, two **Learning Labs**, a **documentary premiere**, a **Women Ocean Champions exhibition**, and multiple **networking and cultural activities**, creating a structure that moved from strategic reflection to practical capacity-building and community engagement.

The conference component, held on the first day, focused on **four main thematic areas**. **Panel 1,** ***"Women Driving the Blue Economy: the WIN-BIG project,"*** presented the project's objectives and preliminary findings, including data on gender gaps in the Atlantic area and Spain, and highlighted structural inequalities and the need for targeted interventions. **Panel 2,** ***"Telling Sea Stories: Marine communication in the digital era,"*** explored the role of communication, social media, and storytelling in making marine science more accessible, promoting scientific vocations, and strengthening knowledge transfer. **Panel 3,** ***"Sport, Tourism, and Nature: A Way to Experience the Sea,"*** examined the intersection between blue tourism, sports, and sustainability, showcasing business models and initiatives that connect economic activity with environmental awareness. **Panel 4,** ***"Synergies for a Competitive Blue Economy,"*** addressed cooperation frameworks, innovation ecosystems, and best practices in

circular economy, technology transfer, and cross-project collaboration. In the context of the Atlantic Blue Economy, these panels gave a full picture by combining policy, science, communication, and market-oriented approaches. comprehensive perspective combining policy, science, communication, and market-oriented approaches within the Atlantic Blue Economy context.

The **Learning Labs**, held on the second day, represented the practical and capacity-building core of the event. **Learning Lab 1,** ***"How to start a business in the Blue Economy,"*** focused on entrepreneurship pathways, providing participants with tools to identify opportunities, understand business processes, and overcome the obstacles associated with launching a blue startup. **Learning Lab 2,** ***"Blue BioBased Circular Economy Learning Lab,"*** focused on circular innovation using marine resources and helped participants design and develop products made from recycled or upcycled ocean materials. These sessions were designed to equip participants with concrete skills linked to innovation, entrepreneurship, and sustainability, reinforcing their professional development within the sector.

Beyond the conference and Learning Labs, the event placed strong emphasis on visibility, inspiration, and experiential engagement. The official launch of the ***WIN-BIG Women Ocean Champions*** **book.** And the opening of the associated **photo exhibition** highlighted female role models and their contributions across different blue sectors. Notably, the Atlantic edition brought together, for the first time, the **full collection of portraits** developed across previous sea-basin events, incorporating contributions from both the Mediterranean and Baltic editions. This created a comprehensive and unified exhibition that allowed participants to visualise the diversity, expertise, and impact of women across the European Blue Economy, reinforcing a shared narrative of leadership and cross-regional representation. The inspirational **keynote** delivered by a professional athlete introduced a narrative of resilience and leadership, connecting personal experience with broader themes of empowerment. The programme also included the premiere of the **documentary** ***"Women from the Sea – EU Episode,"*** adding a storytelling dimension that reinforced visibility and representation.

In addition, informal and experiential elements such as the **show cooking session featuring marine-based gastronomy** and **networking** moments contributed to building connections among participants and showcasing the diversity of Blue Economy sectors. Altogether, the Atlantic event combined **high-level discussion**, practical **training**, and **community-building**, positioning women not only as beneficiaries but as key drivers of innovation, sustainability, and transformation in the Blue Economy.

Mediterranean Event - Report



Part A. Event facts and evidence

What happened, who attended, what was delivered.

1. Basic event information	
Event name	WIN-BIG Mediterranean Event
Sea basin	Mediterranean Sea
Location	Rome, Italy
Dates	26th – 27th – 28th March 2025
Lead organiser and supporting partners	Federazione del Mare
Venue(s)	City Hall - Sala della Protomoteca; Federazione del Mare premises - Palazzo Colonna
Event format	Hybrid Event

Linked project component(s): conference, learning labs, retreat	Day 1 – Conference Day Day 2 – Learning Labs Day 3 – Women's Retreat Day
Person completing the report	Laurence Martin

2. Event objectives and expected outcomes

What were the main objectives of the event overall? Were the objectives achieved?

The WIN-BIG Mediterranean Event was designed with the overall objective of fostering a more inclusive, diverse, and innovative Blue Economy by addressing the systemic gender gap within the Blue Economy sector. The event sought to bridge the gap between policy and actions, focusing on increasing the visibility of women in decision-making roles and technical careers within the emerging sectors of the Blue Economy. They key strategic goals included the promotion of gender equality as a primary need for economic growth, the collection of gender-disaggregated data to inform future EU policies, and the creation of a collaborative cross-border network across the Mediterranean to support women-led businesses and sustainable innovation.

The objectives were fully achieved through a comprehensive program that transitioned from theoretical discourse to practical empowerment and skill-building. The event successfully ensured high-level institutional commitment while simultaneously providing women with concrete tools through Learning Labs focused on sustainability and innovation, business planning, communication, and career management. The attainment of these goals is evidenced by the survey findings, and the personal transformation of participants from the high-level discussions to the empowerment retreat. Ultimately, the event moved beyond mere discussion, establishing a clear roadmap for integrating female talent into the maritime workforce and ensuring that gender equality remains central within the sector.

What were the expected outcomes? Were they reached?

The expected outcomes of the event focused on strengthening the presence of women in the Blue Economy by systematically dismantling professional barriers and enhancing their capacity to climb the career ladder. A primary goal was the creation of a high-level event to facilitate knowledge transfer between policymakers and industry experts, aimed specifically at addressing gender biases through media and political collaboration. Additionally, the event was designed to deliver tangible capacity-building results through the Learning Labs, which were expected to fill critical skill gaps, while fostering a supportive community of mentors

and peers. The session also provided a supportive space for self-reflection, allowing women to share and discuss common challenges. This helped foster a sense of community and mutual understanding, ensuring that women felt supported and connected in their professional journeys. Central to this whole vision was also a format that welcomed men's perspectives, ensuring a holistic, collaborative approach to fostering gender inclusivity across the blue economy.

These outcomes were successfully reached through a strategic three-day progression that moved from institutional dialogue to personal empowerment. The first day secured essential commitments international leaders to integrate gender equality into maritime strategies, while the subsequent Learning Labs provided the practical skill-building to drive innovation and leadership. The event effectively connected policy and practice, utilizing Day 1 to foster strategic alignment among EU and key stakeholders; and Day 2 to deliver hands-on capacity building to a diverse group of participants. By showcasing diverse female role models—from naval officers to professional seafarers—the event effectively increased the visibility of women in maritime careers and provided clear roadmaps for their professional advancement. The success of the inclusive format was evidenced also by the active participation of male industry leaders. The final Women's Retreat effectively solidified all these gains by building the confidence and resilience required to navigate a male-dominated sector, ensuring that the theoretical goals of the conference and learning labs were translated into professional growth. The event successfully established a new, replicable format for advancing female professionals in the Mediterranean maritime sector.

3. Outreach, invitations and participation

3.1 Invitation and registration funnel

Number of people invited	Invitations were broadly disseminated through a diverse range of professional channels, including the networks of project partners and institutional contacts. To maximize inclusivity, the sessions were promoted through specialized mailing lists and various public communication channels to reach a wide audience interested in the topic.
Number registered	275 people overall signed up for the whole Event. Specifically: • 175 registered for the Conference Day • 60 registered for the Learning Labs Day • 40 expressed interest for the Women's Retreat Day

Number attended	• 114 attended the Conference Day in presence • 33 attended the Learning Labs Day • 17 attended the Women's Retreat Day
Number of no-shows	61 no-shows were recorded for the Conference Day, however many participants attended online. 27 no-shows were recorded for the Learning Labs Day.
Drop-out reasons, if known	Overlapping and/or urgent professional commitments

3.2 Explanatory notes

Why did people drop out or not attend?

E.g. Were there capacity issues? Did timing, travel, or competing commitments affect attendance? Did some event components attract more interest than others?

While capacity was not an issue, as the venue and program were well-structured to accommodate the intended audience, a few potential participants wishing to join were unfortunately unable to do so due to their overlapping professional commitments and busy schedules.

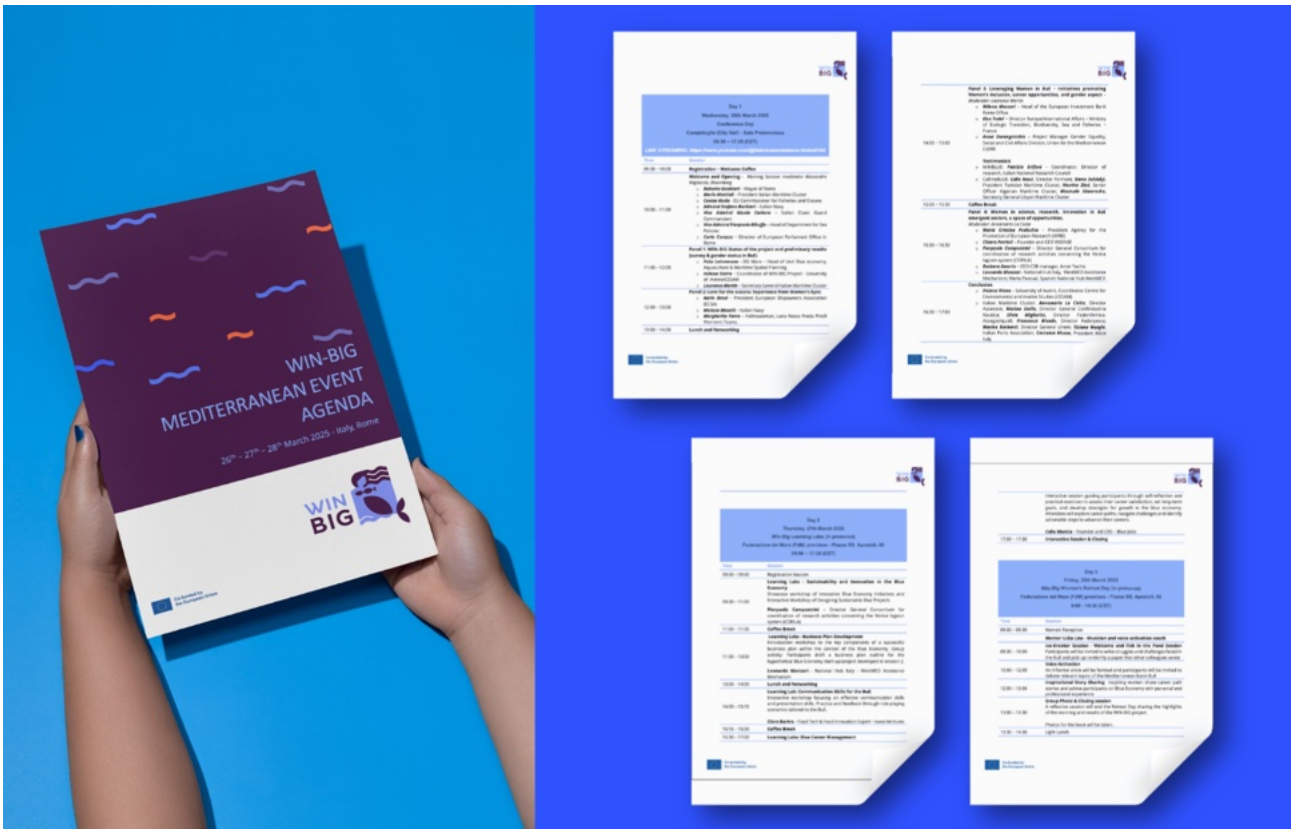
3.3 Participants' profile data

Gender	Overall, 64,5% of participants registered were females, 35,8% were males and 1 person registered as "other". Women represented the majority of both registered and attending participants. Specifically, for the Conference Day, 113 women registered and 72 women attended according to the Eventbrite registration data. For the Learning Labs and the Women's Retreat Day 100% of participants were women.
Age group stats	Participants ranged from early-career individuals (18–25), who made up 6% of the total, to highly experienced professionals (65+), representing 14%. The core of the attendance was evenly split between mid-career professionals (26–45) and senior-level participants (46–65), with each group accounting for 40% of the audience.
Nationalities or countries of residence stats	Participants came from a wide range of countries, mainly from European countries, with additional representation from non-European countries, confirming the event's international outreach. Italy represented the largest group at 70%, followed by Spain and Portugal at 5% and 4% respectively. France also contributed 4% of the total attendance, while the

	Czech Republic accounted for 3%. Representation from Ireland, Norway, and Greece each stood at 2%, while an additional 8% of participants joined from various other countries.
Sector in the Blue Economy	Participants represented a wide range of Blue Economy sectors, including maritime transport, marine research, aquaculture, renewable energy, public administration, marine innovation, and related policy and support activities.
Role/Position type	Participants included students, researchers, policymakers, entrepreneurs, consultants, project managers, and senior executives.
Other	Experience levels ranged from early-stage professionals to individuals with more than 30 years of experience in the Blue Economy.

4. Programme delivered

Final agenda implemented



Panel 1 - WIN-BIG Status of the Project and Preliminary Results	
	
Date and time	26 March 2025, 11:00 – 12:00
Moderator	Alessandra Magliaccio, Bloomberg
Panellists	• Felix Leinemann - DG Mare – Head of Unit Blue economy, Aquaculture & Maritime Spatial Planning • Helena Vieira – Coordinator of WIN-BIG Project - University of Aveiro/CESAM • Laurence Martin – Secretary General, Italian Maritime Cluster
Duration	1 hour
Purpose	To present the current status of the WIN-BIG project and provide initial data on gender gaps in the Blue Economy.
Short summary of what the panel addressed	The panel presented early findings on gender inequalities and barriers affecting women in the Blue Economy, establishing a data-driven foundation for further discussions.

Key takeaways	• Gender gaps persist across multiple sectors • Data collection is essential for policy design • Women's participation needs to be further enhanced
Any particularly valuable insights for participants?	Participants gained valuable insights into the current gender landscape within the Blue Economy, supported by preliminary data from the WIN-BIG project. The session highlighted how structural barriers—such as limited access to leadership roles, funding, and technical training—continue to affect women's participation across sectors. A key insight was the importance of data collection: without robust gender-disaggregated data, it is difficult to design effective interventions. Participants also recognized the need for coordinated efforts at EU and regional levels to address inequalities.
Any recurring challenge or opportunity highlighted?	The need to collect further gender-disaggregated data and consistent monitoring mechanisms remains a major challenge.
Panel 2 - Love for the oceans: Experience from Women's Eyes	



Date and time	26 March 2025, 12:00 – 13:00
Moderator	Alessandra Magliaccio, Bloomberg
Panellists	• Karin Orsel – President European Shipowners Association (ECSA) • Melissa Maselli – Italian Navy • Margherita Porro – Helmswoman, Luna Rossa Prada Pirelli Women's Team
Duration	1 hour
Purpose	To showcase personal and professional experiences of women in the Blue Economy.
Short summary of what the panel addressed	Women shared personal experiences of overcoming barriers and the importance of teamworking. These stories served as evidence of the significant progress achieved by women in the sector and underscore their readiness to assume further leadership and technical responsibilities.
Key takeaways	• Representation is essential • Collaboration strengthens women's roles • Personal stories inspire change
Any particularly valuable insights for participants?	Participants benefited from first-hand experiences shared by women working in diverse maritime sectors, which provided relatable and inspiring examples of career pathways. Participants observed the panel demonstrated that success in the Blue Economy often depends on collaboration, resilience, and strong support networks. A particularly valuable insight was also the shift from competition to solidarity among women, showing how collective empowerment can lead to better outcomes both individually and professionally.
Any recurring challenge or opportunity highlighted?	The need to collect further gender-disaggregated data and consistent monitoring mechanisms remains a major challenge.
Panel 3 - Leveraging Women in BuE – Initiatives promoting Women's inclusion, career opportunities, and gender aspect	



Date and time	26 March 2025, 14:00 – 15:00
Moderator	Laurence Martin
Panellists	• Milena Messori – Head of the European Investment Bank Rome Office • Elsa Tudal – Director Europe/International Affairs, Ministry of Ecologic Transition, Biodiversity, Sea and Fisheries, France • Anna Dorangricchia – Project Manager Gender Equality, Social and Civil Affairs Division, Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) Testimonials: • WINBLUE: Patrizia Grifoni – Coordinator, Director of research, Italian National Research Council • CallmeBLUE: Lidia Rossi, Director Formare; Emna Sohlobji, President Tunisian Maritime Cluster; Nesrine Ziad, Senior Officer Algerian Maritime Cluster; Masauda Abuarosha, Secretary General Libyan Maritime Cluster
Duration	1 hour

Purpose	To discuss initiatives and strategies for gender inclusion.
Short summary of what the panel addressed	The panel explored how showcasing concrete strategies to elevate women's roles in the industry.
Key takeaways	• Gender equality is a strategic priority • Investment in women boosts innovation and growth • Collaboration is a major theme allowing strengthening of maritime clusters and cross-border partnerships to create a more inclusive sector.
Any particularly valuable insights for participants?	Participants gained a clearer understanding of how gender equality and inclusion should be integrated into broader challenges. A key insight was that investing in women is not only a social priority but also a driver of economic growth, innovation, and sectoral transformation. Participants also learned about concrete tools, such as funding frameworks and diversity strategies, that can support women-led initiatives.
Any recurring challenge or opportunity highlighted?	Limited access to funding, leadership positions, and professional networks remains a key barrier for women in the Blue Economy.
Panel 4 - Women in science, research, innovation in BuE emergent sectors, a space of opportunities.	
	
Date and time	26 March 2025, 15:30 – 16:30
Moderator	Annamaria La Civita

Panellists	• Maria Cristina Pedicchio – President Agency for the Promotion of European Research (APRE) • Chiara Petrioli – Founder and CEO, WSENSE • Pierpaolo Campostrini – Director General Consortium for coordination of research activities concerning the Venice lagoon system (CORILA) • Barbara Amerio – CEO, Amer Yachts • Leonardo Manzari - National Hub Italy, WestMED Assistance Mechanism; • Marta Pascual, Spanish National Hub WestMED
Duration	1 hour
Purpose	To demonstrate that achieving gender balance in marine science and innovation is a strategic necessity for the Blue Economy's growth and sustainability.
Short summary of what the panel addressed	This panel focused on the gender gap in marine science and technology, showing how a lack of women in senior roles holds back innovation and environmental progress. Speakers argued that gender balance is essential for better maritime planning and that new digital tools are opening doors for women in traditionally male industries. While women are already leading key innovation hubs, more support and investment are needed to make the Blue Economy truly sustainable.
Key takeaways	• Women are underrepresented in STEM • Innovation sectors offer opportunities • Talent investment is essential
Any particularly valuable insights for participants?	Participants gained valuable insights into the role of women in science, research, and emerging technological sectors within the Blue Economy. The panel highlighted that while gender balance is improving at entry-level positions, significant gaps remain at senior levels. In particular, increasing female participation in STEM and innovation sectors is essential to unlocking the full potential of the Blue Economy. The discussion also emphasized the importance of investing in education, research opportunities, and leadership development for women.
Any recurring challenge or opportunity highlighted?	The low representation of women in senior scientific and technical roles continues to be a major challenge, particularly in STEM-related sectors.

5. Organiser self-assessment

Which panels were strongest, and why?

The strongest panel was "Love for the Oceans: Experience from Women's Eyes" as it provides perfect balance between inspiration and structural roadmaps.

The "Love for the Oceans" panel was particularly impactful because it grounded abstract goals in real-world success stories, such as those of Karin Orsel and Margherita Porro. Participants noted that these personal narratives of resilience and "no-fear" perspectives offered compelling evidence that systemic barriers can be dismantled through persistence and leadership, making the maritime sector feel accessible and attainable for the next generation of women.

As for the Learning Labs, the strongest panel was Communication Skills for the BuE, which emerged as the strongest component of the second day. This interactive workshop moved beyond theory to provide practical capacity-building through role-playing scenarios specifically tailored to the maritime industry. By focusing on effective presentation and negotiation techniques, the session addressed a critical skill gap and increase of self-confidence, equipping participants with the necessary tools to navigate male-dominated professional environments and advocate for their roles within the Blue Economy.

Which themes attracted the most engagement?

On the Conference Day, the main theme of engagement were the influence of visible role models and the strategic integration of gender into maritime policy. Personal testimonies from women in leadership and technical roles translated theoretical empowerment into relatable success stories, effectively fostering emotional resonance among participants.

As for Learning Labs, engagement shifted toward practical skill-building, with a specific focus on applied communication expertise. The interactive nature of specific role-playing allowed participants to bridge critical capacity gaps, providing them with the professional tools necessary to navigate and lead within male-dominated maritime environments.

On the Retreat Day, the themes of personal resilience and collective solidarity attracted the most interest. Through the proposed exercises, participants transformed individual professional challenges into a shared community experience, while inspirational storytelling solidified a sense of mutual support and long-term commitment to the sector.

What worked well in the overall event?

The event succeeded in creating a strong sense of community and inclusivity. The high quality of facilitation and the diversity of panel discussions were very much appreciated. Participants valued the opportunity to hear diverse professional stories and found the practical, hands-

on experience of the Learning Labs specifically beneficial for immediate professional application.
What could have been improved?
While the technical and inspirational content was strong, some sessions could have been further refined to ensure more practical application. Additionally, the networking segments, while generally positive, could be more structured to enhance connections even more. The third day's retreat activities received mixed feedback, suggesting that the balance between personal reflection and professional skill-building could aim for a more seamless integration.
Was the format appropriate?
The progression from a broad Conference (Day 1) to interactive Learning Labs (Day 2) and a personal Women's Retreat (Day 3) was logical, appropriate and well-received. This structure allowed for a transition from macro-level industry discussions to micro-level personal development. Most participants rated the format highly. Building on this, several participants expressed a keen interest in extending the interactive components, highlighting how much they valued the hands-on sessions of the workshops and their desire to engage even more deeply with these practical activities. Some participants questioned if the format could be reduced to 2 days instead to avoid higher rates of agenda conflicts
Would you do something different next time?
Building on the event's success, there could be the opportunity to broaden the curriculum by introducing specialized topics such as Funding Investments, Public Speaking, Intellectual Property, and Risk Management, which participants are eager to explore. Moreover, the Retreat Day could be enhanced by integrating even more practical leadership and self-esteem techniques that align closely with professional growth. Finally, fostering even deeper synergy between industry, academia, and policymakers in shared sessions would amplify the event's positive impact on the Blue Economy.

Part B. Assessment of the Learning Labs

What worked pedagogically and operationally in each lab.

6. Learning Labs overall assessment

6.1 Operational assessment

Timing	
Was the duration appropriate?	The duration of the Learning Labs was appropriately considered to the curriculum, spanning a full day from 09:00 to 17:30, breaks included. This timeframe perfectly allowed for a comprehensive exploration of four distinct thematic areas—Sustainability&Innovation, Business Plan,

	Communication, and Blue Career Management. This timing is supported by the fact that 92% of participants rated the overall time management of the labs with a high score of 4 or 5.
Was there enough time for both content delivery and interaction?	Yes, the schedule successfully balanced expert-led instruction with hands-on activities. Each 90-minute session included dedicated time for interactive workshops and group exercises, while the scheduled coffee breaks and lunch hour provided additional space for networking and informal exchange. 100% of respondents rated the practicality and interaction of the labs as high.
Was the pace too fast, too slow, or appropriate?	The pace was consistently rated as appropriate by participants. The transition between technical topics in the morning and soft-skills development in the afternoon maintained a steady momentum that kept attendees engaged throughout the day. Survey data confirms this engagement, with 92% of participants describing the networking and pace of collaboration during the event as "Very Engaging".
Room and setup	
Was the room suitable for the format?	The venue at the Federazione del Mare premises was highly suitable, offering a large, professional space that comfortably accommodated the diverse group of participants. Its layout was well-matched to the "Learning Lab" format, providing the necessary environment for both plenary presentations and collaborative work. The high level of satisfaction is reflected in the majority of participants who awarded the event organization—including the venue suitability—the highest possible score of 5.
Did the physical arrangement support participation and exchange?	The physical arrangement was conducive to active participation. The setup allowed for easy movement and facilitated the group activities required for discussions, drafting business plans and practicing communication exercises, effectively encouraging networking among the Blue Economy professionals. This is evidenced by the survey results, where 92% of participants reported that they found opportunities to collaborate with others.
Were there any issues with seating, visibility, acoustics, or movement?	The facilities were of high quality, with no significant issues reported. There was an adequate supply of chairs and tables for all attendees, and the room provided excellent visibility of the presenters. Furthermore, the acoustics were clear with no noise from the outside, ensuring a focused and productive learning environment.

7. Learning Lab 1 - Sustainability and Innovation in the Blue Economy

General Information	
Facilitator(s)	Pierpaolo Campostrini – Director General Consortium for coordination of research activities concerning the Venice lagoon system (CORILA)
Planned capacity	Up to 60 participants
Actual attendance	33 participants attended the Learning Labs Day (100% women)
Purpose	Showcase workshop of Innovative Blue Economy Initiatives and Interactive Workshop of Designing Sustainable Blue Projects.
Main skills, knowledge areas, or professional capacities this LL intended to strengthen	Participants strengthened their understanding of key sustainability principals in marine sectors, identification and exploration of green and digital transition, application of circular economy practices, practical applications to gain actionable insights and real-world examples.
Structure/Format	Interactive workshop including case studies and group discussion
Duration	09:30 – 11:00 (1h30)
Link to materials if existing	Article published on the FDM website Available Here All pictures from the "Learning Labs Day" Available Here
Photo	

Organiser Self-Assessment	
Which elements of the session were most successful?	The approach to exploring sustainability and innovation through a triple-lens (environmental, social, and economic) was highly effective. The transition from theoretical concepts to a practical Action Plan phase allowed participants to properly apply the principles directly to Blue Economy scenarios.
Which parts seemed most useful or memorable for participants?	The focus on the Twin Transition seemed to be the most memorable key takeaway for those looking to modernize maritime sectors. Survey data registered it as one of the most impactful activities for career goals and development.
What did not work as planned?	The session proceeded smoothly according to the agenda, with no specific issues identified in the execution of the planned activities.
Which aspects were less effective?	The feedback indicates that the session maintained a high standard of delivery throughout.
Is there any aspect that shouldn't be considered in future editions?	Every element of this Learning Lab demonstrated clear value, and no components should be removed from the curriculum.
Immediate outcomes	
Please check whether the Learning Lab led to any visible outcomes, such as: ☐ new contacts or exchanges among participants, X interest in mentoring or follow-up support, ☐ requests for additional training, ☐ ideas for collaboration, X practical outputs from the session, X strong discussion points that should inform future activities ☐ Others:	
Was there any feedback directly from the facilitators?	
Pierpaolo Campostrini noted that the participants showed a high level of engagement and curiosity during the development of the activities, noting the quality of the audience's feedback.	

8. Learning Labs 2 - Business Plan Development

General Information	
Facilitator(s)	Leonardo Manzari - National Hub Italy - WestMED Assistance Mechanism
Planned capacity	Up to 60 participants
Actual attendance	33 participants attended the Learning Labs Day (100% women)
Purpose	Introduction workshop to the key components of a successful business plan within the context of the Blue Economy. Participants drafted a business plan outline for the hypothetical Blue Economy start-up/project developed in session
Main skills, knowledge areas, or professional capacities this LL intended to strengthen	Participants developed Business planning and financial feasibility skills; Strategic thinking for Blue Economy start-ups; Ability to structure and present business ideas. These skills were reinforced through practical group work and applied exercises during the session.
Structure/Format	Interactive workshop with group activity to design a business plan.
Duration	11:30 – 13:00 (1h30)
Link to materials if existing	Article published on the FDM website Available Here All pictures from the "Learning Labs Day" Available Here
Photo	
Organiser Self-Assessment	
Which elements of the session were most successful?	The session successfully established a clear distinction between a Business Model and a Business Plan, providing foundational definitions for each. By identifying the Business Model and the

	Business Plan, the presentation created a solid conceptual framework for participants
Which parts seemed most useful or memorable for participants?	The comprehensive list of main components required for a business plan likely resonated most with participants as a practical checklist, such as concrete financial tools.
What did not work as planned?	While the session aimed to guide business development, the reliance on high-level definitions may have left some participants seeking more immediate application and explanation.
Which aspects were less effective?	The conceptual framework provided a foundation by defining the core principles of sustainability and activity organization. To build upon this strong theoretical base, future sessions could further enhance the experience by bridging the gap between high-level concepts and specific "how-to" methodologies.
Is there any aspect that shouldn't be considered in future editions?	Future editions could complement the existing basic suggestions and notions by moving toward an even more interactive experience.
Immediate outcomes	
Please check whether the Learning Lab led to any visible outcomes, such as: X new contacts or exchanges among participants, X interest in mentoring or follow-up support, ☐ requests for additional training, ☐ ideas for collaboration, ☐ practical outputs from the session, ☐ strong discussion points that should inform future activities ☐ Others:	
Was there any feedback directly from the facilitators?	
Leonardo Manzari expressed satisfaction with the engagement during the business plan development workshop.	

9. Learning Labs 3 - Communication Skills for the BuE

General Information	
Facilitator(s)	Clara Bartra – Food Tech & Food Innovation Expert – Ivoro Ventures
Planned capacity	Up to 60 participants

Actual attendance	33 participants attended the Learning Labs Day (100% women)
Purpose	Interactive workshop focusing on effective communication skills and presentation skills. Practice and feedback through role-playing scenarios tailored to the BuE.
Main skills, knowledge areas, or professional capacities this LL intended to strengthen	Participants enhanced: Public speaking and pitching skills; Storytelling and communication strategies; Confidence in professional environments; Ability to communicate value propositions effectively.
Structure/Format	Interactive workshop with role-playing exercises.
Duration	14:00 – 15:15 (1h15)
Link to materials if existing	Article published on the FDM website Available Here All pictures from the "Learning Labs Day" Available Here
Photo	
Organiser Self-Assessment	
Which elements of the session were most successful?	The session successfully laid out a comprehensive framework for professional communication, particularly through the introduction of communication pillars, persuasion pillars, art of influencing, case-study, importance of communication skills, the use of the voice, and pauses, the body language, anxiety management, and more. The structured focused on the "Problem, Solution, Benefit" flow, provided a very clear roadmap for participants to follow.

Which parts seemed most useful or memorable for participants?	The practical breakdown of non-verbal communication—including body language, eye contact, and tone of voice—offered highly memorable insights into how to build trust. Additionally, the guidance on active listening and empathy likely resonated as essential tools for fostering meaningful professional relationship.
What did not work as planned?	The session was successfully covered everything from interpersonal communication to speed dating activities as planned.
Which aspects were less effective?	No aspects were less effective than others.
Is there any aspect that shouldn't be considered in future editions?	All aspects should be considered in future editions since all of them provided a great and useful knowledge and tips that participants found very helpful.
Immediate outcomes	
Please check whether the Learning Lab led to any visible outcomes, such as: ☐ new contacts or exchanges among participants, X interest in mentoring or follow-up support, ☐ requests for additional training, ☐ ideas for collaboration, X practical outputs from the session, X strong discussion points that should inform future activities ☐ Others:	
Was there any feedback directly from the facilitators?	
Clara Bartra noted that the session effectively explained complex communication strategies, observing that the information was well-received by participants, who demonstrated great curiosity and a sense of enjoyment.	

10. Learning Labs 4 - Blue Career Management

General Information	
Facilitator(s)	Celia Murcia – Founder and CEO – Blue-Jobs
Planned capacity	Up to 60 participants

Actual attendance	33 participants attended the Learning Labs Day (100% women)
Purpose	To support career development and self-reflection.
Main skills, knowledge areas, or professional capacities this LL intended to strengthen	Participants developed: Career planning and self-assessment skills; Goal setting and professional development strategies; Awareness of career pathways; Ability to identify barriers and opportunities for growth. These skills were strengthened through guided self-reflection and goal-setting exercises.
Structure/Format	Interactive exercises focused on goal setting and career planning
Duration	15:30 – 17:00 (1h30)
Link to materials if existing	Article published on the FDM website Available Here All pictures from the "Learning Labs Day" Available Here
Photo	
Organiser Self-Assessment	
Which elements of the session were most successful?	The session was highly effective in providing a structured overview of the diverse career pathways available within the blue economy. The collaborative environment encouraged participants to explore personal professional goals while gaining a clearer understanding of the sector's evolving landscape
Which parts seemed most useful or memorable for participants?	Participants particularly valued the insights into identifying transferable skills and aligning them with specific blue economy roles. The guidance on navigating career transitions and the emphasis on lifelong learning within the Blue Economy sector stood out as highly relevant and empowering highlight.

What did not work as planned?	Everything worked smoothly. The content was comprehensive, providing enough time for each segment allowed participants to delve deeper into the specific nuances of different career paths.
Which aspects were less effective?	To build on this successful framework, future sessions could further enhance the experience by connecting these core ideas with even more direct, step-by-step ways to put them into practice.
Is there any aspect that shouldn't be considered in future editions?	No elements should be removed. The session provided valuable knowledge and successfully raised awareness regarding the diverse career paths, which participants found to be highly beneficial for their professional journeys.
Immediate outcomes	
Please check whether the Learning Lab led to any visible outcomes, such as: X new contacts or exchanges among participants, ☐ interest in mentoring or follow-up support, ☐ requests for additional training, ☐ ideas for collaboration, X practical outputs from the session, X strong discussion points that should inform future activities ☐ Others:	
Was there any feedback directly from the facilitators?	
Celia Murcia focused on the importance a proactive approach to career development, providing a clear path for professionals to navigate the evolving sector of the Blue Economy.	

Part C. Survey results

Following the Mediterranean Event, post-event surveys (one for each Day) were conducted to gather insights from participants, revealing a high level of satisfaction across all three session components. Quantitative data confirms this success, with average ratings for organizational aspects, panel effectiveness, and session formats consistently **reaching 4 out of 5**. Attendees consistently valued the high quality of the speakers, the relevance of the subject matter, and the meaningful professional connections formed throughout the event.

As for the **Conference Day**, participants noted the diversity and expertise of the speakers, with **100%** of respondents confirming that the topics aligned with their professional goals. In

particular, they enjoyed the thoughtful balance between policy, innovation, and gender-related topics in the Blue Economy. The panel discussions were highly valued, receiving a strong effectiveness score of **4.67 out of 5** for their ability to offer diverse perspectives on women's roles in the Blue Economy. **Engagement** remained high throughout the sessions, with the format earning a solid **average score of 4/5**. Moreover, **60% of participants** felt they had "plenty" of networking opportunities, another **40%** found them sufficient, indicating a generally positive environment for making connections.

As for the **Learning Labs**, feedback highlighted the interactive nature of these sessions as a key strength. This was backed by high scores for both interaction - **averaging 4.5/5** - and practicality with participants finding the focus on communication, sustainability, and entrepreneurship especially helpful for skill development. The collaborative atmosphere was a major highlight, with **91%** of participants describing the networking and collaboration as **"Very Engaging."** This high level of engagement translated into tangible outcomes, as **54%** of respondents felt they had "**a lot"** of opportunities to collaborate.

As for the **Women's Retreat,** this day was described as a deeply impactful experience, with respondents appreciating the supportive and intimate environment, reflected in top scores for the sense of community - **averaging 4/5** - and the quality of mentoring, for which **66%** of the gave the facilitation a perfect score of **5 out of 5**. The retreat encouraged personal reflection, with many participants noting that it contributed meaningfully to addressing personal and professional challenges.

To make future editions even more rewarding, participants suggested expanding the duration of interactive sessions to allow for deeper engagement, along with the opportunity to introduce more structured networking moments and to further broaden the event's reach across additional countries and sectors, ensuring the momentum of these valuable connections continues well beyond the event itself.

In summary, the WIN-BIG Mediterranean Event concluded with an impressive **overall satisfaction score of 4.5 / 5.0**, a figure that reflects the consistent quality maintained across the three-day program. This aggregated score encompasses high score for organizational efficiency, the dynamic interactivity of the sessions, and the deep professional relevance of the content. By successfully balancing these three pillars, the event proved to be a highly effective platform for empowerment and knowledge exchange, leaving participants with a strong sense of value and a clear desire for the continuation of such impactful initiatives in the Blue Economy.

Baltic Event - Report



Part A. Event facts and evidence

What happened, who attended, what was delivered.

1. Basic event information	
Event name	**WIN-BIG Baltic Event**
Sea basin	Baltic Sea
Location	Kiel, Germany
Dates	November 5-6th, 2025
Lead organiser and supporting partners	**sustainable Projects (s.Pro),** with SUBMARINER Network, Blaue Bioökonomie, and Kiel University / Kiel Marine Science Campus supporting the event delivery.
Venue(s)	○ November 5th – Conference & Learning Labs Part I at the Seeburg

	○ November 6th – Learning Labs Part II & Women's Retreat at the Marine Science Campus (MSC)
Event format	Physical event
Linked project component(s): conference, learning labs, retreat	○ Conference ○ Learning Labs ○ Women's Retreat
Person completing the report	Mariana Mata Lara

2. Event objectives and expected outcomes

What were the main objectives of the event overall? Were the objectives achieved?

The WIN-BIG Baltic Event was designed as the second regional sea-basin event in the WIN-BIG series. Its overall purpose was to strengthen gender inclusivity in the Baltic Blue Economy by addressing barriers faced by women, presenting regional gender-mapping findings, creating space for discussion with stakeholders, and offering practical capacity-building through Learning Labs and a women-focused retreat. A clear focus was put on knowledge sharing, skill building, connection, and professional growth for women across blue sectors. Specifically, the conference component was intended to enable open discussion and exchange at regional level, while the Learning Labs were explicitly framed as a practical, hands-on response to capacity gaps, focused on professional growth, leadership, innovation and networking.

These objectives were broadly achieved. The conference component successfully created a relevant discussion space on women's participation in the Blue Economy, as reflected in the positive participant feedback. Panel discussions were rated **4.27/5** for providing diverse perspectives on women's roles in the sector, while the overall session format for learning and engagement received **4.18/5**. The event also succeeded in offering practical capacity-building through the Learning Labs, which received **4.56/5** for structure, time management, and materials, and **4.20/5** for interaction. In addition, the objective of fostering networking and exchange was partly achieved: respondents evaluated networking opportunities positively overall, although the survey results also show room for improvement in creating stronger collaboration pathways. Finally, the objective of increasing visibility and creating a supportive women-focused environment was also clearly met, particularly through the retreat, exhibition, and women-centred framing of the event, with the retreat receiving strong scores for inclusiveness (**4.43/5**), facilitation (**4.43/5**), and sense of community (**4.29/5**).

What were the expected outcomes? Were they reached?

The expected outcomes of the Baltic Event were increased awareness of the barriers and opportunities for women in the Baltic Blue Economy; stronger visibility of women's

experiences, contributions, and leadership; improved knowledge and skills supporting women's professional development; expanded networking and peer exchange; a stronger sense of support and community among women in the sector; and momentum for future opportunities that foster women's roles in the Blue Economy. These expected outcomes were reached to a considerable extent, although not equally strongly across all dimensions. Awareness-raising and visibility were clearly achieved, as participants highlighted negotiation, intellectual property, awareness of biases, and the women-focused perspective of the event among the most valuable takeaways. Professional development outcomes were also reached, particularly through the Learning Labs on negotiation, communication, and intellectual property, although the score for immediate applicability of the Learning Labs in professional life (**3.30/5**) suggests that some topics were more directly transferable than others. Networking and peer exchange outcomes were also reached, with respondents referring to future collaborations, exchange with other women, best practices, and continued use of the presentations and notes after the event, even if collaboration opportunities during the labs were assessed more moderately. Community-building outcomes were achieved strongly, especially through the retreat, although its personal relevance and contribution to participants' individual challenges varied more across respondents. Lastly, the event generated clear future momentum: **55%** of respondents believed the conference would lead to future opportunities that foster women's roles in the Blue Economy, while **45%** answered "maybe," indicating that the event was seen as both relevant and promising in terms of longer-term impact.

3. Outreach, invitations and participation

3.1 Invitation and registration funnel

Number of people invited	Registration linked promoted online
Number registered	75 participants
Number attended	60 participants
Number of no-shows	15 people
Drop-out reasons, if known	Last-minute compromises

3.2 Explanatory notes

Why did people drop out or not attend?

E.g. Were there capacity issues? Did timing, travel, or competing commitments affect attendance? Did some event components attract more interest than others?

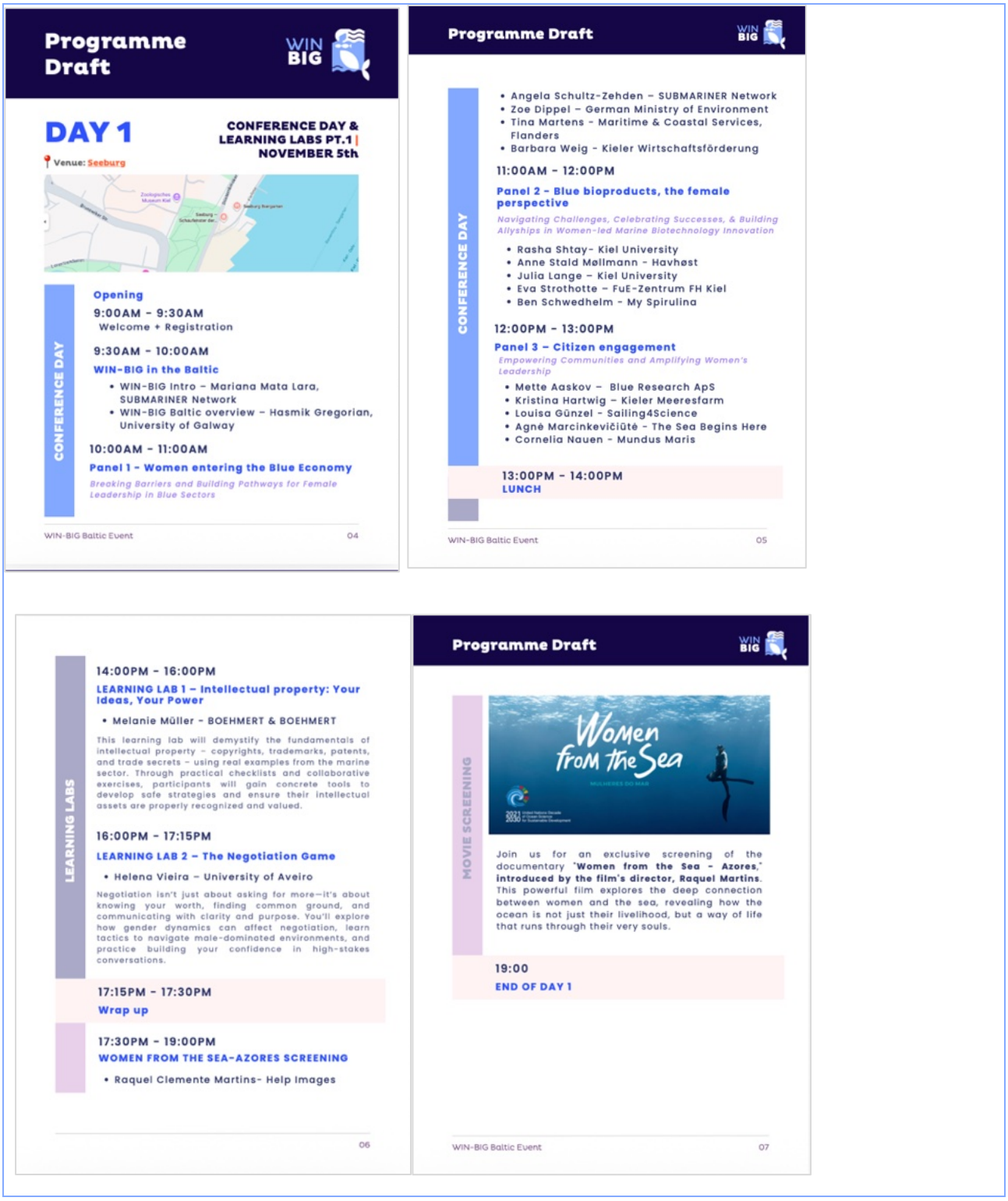
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3.3 Participants' profile data	
Gender	**93.1% women**, 5.7% men, and 1.1% prefer not to say.
Age group stats	The largest age groups were **35–45** (34.5%) and **25–35** (32.2%), followed by 45–55 (16.1%), 55–65 (8.0%), 18–25 (5.7%), and 65+ (2.3%). 1.1% did not specify age.
Nationalities or countries of residence stats	**The strongest representation came from Germany** (36.8%), followed by Portugal (8.0%), Denmark (4.6%), and Italy (4.6%). Ireland, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom each represented 3.4%, while Finland and Sweden each represented 2.3%. A further 3.4% of participants indicated mixed German backgrounds, and 5.7% did not specify nationality. The remaining participants represented a wide range of other nationalities, each accounting for 1.1% of registrations.
Sector in the Blue Economy	**The event attracted a strongly knowledge- and innovation-oriented audience**. The most represented sectors were Research & Academia (48.3%), Blue Bioeconomy / Biotechnology (36.8%), Fisheries & Aquaculture (28.7%), Marine Conservation & Restoration (24.1%), Maritime Spatial Planning & Governance (16.1%), and Blue Sports & Sustainable Tourism (12.6%). Marine Energy & Robotics and Maritime Transport & Ports each represented 5.7%. As registrants could select more than one sector, percentages do not add up to 100%.
Role/Position type	Based on grouped role categories, the largest participant groups were **in Research / academia** (27.6%), **Leadership / entrepreneurship / management** (24.1%), **Project management / coordination** (20.7%), **and Policy / advisory / communications** (18.4%). In addition, 4.6% were students / early-career participants, 3.4% fell under other specialist / support roles, and 1.1% were other / unspecified.
Other	N/A

4. Programme delivered

Final agenda implemented

The Baltic Event was implemented over two days. The first day at Seeburg combined opening remarks, three conference panels, lunch, two Learning Labs, a wrap-up, and the screening of the documentary Women from the Sea – Azores. The second day at Kiel University / Marine Science Campus included two additional Learning Labs, lunch, the Women's Retreat, and a final wrap-up. The agenda also confirms that the event featured a **Women Ocean Champions exhibition**.



Programme Draft

DAY 1

CONFERENCE DAY & LEARNING LABS PT.1 | NOVEMBER 5th

Venue: Seeburg

CONFERENCE DAY

Opening

9:00AM – 9:30AM
Welcome + Registration

9:30AM – 10:00AM

WIN-BIG in the Baltic

- WIN-BIG Intro – Mariana Mata Lara, SUBMARINER Network
- WIN-BIG Baltic overview – Hasmik Gregorian, University of Galway

10:00AM – 11:00AM

Panel 1 – Women entering the Blue Economy

Breaking Barriers and Building Pathways for Female Leadership in Blue Sectors

Programme Draft

CONFERENCE DAY

- Angela Schultz-Zehden – SUBMARINER Network
- Zoe Dippel – German Ministry of Environment
- Tina Martens - Maritime & Coastal Services, Flanders
- Barbara Weig - Kieler Wirtschaftsförderung

11:00AM – 12:00PM

Panel 2 – Blue bioproducts, the female perspective

Navigating Challenges, Celebrating Successes, & Building Allyships in Women-led Marine Biotechnology Innovation

- Rasha Shtay- Kiel University
- Anne Stald Møllmann - Havhøst
- Julia Lange – Kiel University
- Eva Strothotte – FuE-Zentrum FH Kiel
- Ben Schwedhelm - My Spirulina

12:00PM – 13:00PM

Panel 3 – Citizen engagement

Empowering Communities and Amplifying Women's Leadership

- Mette Aaskov – Blue Research ApS
- Kristina Hartwig – Kieler Meeresfarm
- Louisa Günzel - Sailing4Science
- Agnė Marcinkevičiūtė - The Sea Begins Here
- Cornelia Nauen - Mundus Maris

13:00PM – 14:00PM
LUNCH

LEARNING LABS

14:00PM – 16:00PM

LEARNING LAB 1 – Intellectual property: Your Ideas, Your Power

- Melanie Müller – BOEHMERT & BOEHMERT

This learning lab will demystify the fundamentals of intellectual property – copyrights, trademarks, patents, and trade secrets – using real examples from the marine sector. Through practical checklists and collaborative exercises, participants will gain concrete tools to develop safe strategies and ensure their intellectual assets are properly recognized and valued.

16:00PM – 17:15PM

LEARNING LAB 2 – The Negotiation Game

- Helena Vieira – University of Aveiro

Negotiation isn't just about asking for more—it's about knowing your worth, finding common ground, and communicating with clarity and purpose. You'll explore how gender dynamics can affect negotiation, learn tactics to navigate male-dominated environments, and practice building your confidence in high-stakes conversations.

17:15PM – 17:30PM
Wrap up

17:30PM – 19:00PM

WOMEN FROM THE SEA-AZORES SCREENING

- Raquel Clemente Martins- Help Images

Programme Draft

MOVIE SCREENING

Join us for an exclusive screening of the documentary "**Women from the Sea – Azores**," **introduced by the film's director, Raquel Martins**. This powerful film explores the deep connection between women and the sea, revealing how the ocean is not just their livelihood, but a way of life that runs through their very souls.

19:00
END OF DAY 1

Co-funded by the European Union



Panel 1 – Women entering the Blue Economy



Date and time	5 November 2025, 10:00–11:00
Moderator	Angela Schultz-Zehden, s.Pro & SUBMARINER Network

Panellists	Zoë Dippel, Barbara Weig, Eva Strothotte
Duration	60 minutes
Purpose	The panel was designed to discuss the common hurdles women face when entering the Blue Economy and to explore what kinds of policy support, diversity tools, networks and sector opportunities can help women progress. The question set prepared for the panel addressed government policies, diversity and inclusion tools in maritime settings, the importance of connecting with other women, and women's leadership opportunities in innovative offshore spaces.
Short summary of what the panel addressed	The session combined structural and personal perspectives on women's entry into blue sectors. Zoë Dippel's contribution framed gender equality as beneficial not only for women but for economies, political decision-making and social fairness more broadly. Barbara Weig's slides highlighted networking, female role models, visibility of women, and the value of mixed teams built on mutual respect. Eva Strothotte brought in an offshore and innovation-oriented perspective, showing women's roles in multi-use, aquaculture, nature restoration and environmental impact work connected to North Sea and Baltic Sea projects.
Key takeaways	The panel highlighted that networking is critical for career progression, that female role models and visibility matter, and that successful and innovative projects require mixed teams with different strengths. It also underscored the importance of policy frameworks and practical diversity tools, alongside the growing opportunities for women in innovative offshore and marine project spaces.
Any particularly valuable insights for participants?	A particularly valuable element was the combination of systemic and personal insight: the panel did not only discuss barriers in abstract terms, but linked them to concrete mechanisms such as role models, visibility, inclusive tools, and real professional opportunities in offshore and coastal sectors.
Any recurring challenge or opportunity highlighted?	Recurring challenges included persistent gender barriers in entering and progressing in blue sectors, while recurring opportunities included stronger cross-sector networks, better visibility for women, and the emergence of innovative project areas where women can take leadership roles.

Panel 2 – Blue bioproducts, the female perspective	
	
Date and time	5 November 2025, 11:00–12:00
Moderator	Natascha Jaspert, SUBMARINER Network
Panellists	Rasha Shtay, Anne Stald Møllmann, Ben Schwedhelm, Tina Maria Seligmann, Julia Lange.
Duration	60 minutes
Purpose	This panel aimed to explore challenges, opportunities and success factors for women in blue bioproduct innovation, including marine-based food and feed applications, mariculture, start-ups, transfer from research to market, and women's visibility and leadership in male-dominated sectors. The prepared panel questions addressed sustainable marine recipes, women's entrepreneurship in maritime gardens and mariculture, men's role as allies, visibility in food and feed industries, and advice on moving from research to market-driven innovation.
Short summary of what the panel addressed	The panel brought together examples from food technology, mariculture, blue-biotech start-ups, regulatory support and innovation-cluster coordination. The speakers showed that women are increasingly active in community gardens, algae and food innovation, but that commercial ocean farming and primary food production remain strongly male-dominated. At the same time, the panel highlighted how networks, transfer skills, collective leadership, and regulatory

	understanding support women's pathway from research and ideas to viable innovation. A number of challenges associated with blue careers were mentioned, including overwork, relocation, limited contract duration, reputation pressure and timing around family life.
Key takeaways	The main messages of the panel were that women are already leading and shaping blue-bioproduct innovation, but still face structural barriers in market-facing and primary-production sectors; that networks and collaboration are essential for scaling blue innovation; that transfer from research to market requires support and strategic guidance; and that women's leadership in food, feed and marine biotechnology should be made more visible.
Any particularly valuable insights for participants?	Particularly valuable insights included the examples from Havhøst on women's participation in community-oriented ocean farming, from My Spirulina on building a consumer-facing algae start-up, and from Julia Lange and Tina Maria Seligmann on transfer, collective leadership, food applications and regulatory realities in the algae/food sector.
Any recurring challenge or opportunity highlighted?	Recurring challenges included gender imbalance in commercial ocean farming and food production, career instability and limited contracts, and the difficulty of navigating innovation pathways. Recurring opportunities included regenerative food cultivation, algae-based products, network-building, and collective leadership around blue bioeconomy innovation.

Panel 3 – Citizen engagement



Date and time	5 November 2025, 12:00–13:00
Moderator	Mariana Mata Lara, SUBMARINER Network
Panellists	Mette Aaskov, Kristina Hartwig, Louisa Günzel, Agnė Marcinkevičiūtė, Cornelia E. Nauen
Duration	60 minutes
Purpose	The panel was designed to discuss how citizen engagement can motivate real action and participation in the Blue Economy, how female leaders in ocean science and communication can reach wider and more diverse audiences, and how storytelling, art, film and educational outreach can make scientific and environmental knowledge more accessible.
Short summary of what the panel addressed	The session emphasised transparency, public dialogue, local community involvement, education and awareness as foundations for citizen engagement. It also explored practical communication questions such as how to tell better stories about aquaculture and sustainable marine food. Louisa Günzel's contribution highlighted citizen-science sailing expeditions as a way to make ocean research accessible while opening pathways for young women in marine science and sailing. Agnė Marcinkevičiūtė's material on The Sea Begins Here showed how film can connect personal stories to ecological crisis and inspire collective action. Cornelia Nauen's profile reinforced the importance of connecting science, civil society and ocean protection.
Key takeaways	The panel highlighted the importance of transparency, local participation, education and awareness, and the use of storytelling and creative media to raise engagement around the sea. It also showed that citizen engagement is not separate from women's leadership: women's roles as communicators, organisers, educators and storytellers can be central in shaping more inclusive ocean futures.
Any particularly valuable insights for participants?	The most valuable insights came from the combination of practical communication examples and inspiring formats: community dialogue around aquaculture and mussels, citizen-science sailing, and documentary film as a tool for social and environmental mobilisation.
Any recurring challenge or opportunity highlighted?	A recurring challenge was how to motivate real action and participation around complex marine issues. A recurring opportunity was the use of creative and community-rooted approaches that make ocean knowledge accessible, emotional and actionable for a broader public, including youth and underrepresented groups.

5. Organiser self-assessment

Which panels were strongest, and why?

Panel 1 – Women entering the Blue Economy and **Panel 2 – Blue bioproducts, the female perspective** were the strongest panels. Panel 1 was particularly strong because it addressed structural barriers, visibility, networking, policy support, and women's entry into blue sectors in a direct and relevant way. Panel 2 was especially strong because it connected women's leadership and innovation to concrete blue-bioproduct, food, mariculture, and market-oriented examples, making the discussion highly relevant for participants interested in research-to-market pathways and entrepreneurship. Together, these two panels combined systemic reflection with concrete professional realities, which was one of the strongest features of the event.

Which themes attracted the most engagement?

Considering the full programme (Conference, Learning Labs and Women's Retreat), the themes that attracted the most engagement were **negotiation, intellectual property, women's leadership** and visibility, **awareness of gender bias,** and **communication**. Survey responses show that negotiation and intellectual property were repeatedly highlighted as particularly valuable takeaways, while communication emerged strongly in the Learning Labs section as one of the most relevant themes for participants' career goals. The event also generated strong engagement around women-focused exchange and the practical challenges of career progression in the Blue Economy.

What worked well in the overall event?

The overall event worked well because it combined several complementary elements in a coherent flow: regional discussion through the panels, practical upskilling through the Learning Labs, inspiration and visibility through the documentary screening and Women Ocean Champions exhibition, and reflection and community-building through the Women's Retreat. The organisation and venue were positively assessed (**4.45/5**), the panel discussions were rated strongly (**4.27/5**), and the Learning Labs were especially well rated for structure, timing, and materials (**4.56/5**). The event also succeeded in creating a women-centred environment that participants valued for both professional learning and peer exchange.

What could have been improved?

The areas that could have been improved were **structured networking**, **collaboration pathways**, and **follow-up orientation**. While networking and exchange were clearly present, the survey shows that participants saw room for stronger collaboration opportunities during the Learning Labs. In addition, future editions would benefit from giving even more attention to **leadership training**, **financing**, **regulatory frameworks**, **sexism in professional roles**,

and **women's access to top positions**, as these were explicitly identified by participants as areas requiring more attention. The retreat also showed more mixed results in terms of personal relevance and impact, indicating that expectation-setting and framing of this component could be strengthened.
Was the format appropriate?
Yes. The format was appropriate and effective for the objectives of the Baltic Event. It combined awareness-raising, visibility, practical learning, peer exchange, and reflection in a way that matched the purpose of WIN-BIG's sea-basin events. Survey results confirm this: participants rated the session format for learning and engagement **4.18/5**, and **55%** stated that the conference topics aligned with their professional role or goals, while **45%** considered them somewhat aligned. The format therefore provided both relevance and diversity of engagement.
Would you do something different next time?
In a future edition, the event would benefit from more **structured networking and matchmaking moments**, a stronger focus on **leadership advancement and financing pathways**, and more explicit opportunities for participants to connect the Learning Labs to their own projects, organisations, or career development plans (although this implies a difficult implementation given the diverse audience's interests). For the retreat component, clearer expectation-setting and framing would help ensure that participants understand its purpose and engage with it from the outset in a more consistent way.

Part B. Assessment of the Learning Labs

What worked pedagogically and operationally in each lab.

6. Learning Labs overall assessment

6.1 Operational assessment

Timing	
Was the duration appropriate?	**Yes, overall the duration was appropriate.** The Learning Labs were organised in substantial blocks ranging from **75 minutes to 2 hours**, which allowed each session to go beyond a short presentation format and include practical or reflective elements. This is also reflected in the positive participant rating for the overall organisation of the Learning Labs, including structure, time management and materials (**4.56/5**).
Was there enough time for both content	**Yes, overall there was enough time for both content delivery and interaction.** The session design across the four Learning Labs combined input with exercises, discussion, or reflection. Participant

delivery and interaction?	feedback confirms that interaction was positively assessed, with the Learning Labs receiving **4.20/5** for interaction. At the same time, the survey results also show that the immediate practical applicability of the labs scored lower (**3.30/5**), which suggests that while the time allocation supported interaction, some participants would have benefited from even more time for application to their own professional contexts, resulting difficult to match to everyone given the diversity pf backgrounds in the audience.
Was the pace too fast, too slow, or appropriate?	**The pace was appropriate overall.** Survey feedback on the organisation of the Learning Labs was clearly positive (**4.56/5**), and no recurring criticism in the survey material pointed to timing problems as a major issue. The overall positive assessment indicates that the balance between delivery and flow worked well for most participants.
Room and setup	
Was the room suitable for the format?	**Yes, the rooms were suitable for the format.** The Learning Labs were delivered in person across the two event venues, and participant feedback on the venue and organisational aspects of the conference was positive overall (**4.45/5**). No survey feedback identified the room setting as a significant weakness for the Learning Labs.
Did the physical arrangement support participation and exchange?	**Yes, the physical arrangement supported participation and exchange.** This is confirmed indirectly by the positive feedback on Learning Lab interaction (**4.20/5**) and by the fact that participants rated the labs as engaging for networking and collaboration, with **50%** describing them as "very engaging" and **50%** as "more or less." These results indicate that the setup enabled discussion and exchange among participants.
Were there any issues with seating, visibility, acoustics, or movement?	**No specific issues** were identified in the event nor by the organisers, nor by the participants.

7. Learning Labs 1 – Intellectual Property: Your Ideas, Your Power

General Information	
Facilitator(s)	Melanie Müller, Boehmert & Boehmert
Planned capacity	Limited to 60 participants

Actual attendance	Full capacity
Purpose	The lab was designed to demystify the fundamentals of intellectual property and explain how copyrights, trademarks, patents and trade secrets work in practice, especially through examples from the marine sector. The purpose was not only to introduce definitions, but to equip participants with practical tools to ensure that their intellectual assets are recognised, valued and protected.
Main skills, knowledge areas, or professional capacities this LL intended to strengthen	The lab aimed to strengthen participants' understanding of the role of IP in innovation, the differences between technical and non-technical intellectual property rights, and the way IP can de-risk ventures for investors, grants and partners. It also intended to support more strategic thinking around protection, valuation and the use of IP in blue-economy ventures.
Structure/Format	The presentation was structured around an introduction, fundamentals of IPRs and protection, looking ahead, and Q&A. It used concrete categories such as copyrights, trademarks, patents and trade secrets, and explained why IP matters in the blue economy. The great presentation skills of Melanie and her practical orientation through examples, checklists and collaborative exercises, mantained high interest from the audience along the whole session.
Duration	2 hours
Link to materials if existing	All available here

Photo	
Organiser Self-Assessment	
Which elements of the session were most successful?	The most successful element of the session was its practical translation of **intellectual property concepts into professional and innovation-oriented use**. The session made copyrights, trademarks, patents, and trade secrets understandable and directly relevant to participants working on projects, products, start-ups, or transferable research. It also worked well in showing how intellectual property supports value creation, partnerships, funding readiness, and strategic protection of ideas in the Blue Economy.
Which parts seemed most useful or memorable for participants?	The most useful and memorable parts were those that linked IP protection to concrete professional value. Survey responses confirm that intellectual property was one of the most appreciated themes of the event and was repeatedly mentioned together with negotiation skills among the most valuable takeaways. LL1 was also selected as **one of the Learning Labs with the greatest impact on their professional interest.**
What did not work as planned?	No specific issue was identified as out of plan.
Which aspects were less effective?	No recurring weaker aspect specific to this Learning Lab emerged from the participant feedback.
Is there any aspect that shouldn't be	No element of this Learning Lab should be removed. The topic addressed a concrete and relevant capacity area that is often missing

considered in future editions?	in professional development formats and should be retained in future editions.
Immediate outcomes	
Please check whether the Learning Lab led to any visible outcomes, such as: ☐ new contacts or exchanges among participants, X interest in mentoring or follow-up support, ☐ requests for additional training, ☐ ideas for collaboration, X practical outputs from the session, ☐ strong discussion points that should inform future activities ☐ Others:	
Was there any feedback directly from the facilitators?	
Melanie was very grateful to being invited into this event considering how different the crowd was to the one she is used to. She got inspired by a women-focused content, by the connections of her area to the Blue Economy, but especially she deeply enjoyed the retreat and mentioned she would like that all her female colleagues would attend one of the WIN-BIG event. Lastly, she offered to be included *pro bono* in the WIN-BIG's programme 'Mentors4theFutureLeaders'.	

8. Learning Labs 2 – The Negotiation Game

General Information	
Facilitator(s)	Helena Vieira, University of Aveiro
Planned capacity	Limited to 60 participants
Actual attendance	Full capacity
Purpose	This Learning Lab empowered women with negotiation skills and tools tailored to the Blue Economy and positioned negotiation as a core professional, entrepreneurial, and leadership skill. The session strengthened participants' ability to negotiate with clarity, confidence, and purpose, while also addressing the gender barriers and stereotypes that often shape women's negotiation experiences in professional settings.
Main skills, knowledge areas,	The lab strengthened negotiation skills in areas such as communication, active listening, rapport-building, persuasive

or professional capacities this LL intended to strengthen	language, emotional intelligence, problem-solving, and persistence. It also introduced the strategic tools of BATNA and ZOPA and addressed women-specific negotiation barriers, including confidence gaps, stereotypes around assertiveness, and the undervaluation of one's contribution.
Structure/Format	The session combined an icebreaker, conceptual input, examples from blue-economy and professional contexts, practical explanation of BATNA and ZOPA, reflection on common barriers affecting women in negotiation, and a role-play exercise followed by debriefing. The role-play used scenarios on sustainable aquaculture, conservation NGO–funder company , and blue-biotech venture capital negotiations, and the session concluded with a reflection and commitment-to-action component.
Duration	75 minutes
Link to materials if existing	All available here
Photo	
Organiser Self-Assessment	
Which elements of the session were most successful?	The most successful elements were the combination of negotiation concepts with practical tools and empowering reflection on gender barriers within negotiation contexts. The session worked particularly well because it connected BATNA, ZOPA, and core negotiation skills with women's professional realities in the Blue Economy. The role-

	play format also strengthened engagement and helped participants move from theory to application.
Which parts seemed most useful or memorable for participants?	The most useful and memorable parts were the role-play scenarios, the practical explanation of BATNA and ZOPA, and the framing of negotiation as a leadership and empowerment tool. **Survey responses confirm that this was the most impactful Learning Lab overall**: **63% of respondents** considered this as the lab with the strongest impact on their professional interests, and negotiation was repeatedly mentioned as one of the most valuable takeaways from the event.
What did not work as planned?	No specific issue was identified as out of plan.
Which aspects were less effective?	No recurring weaker aspect specific to this Learning Lab emerged from the participant feedback.
Is there any aspect that shouldn't be considered in future editions?	No element of this Learning Lab should be removed. This Learning Lab was one of the strongest components of the Baltic Event and should clearly be retained in future editions. A longer time slot (min 2h) for this may improve impact and engagement.
Immediate outcomes	
Please check whether the Learning Lab led to any visible outcomes, such as: ☐ new contacts or exchanges among participants, X interest in mentoring or follow-up support, X requests for additional training, ☐ ideas for collaboration, X practical outputs from the session, ☐ strong discussion points that should inform future activities ☐ Others:	
Was there any feedback directly from the facilitators?	
Helena enjoyed preparing and delivering this LL. She commented that the context and Blue Economy framing for the whole LL and particularly for role-play are key to this training. The facilitator suggested a longer time slot for this to be more impactful and provide consolidation time for trainees to really absorb all materials and learnings.	

9. Learning Labs 3 – Funding Fundamentals: Innovation vs. Research

General Information	
Facilitator(s)	Angela Schultz-Zehden, SUBMARINER Network / s.Pro, and Alexander Ohrt, opencampus.sh / Waterkant
Planned capacity	Limited to 60 participants
Actual attendance	Full capacity
Purpose	This Learning Lab supported participants in understanding the difference between research funding and innovation-oriented funding, while helping them build basic finance and funding literacy relevant to the Blue Economy. The session strengthened participants' ability to position ideas for the right funding and innovation audiences and encouraged a broader understanding of how research, entrepreneurship, project ecosystems, and impact pathways connect in practice.
Main skills, knowledge areas, or professional capacities this LL intended to strengthen	The session strengthened knowledge of funding instruments, project synergies, ecosystem-building, finance pathways, and early-stage innovation support. It also developed participants' understanding of how to move from research-driven work toward innovation and entrepreneurial impact, and how to identify the right support structures for different stages of development.
Structure/Format	The lab combined a systems-level overview of different funding sources, project clusters, and blue-economy ecosystem structures with a more entrepreneurial and impact-oriented perspective on innovation pathways. This created a session that connected funding literacy with strategic thinking about start-ups, science-based innovation, and practical next steps for participants' own ideas and professional development.
Duration	2 hours
Link to materials if existing	All available here

Photo	
	
Organiser Self-Assessment	
Which elements of the session were most successful?	The most successful element of the session was the **entrepreneurial and innovation-focused part**, which complemented the audience's stronger familiarity with the research world. This part of the Learning

	Lab helped broaden participants' perspective beyond conventional research funding and introduced a more dynamic understanding of innovation pathways, start-up thinking, and impact-oriented development in the Blue Economy. Alexander Ohrt's intervention was particularly successful in this regard, as it brought an energetic, fun, and accessible perspective that made the topic lively and relatable for participants.
Which parts seemed most useful or memorable for participants?	The most useful parts were the overview of funding sources, the explanation of project clusters and synergies, and especially the link between science-based work and entrepreneurial/innovation pathways. The entrepreneurial perspective stood out because it pushed participants to think beyond the research environment and consider how ideas can evolve into impact-oriented initiatives, ventures, or innovation processes. Survey feedback confirms that financing and related support pathways are important to participants, and LL3 was selected by **30% of respondents** as one of the Learning Labs with the greatest impact on their professional interest. Participants also identified financing as an area that should receive more attention in future events.
What did not work as planned?	No specific issue was identified as out of plan.
Which aspects were less effective?	The content was highly relevant for part of the audience, but future editions could strengthen its direct application to participants' own projects or career plans. This conclusion is supported by the survey pattern showing strong interest in financing as a topic for future events.
Is there any aspect that shouldn't be considered in future editions?	No element of this Learning Lab should be removed. The topic remains important and should continue to be included, while future editions could strengthen its practical application dimension.
Immediate outcomes	
Please check whether the Learning Lab led to any visible outcomes, such as: ☐ new contacts or exchanges among participants, X interest in mentoring or follow-up support, X requests for additional training,	

☐ ideas for collaboration, X practical outputs from the session, ☐ strong discussion points that should inform future activities ☐ Others:
Was there any feedback directly from the facilitators?
No direct feedback from the facilitator was provided.

10. Learning Labs 4 – How our background shapes the way we communicate

General Information	
Facilitator(s)	Raquel Clemente Martins and Julia Lange
Planned capacity	Limited to 60 participants
Actual attendance	Full capacity
Purpose	This Learning Lab explored how educational, cultural, and professional backgrounds shape communication, and supported participants in identifying their own communication styles, understanding biases, strengthening storytelling skills, and adapting their communication to different people and settings. The session gave communication a strong reflective and relational dimension that is highly relevant for leadership, collaboration, and stakeholder engagement in the Blue Economy.
Main skills, knowledge areas, or professional capacities this LL intended to strengthen	The session strengthened self-awareness, cross-cultural and contextual communication, storytelling, bridge-building across different backgrounds, and more effective communication with diverse audiences. It also encouraged reflection on how personal histories, values, and assumptions shape communication styles and professional interaction through the cards provided by Tina Mertens from the "***Toolbox on diversity and inclusion***" developed by *The Agency for Maritime and Coastal Services* in Belgium.
Structure/Format	The Learning Lab used a highly interactive format that included facilitator introductions, the "Maritime Mystery" icebreaker, reflection on background and values, discussion of communication differences, the

	"Who am I?" storytelling exercise, the "Let's Bridge" activity, and a final recap with toolbox resources. The format emphasised participation, reflection, dialogue, and experiential learning throughout.
Duration	2 hours
Link to materials if existing	All available here
Photo	
Organiser Self-Assessment	
Which elements of the session were most successful?	The most successful elements were the interactive and reflective exercises that helped participants explore how background, identity, values, and experience shape communication. The session created strong conditions for participation, self-reflection, and peer exchange, and complemented the more strategy-oriented Learning Labs with a focus on interpersonal and cross-cultural communication.
Which parts seemed most useful or memorable for participants?	The most useful and memorable parts were the storytelling and bridge-building exercises, especially the activities focused on interpretation, common ground, and communication across backgrounds. Survey responses confirm the strength of this topic: communication emerged as the strongest topic in the open answers on relevance to career goals, and LL4 was selected by **45% of respondents** as the Learning Lab with

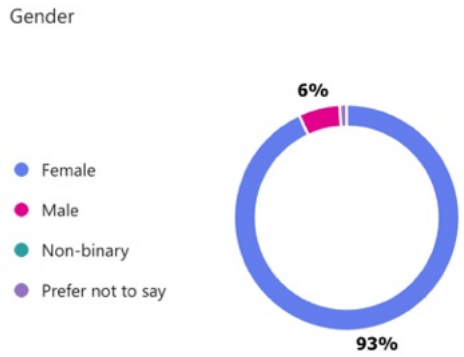
	the greatest impact on their professional interest. This made it the second most impactful Learning Lab after negotiation.
What did not work as planned?	No specific issue was identified in the survey by participants nor by organisers.
Which aspects were less effective?	No recurring weaker aspect specific to this Learning Lab emerged from the participant feedback available. The session was clearly relevant and impactful, especially for participants interested in leadership, collaboration, and communication across diverse professional settings.
Is there any aspect that shouldn't be considered in future editions?	No element should be removed. This Learning Lab addressed an important and highly valued capacity area and should be retained in future editions.

Immediate outcomes
Please check whether the Learning Lab led to any visible outcomes, such as: X new contacts or exchanges among participants, ☐ interest in mentoring or follow-up support, ☐ requests for additional training, ☐ ideas for collaboration, X practical outputs from the session, X strong discussion points that should inform future activities ☐ Others:
Was there any feedback directly from the facilitators?
No direct feedback from the facilitator was provided.

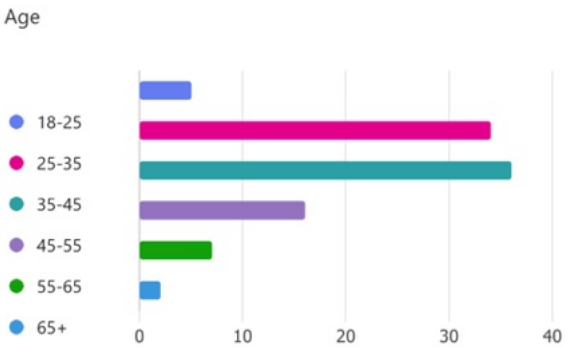
Part C. Survey results

A follow-up email was sent to participants after the Baltic Event inviting them to evaluate the overall event and its main components through a survey. The survey collected feedback on participant profile, the conference and panel discussions, the relevance of the topics to participants' professional goals, networking opportunities, the organisation and value of the Learning Labs, their practical applicability and collaboration potential, as well as the comfort, inclusiveness, facilitation, and overall relevance of the Women's Retreat. The results provide an important evidence base for assessing how the event was experienced by participants and for identifying strengths, areas for improvement, and lessons that can inform future WIN-BIG events and Learning Lab formats. The survey findings are presented below.

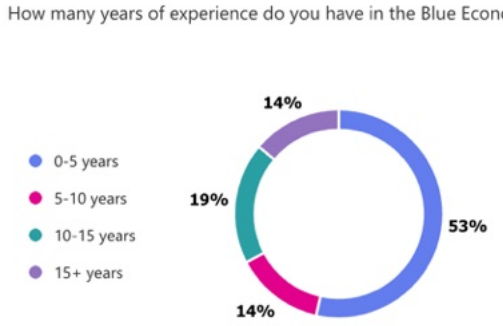
1.Gender



2. Age



3. Years of experience in the Blue Economy



4. Sector in the Blue Economy



5. Nationality



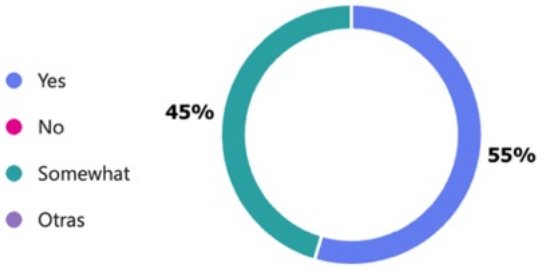
6. Position



7. How would you rate the venue and organisational aspects of the Conference? *Rate from 1 (Very poor) to 5 (Excellent)*



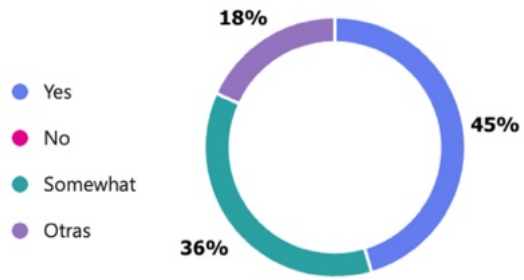
8. Have the Conference topics aligned with your current role or professional goals?



9. How effective were the panel discussions in providing diverse perspectives on women's roles in the Blue Economy? *Rate from 1 (Very poor) to 5 (Excellent)*



10. Did you have enough opportunities to networking during the Conference?



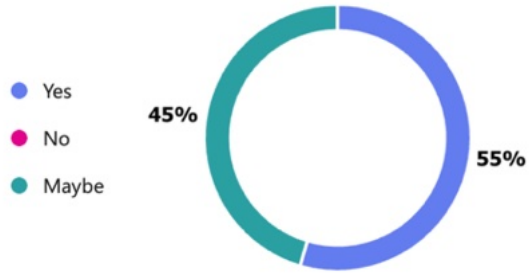
11. Please, describe a particular best practice or knowledge you gained insight from and how does it help in supporting women in the Blue Economy?



12. How would you rate the format of the sessions for your learning and engagement? *Rate from 1 (Very poor) to 5 (Excellent)*



13. Do you believe the Conference will lead to future opportunities that foster women's roles in the Blue Economy?



14. Are there specific areas or challenges within the Blue Economy do you think require more attention in future conferences?



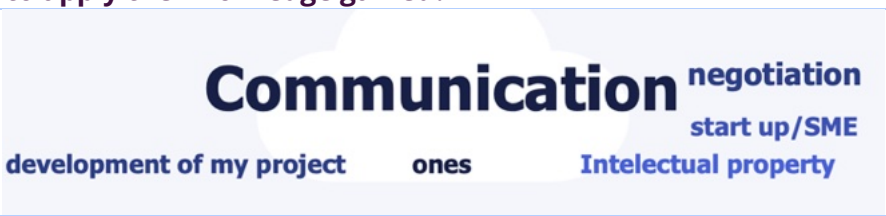
15. How well-organised were the Learning Labs in terms of structure, time management, and materials provided? *Rate from 1 (Very poor) to 5 (Excellent)*



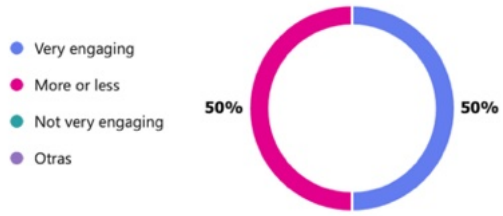
16. How would you rate the interaction in the Learning Labs?
Rate from 1 (Very poor) to 5 (Excellent)



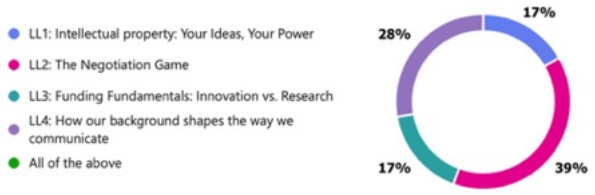
17. Which topics of the Learning Labs were most relevant to your career goals, and how do you plan to apply the knowledge gained?



18. How engaging were the Learning Labs in terms of networking and collaboration with other participants?



19. Which labs/activities had the most impact on your professional interest?



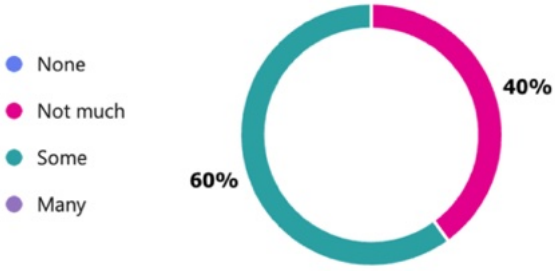
20. In what ways do you take advantage of the experiences and insights gained from these activities for your professional life?



21. To what extent did the Learning Labs provide you with practical knowledge that you can immediately apply in your professional life?



22. Did you find opportunities to collaborate with other participants on projects or ideas during the Learning Labs?



23. What topics would you suggest adding or expanding upon in future Learning Lab discussions?

From the replies it could be grouped in the following thematics:

- Leadership and organisational skills
- How to identify and access women's networks
- How to identify and access philanthropic investors
- Experiences with different types of investors
- Sociological and psychological factors shaping gendered approaches
- Cultural and upbringing factors that condition behaviour
- "Sticky floor" dynamics and related barriers

- Salary negotiation
- Transparency in the workplace
- Protocols for calling out sexism
- How to get concrete policies approved and implemented

24. How comfortable was the retreat location, and were the logistical arrangements adequate? *Rate from 1 (Very uncomfortable) to 5 (Very comfortable)*



25. How inclusive and engaging was the retreat for participants from different backgrounds? *Rate from 1 (Not Inclusive) – 5 (Very Inclusive)*



26. How would you rate the quality of facilitation and guidance provided during the women's retreat day? *1 (Very Poor) – 5 (Excellent)*



27. Did the retreat contribute to your personal challenges? *Rate from 1 (Not at all) - 5 (Definitely)*



28. In your opinion, how relevant and impactful was the Women Retreat's Day? *Rate from 1 (Not at all relevant/impactful) to 5 (Extremely relev ant/impactful)*



29. How strong was the sense of community you felt among the participants during the retreat? *Rate from 1 (No sense of community/support) to 5 (Very strong sense of community/support)*



30. Do you have any further feedback or comments you would like to provide?



Atlantic Event - Report



Part A. Event facts and evidence

What happened, who attended, and what was delivered.

1. Basic event information	
Event name	Empowering Women in the Atlantic Blue Economy: Innovation, Skills & Connections
Sea basin	Atlantic Basin
Location	**Málaga, Spain**
Dates	March 25-26th, 2026
Lead organiser and supporting partners	Andalusian Maritime Marine Cluster – CMMA –
Venue(s)	Sala 1, La Térmica
Event format	In-person event
Linked project component(s): conference, learning labs, retreat	• Conference • Learning Labs
Person completing the report	**Elizabeth Domínguez Chapman**

2. Event objectives and expected outcomes

What were the main objectives of the event overall? Were the objectives achieved?

The WIN-BIG Atlantic Event was designed as the third and final regional sea-basin event in the WIN-BIG series. Its overall objective was to consolidate and expand the work developed in previous sea basins by strengthening gender inclusivity in the Atlantic Blue Economy. The event aimed to address structural barriers faced by women, present regional and European insights on gender gaps, foster dialogue among stakeholders, and provide practical capacity-building opportunities through Learning Labs and networking activities. A strong emphasis was placed on knowledge exchange, visibility, skills development, and professional growth for women across key blue sectors.

Specifically, the conference component was designed to create a high-level platform for discussion, bringing together policymakers, researchers, industry representatives, and practitioners to reflect on gender equality, innovation, communication, and cooperation in the Blue Economy. The Learning Labs were conceived as hands-on sessions addressing concrete capacity gaps, particularly in entrepreneurship and circular economy innovation, enabling participants to acquire practical tools and methodologies applicable to their professional development. In addition, the event placed particular focus on visibility and inspiration through the integration of the Women Ocean Champions exhibition—featuring portraits from the Mediterranean, Baltic, and Atlantic sea basins—and the premiere of the *Women from the Sea – EU Episode* documentary.

These objectives were largely achieved. The conference successfully facilitated a multidisciplinary dialogue on women's participation in the Blue Economy, combining policy perspectives, scientific insights, and industry practices. Based on participant feedback analysis, the conference component achieved an estimated satisfaction score of **4.3/5**, with approximately **75–80% of respondents** highlighting the value of exposure to diverse perspectives, real-life experiences, and cross-sector dialogue. Key themes identified include the importance of communication, visibility of female role models, and access to gender-related data as drivers for awareness and change.

The Learning Labs effectively delivered practical capacity-building, with an estimated evaluation score of **4.4/5** in terms of relevance and usefulness. Around **70–85% of participants** identified entrepreneurship pathways, circular economy approaches, and real project examples as directly applicable to their professional development. A significant proportion of respondents also expressed their intention to apply the knowledge gained in their own initiatives, particularly in business creation, innovation, and project development. The sessions were further recognised for fostering inspiration, confidence, and new perspectives, especially among early-stage professionals.

Furthermore, the event succeeded in fostering networking and exchange among participants from different countries and sectors, with an estimated score of **4.0/5**. Approximately **65–**

75% of respondents positively valued networking opportunities, knowledge-sharing, and exposure to good practices. At the same time, feedback highlighted an area for improvement, as **around 20–25% of participants** indicated the need for stronger mechanisms to translate initial connections into long-term collaborations and more direct engagement with industry actors.

Finally, the objective of increasing visibility and creating a supportive, women-focused environment was clearly achieved, with an estimated score of **4.5/5**. A large majority of respondents (**over 80%**) emphasised the importance of representation, storytelling, and community-building. The integrated exhibition of role models from all sea basins, together with the documentary and the diversity of speakers, contributed to reinforcing a shared sense of inspiration, belonging, and empowerment. As the final event in the series, the Atlantic edition played a key role in consolidating results, strengthening connections, and amplifying the overall impact of the WIN-BIG initiative.

What were the expected outcomes? Were they reached?

The expected outcomes of the WIN-BIG Atlantic Event were focused on delivering both tangible outputs and strategic contributions to the overall project. These included: (i) generating updated knowledge and discussion on gender equality challenges and opportunities in the Atlantic Blue Economy; (ii) equipping participants with practical skills and tools applicable to entrepreneurship and innovation; (iii) facilitating the creation of new professional connections across sectors and countries; and (iv) increasing the visibility of women through concrete communication and storytelling actions. As the final event in the series, an additional expected outcome was to integrate and consolidate results from the Mediterranean and Baltic sea-basin events into a coherent European-level narrative.

These outcomes were achieved to a large extent. The event successfully delivered a structured programme combining conference sessions, Learning Labs, and visibility actions, ensuring both knowledge generation and practical application. The expected capacity-building outputs were reached through the implementation of targeted Learning Labs, while networking outcomes were supported through dedicated interaction spaces and a diverse participant profile.

In terms of visibility, the event achieved a particularly strong outcome by integrating the Women Ocean Champions exhibition across all three sea basins, creating a unified representation of female role models at European level. This, together with the documentary premiere and communication activities, ensured a high level of dissemination and outreach.

Finally, the Atlantic event effectively fulfilled its role as the closing event of the series by consolidating insights, approaches, and engagement models developed throughout the project. This resulted in a more structured and transferable framework for promoting gender equality in the Blue Economy, confirming that the expected outcomes were not only reached but also reinforced at a cross-regional level.

3. Outreach, invitations and participation

3.1 Invitation and registration funnel

Number of people invited	The Win-Big website and CMMA channels promoted the registration link.
Number registered	**127** participants
Number attended	92 In-person
Number of no-shows	35 people
Drop-out reasons, if known	N/A

3.2 Explanatory notes

Why did people drop out or not attend?

E.g. Were there capacity issues? Did timing, travel, or competing commitments affect attendance? Did some event components attract more interest than others?

Unknown

3.3 Participants' profile data

Gender	73% women versus 27% male registered (93 Female + 34 Male)

In line with a decision taken by the event organisers to simplify the registration process, the Atlantic event registration form was limited to essential attendance-related fields. As a result, no data were collected regarding participants' age, country of residence, blue economy sector, or professional role.

4. Programme delivered

Final agenda implemented

The Atlantic Event was implemented over two days at La Térmica in Málaga. The first day combined opening remarks, four conference panels, the launch of the Women Ocean Champions book, an inspirational keynote, the opening of the photo exhibition, and networking activities including a show cooking.

The second day included two Learning Labs, lunch, the premiere of the documentary Women from the Sea – EU Episode, and a final wrap-up with networking activities. The agenda also confirms that the event featured a Women Ocean Champions exhibition, bringing together portraits from the Mediterranean, Baltic, and Atlantic sea basins.



Panel 1 - *Women Driving the Blue Economy: the WIN BIG project*



Date and time	March 25th (10:35 - 11:25)
Moderator	***Laurance Martin,*** *Secretary general of Federazione del Mare (FdM)*
Panellists	• Helena Vieira, WIN-BIG Project Coordinator, University of Aveiro • Edel Doherty, University of Galway • Carmen Camelo, Vice-Rector for Entrepreneurship and Employability, University of Cádiz
Duration	50 min
Purpose	To provide an evidence-based overview of gender gaps in the Blue Economy and set the foundation for informed discussion across stakeholders.
Short summary of what the panel addressed	The panel presented the WIN-BIG project framework and shared initial findings on gender equality in the Blue Economy, with a focus on the Atlantic area and Spain. It addressed structural barriers, labour market dynamics, and the role of data in understanding gender gaps
Key takeaways	• Gender disparities persist across blue sectors, particularly in leadership and higher-value roles. • Data collection and mapping are essential for evidence-based policymaking. • Targeted support mechanisms are needed to improve women's access and progression
Any particularly valuable insights for participants?	Participants gained access to concrete data and comparative perspectives across regions, helping to contextualise their own professional environments and identify gaps and opportunities.
Any recurring challenge or opportunity highlighted?	A key challenge identified was the lack of consistent and comparable gender-disaggregated data, while an important opportunity lies in using data-driven approaches to inform policy and sectoral strategies.
Panel 2 - Telling Sea Stories: Marine communication in the digital era	



Date and time	March 25th (10:35 - 11:25)
Moderator	***Verania Medina,*** *Commercial and Marketing Director at Costasol Cruises.*
Panellists	• Charlie Sarria, researcher, science communicator, contributor to National Geographic Spain, and co-founder of the NGO Condrik. • Mari Carmen García and Olga Sánchez- Spanish Institute of Oceanography • Carmen Garrido, scientific coordinator of CEIMAR and Thinkinazul Andalucía. • Myriam Retamero, CTAQUA.
Duration	50 min
Purpose	To explore how communication and storytelling can enhance visibility, engagement, and knowledge transfer in the Blue Economy.
Short summary of what the panel addressed	This panel explored the role of communication, storytelling, and digital tools in making marine science and the Blue Economy more accessible, with a focus on outreach, education, and visibility of women.

Key takeaways	• Effective communication is essential to bridge the gap between science and society. • Social media and storytelling are powerful tools for visibility and engagement. • Communication plays a key role in attracting new talent, especially younger generations
Any particularly valuable insights for participants?	Participants gained practical insights into how to translate complex scientific knowledge into accessible narratives and how to use communication strategically to enhance their impact and visibility.
Any recurring challenge or opportunity highlighted?	A recurring challenge is the difficulty of simplifying scientific content without losing accuracy, while an opportunity lies in leveraging digital platforms to amplify outreach and inspire future professionals.
Panel 3 - Sport, Tourism, and Nature: A Way to Experience the Sea	
	
Date and time	March 25th (12:45 – 13:35)
Moderator	***Irene Bruzón,*** Director of the Benalmadena Marina (Málaga).
Panellists	• **Marta Garat,** CEO of Novojet • **Marta Díaz Barrera**, Blue Economy Ambassador and Marine Sustainability Advisor for Yacht Clubs

	• **Esther Molina**, Manager of Suncruise Andalucía
Duration	50 min
Purpose	To highlight the role of blue tourism and sports as drivers of inclusion, sustainability, and new career pathways in the Blue Economy.
Short summary of what the panel addressed	The panel examined the intersection between blue tourism, sports, and sustainability, highlighting how these sectors contribute to economic development, environmental awareness, and social inclusion.
Key takeaways	• Blue sports and tourism can act as entry points for women into the sector. • Sustainable business models are increasingly linked to environmental responsibility. • These sectors contribute to well-being, empowerment, and community engagement.
Any particularly valuable insights for participants?	Participants were exposed to diverse career paths and entrepreneurial opportunities, particularly in emerging and less traditional blue sectors
Any recurring challenge or opportunity highlighted?	A key challenge is the limited visibility of women in certain segments, while an opportunity lies in the growth of sustainable tourism and sports as inclusive and accessible sectors.
Panel 4 - Synergies for a Competitive Blue Economy	
	

Date and time	March 25th (12:45 – 13:35)
Moderator	***Elizabeth Chapman,*** *Director of International Projects, CMMA*
Panellists	• **Sandra García Torres,** Head of International Projects, BIC EURONOVA • **Tiziana de Nittis,** Project Manager and Senior Expert in EU programmes at the Directorate-General for Knowledge, Research, Employment and Enterprises • **Patrizia Griffoni,** Researcher at CNR-IRPPS • **Pilar Fernández-Fígares**, Managing Director of the Malagaport Foundation
Duration	50 min
Purpose	To showcase collaboration models and innovation ecosystems that can strengthen competitiveness and integration within the Blue Economy.
Short summary of what the panel addressed	This panel focused on cooperation, innovation ecosystems, and synergies between projects and stakeholders, highlighting best practices in circular economy, technology transfer, and cross-sector collaboration.
Key takeaways	• Collaboration between projects and stakeholders enhances impact and scalability. • Circular economy approaches are key drivers of innovation in the Blue Economy. • We need stronger links between research, industry, and policy.
Any particularly valuable insights for participants?	Participants gained awareness of existing initiatives, funding opportunities, and collaboration models that they can leverage to develop projects and partnerships.
Any recurring challenge or opportunity highlighted?	A recurring challenge is the fragmentation of initiatives and lack of coordination, while a key opportunity lies in strengthening synergies and creating integrated innovation ecosystems.

5. Organiser self-assessment

Which panels were strongest, and why?

Panel 1 (*Women Driving the Blue Economy: the WIN-BIG project*) and Panel 2 (*Telling Sea Stories: Marine communication in the digital era*) emerged as the strongest. Panel 1 provided a solid evidence-based foundation, combining data, policy context, and regional insights, which helped frame the overall discussion. Panel 2 stood out due to its practical relevance and accessibility, as it connected scientific knowledge with communication strategies and real-world applications, generating high engagement from participants.

Which themes attracted the most engagement?

The themes that attracted the most engagement were communication and storytelling, entrepreneurship, and the visibility of women in the sector. Participants showed particular interest in how to translate knowledge into impact (communication), how to access and develop opportunities (entrepreneurship), and how to increase representation and recognition of women through role models and narratives. These themes resonated strongly as they combined practical relevance with personal and professional development.

What worked well in the overall event?

The overall structure of the event worked particularly well, combining high-level discussions with practical and interactive components. The integration of different formats—conference panels, Learning Labs, exhibition, documentary screening, and networking—created a dynamic and engaging experience. The diversity of speakers and participants, as well as the balance between policy, research, and industry perspectives, contributed to a rich and multidisciplinary dialogue. Additionally, the visibility elements, including the exhibition and storytelling components, strengthened the sense of community and inspiration.

What could have been improved?

While networking opportunities were positively perceived, there is room for improvement in facilitating more structured and long-term collaboration pathways. Some participants expressed the need for more direct interaction with industry stakeholders and more time dedicated to discussion and exchange. Additionally, further alignment between sessions could enhance continuity across the programme, ensuring stronger links between thematic discussions and practical applications.

Was the format appropriate?

Indeed, the format was appropriate and effective in achieving the event's objectives. The combination of conference sessions and hands-on Learning Labs allowed for both knowledge exchange and practical capacity-building. The inclusion of visibility and community-building elements further strengthened the overall impact. Participants found the two-day structure balanced and manageable.

Would you do something different next time?
For future editions, it would be beneficial to strengthen follow-up mechanisms to support sustained collaboration beyond the event, such as dedicated matchmaking sessions or post-event networking platforms. Increasing interaction time within sessions and incorporating more participatory formats could further enhance engagement. Additionally, reinforcing the involvement of private sector actors could provide more direct links to employment and business opportunities.

Part B. Assessment of the Learning Labs and premiere of WOMEN FROM THE SEA documentary – EU Episode

What worked pedagogically and operationally in each lab.

6. Learning Labs overall assessment

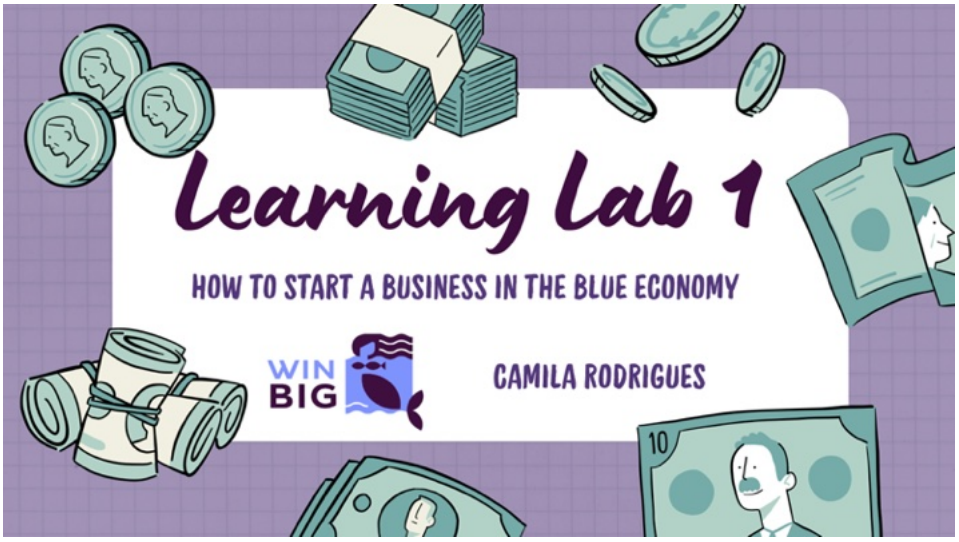
6.1 Operational assessment

Timing	
Was the duration appropriate?	The duration of the Learning Labs was appropriate overall, allowing sufficient time to introduce key concepts while maintaining participant engagement. The two-hour format per session provided a balanced framework for both content delivery and practical activities.
Was there enough time for both content delivery and interaction?	Certainly, the sessions generally achieved a good balance between theoretical input and interaction. However, in some cases, participants expressed interest in having additional time for discussion and deeper exchange, particularly during hands-on activities.
Was the pace too fast, too slow, or appropriate?	The pace was appropriate in most sessions, ensuring continuity and engagement. Nevertheless, certain segments, especially those involving practical exercises, could benefit from a slightly slower pace to allow for more reflection and peer exchange.
Room and setup	

Was the room suitable for the format?	The room was suitable for the Learning Lab format, providing a comfortable and professional environment for both presentations and interactive activities.
Did the physical arrangement support participation and exchange?	Yes, the physical arrangement supported participation and interaction, enabling group work and facilitating direct communication between participants and facilitators.
Were there any issues with seating, visibility, acoustics, or movement?	No major issues were reported. Minor limitations related to movement during group activities were noted, but these did not significantly affect the overall experience.

7. Learning Labs 1 - How to start a business in the Blue Economy

General Information	
Facilitator(s)	**Camila Rodrigues de Carvalho -** CTO de EONSEA
Planned capacity	60 people
Actual attendance	35 in-person
Purpose	To provide participants with practical guidance on how to develop and launch a business in the Blue Economy, focusing on entrepreneurial processes and opportunity identification.
Main skills, knowledge areas, or professional capacities this LL intended to strengthen	• Entrepreneurial mindset and opportunity recognition • Understanding of business development processes • Basic knowledge of Blue Economy market dynamics
Structure/Format	The session combined theoretical input with practical examples and interactive discussion, allowing participants to explore real-life entrepreneurial pathways and challenges.
Duration	(120 min)

Link to materials if existing	LINK
Photo	
Organiser Self-Assessment	
Which elements of the session were most successful?	• Real case studies and practical examples • Clear explanation of entrepreneurial steps • Direct interaction with the facilitator
Which parts seemed most useful or memorable for participants?	Participants particularly valued insights into real business experiences and actionable advice on starting a venture in the Blue Economy.
What did not work as planned?	Time constraints limited deeper exploration of specific business ideas and individual feedback.
Which aspects were less effective?	Some theoretical sections could have been further simplified or complemented with more practical exercises.
Is there any aspect that shouldn't be	No major elements need to be removed, but a stronger focus on hands-on application is recommended.

considered in future editions?	

Immediate outcomes
Please check whether the Learning Lab led to any visible outcomes, such as: X new contacts or exchanges among participants, X interest in mentoring or follow-up support, ☐ requests for additional training, X ideas for collaboration, X practical outputs from the session, X strong discussion points that should inform future activities ☐ Others:
Was there any feedback directly from the facilitators?
Facilitators provided informal feedback during and after the sessions, highlighting the high level of participant engagement and interest in the topics addressed. They noted that participants were particularly responsive to practical examples and real-life applications, which facilitated interaction and discussion. At the same time, facilitators indicated that additional time could have further enhanced the sessions, especially to allow deeper discussion and more personalised exchange with participants. Overall, the feedback from facilitators was positive, confirming the relevance of the topics and the effectiveness of the formats implemented.

8. Learning Labs 2 - Blue BioBased Circular Economy

General Information	
Facilitator(s)	**Nieta da Ponte**, CEO of Nieta Atelier
Planned capacity	60 people
Actual attendance	35 in-person
Purpose	To introduce participants to circular economy principles in the Blue Economy through real product examples and demonstrate how

	marine-based materials can be transformed into sustainable solutions.
Main skills, knowledge areas, or professional capacities this LL intended to strengthen	• Understanding of circular economy applications in the Blue Economy • Knowledge of sustainable materials and production processes • Awareness of innovation pathways in bio-based product development
Structure/Format	The session was structured as a demonstration-based Learning Lab, combining an explanatory presentation with a product showcase. The facilitator presented a series of real products made from marine and recycled materials, explaining their design, sourcing, and production processes. This was followed by an interactive moment where participants could directly observe and handle the products while engaging in discussion with the facilitator.
Duration	(120 min)
Link to materials if existing	N/A
Photo	
Organiser Self-Assessment	

Which elements of the session were most successful?	• The use of real, tangible products as learning tools • Direct explanation of production processes by the facilitator • Sensory interaction (touch and observation), which enhanced understanding
Which parts seemed most useful or memorable for participants?	Participants particularly valued the opportunity to engage directly with the products, as this made abstract circular economy concepts more concrete and easier to understand. The practical demonstration of how materials are transformed into final products was especially impactful.
What did not work as planned?	The absence of a hands-on component limited participants' ability to actively apply the concepts presented during the session.
Which aspects were less effective?	While the demonstration format was effective for knowledge transfer, it provided fewer opportunities for active participation compared to more workshop-based formats.
Is there any aspect that shouldn't be considered in future editions?	The demonstration format should not be discarded, as it adds strong value, but it could be complemented in future editions with a small hands-on or co-creation component to enhance engagement and practical application.

Immediate outcomes
Please check whether the Learning Lab led to any visible outcomes, such as: X new contacts or exchanges among participants, ☐ interest in mentoring or follow-up support, X requests for additional training, X ideas for collaboration, X practical outputs from the session, ☐ strong discussion points that should inform future activities ☐ Others:
Was there any feedback directly from the facilitators?
N/A

9. Exclusive Premiere of WOMEN FROM THE SEA Documentary - EU Episode

General Information	
The session consisted of the premiere screening of the *Women from the Sea – EU Episode*, followed by an informal moment of reflection and exchange among participants. The documentary presented stories of women working across different blue sectors, highlighting their professional journeys, challenges, and achievements. It notably featured women from the WIN-BIG consortium and was filmed in Ireland in the framework of a WIN-BIG meeting, with a strong representation of Irish professionals and, more broadly, the Atlantic sea basin.	
Facilitator(s)	**Raquel Martins, HELPO IMAGES**
Planned capacity	69 people
Actual attendance	45 in-person
Purpose	To increase the visibility of women in the Blue Economy through storytelling, showcasing real-life experiences and career pathways, and fostering inspiration and reflection among participants.
Main skills, knowledge areas, or professional capacities this LL intended to strengthen	• Awareness of gender roles and representation in the Blue Economy • Understanding of diverse career pathways and professional trajectories • Inspiration and confidence-building through role models
Structure/Format	The session followed a screening-based format, with participants attending the documentary premiere in a shared setting. This was complemented by an informal discussion environment, allowing participants to reflect on the content and exchange impressions.
Duration	(60 min)
Link to materials if existing	N/A

Photo	
Organiser Self-Assessment	
Which elements of the session were most successful?	• The use of real stories and personal narratives • High emotional engagement generated by the documentary • Strong alignment with the event's visibility and empowerment objectives • Direct connection with the WIN-BIG project through the participation of consortium members
Which parts seemed most useful or memorable for participants?	Participants particularly valued the authenticity of the stories and the diversity of profiles presented, especially the representation of women from the Atlantic region, which strengthened the relevance of the content in the context of the event.
What did not work as planned?	No major issues were identified in the implementation of the session.
Which aspects were less effective?	The lack of a structured discussion or Q&A immediately after the screening may have limited deeper reflection and exchange among participants.
Is there any aspect that shouldn't be considered in future editions?	The screening format should be maintained, but it could be strengthened by incorporating a facilitated discussion or interaction with contributors to the documentary.

Immediate outcomes
Please check whether the documentary led to any visible outcomes, such as: ☐ new contacts or exchanges among participants, X interest in mentoring or follow-up support, ☐ requests for additional training, ☐ ideas for collaboration, X practical outputs from the session, X strong discussion points that should inform future activities ☐ Others:
Was there any feedback directly from the facilitators?
Organisers observed a high level of engagement during the screening, reflected in participants' attention and subsequent informal discussions. The documentary was perceived as a powerful tool for conveying complex issues through accessible narratives, reinforcing the importance of storytelling in promoting gender equality in the Blue Economy, particularly within the Atlantic context.

Part C. Survey results

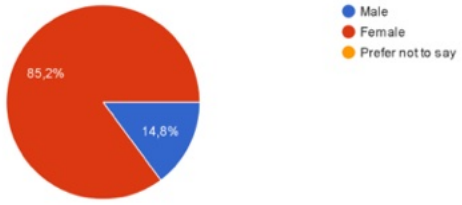
To assess the effectiveness, relevance, and overall impact of the WIN-BIG Atlantic Event, a post-event survey was conducted among participants. The objective of this survey was to gather both quantitative and qualitative feedback on key aspects of the event, including the conference sessions, Learning Labs, networking opportunities, and overall organisation.

The survey aimed to capture participants' perceptions in terms of content quality, practical usefulness, level of engagement, and applicability of the knowledge acquired. In addition, open-ended questions allowed respondents to provide more detailed insights on strengths, areas for improvement, and personal takeaways from the event.

The results presented in the following section provide an evidence-based assessment of the event's outcomes, complementing the organiser's perspective with direct participant feedback. This contributes to a more comprehensive evaluation of the event and supports the identification of lessons learned for future editions.

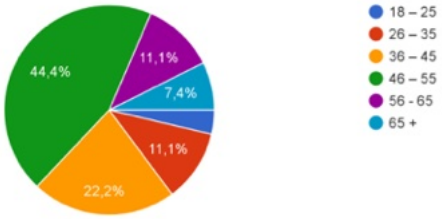
1. GENDER

27 respuestas



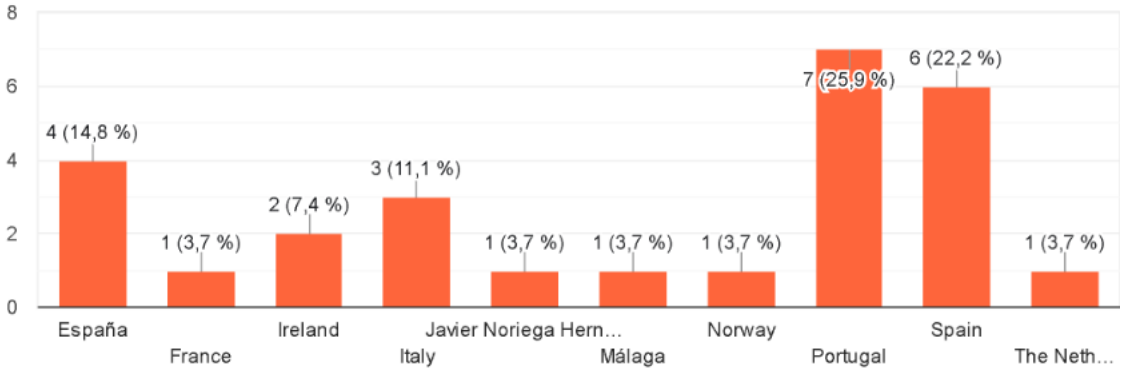
2. AGE

27 respuestas



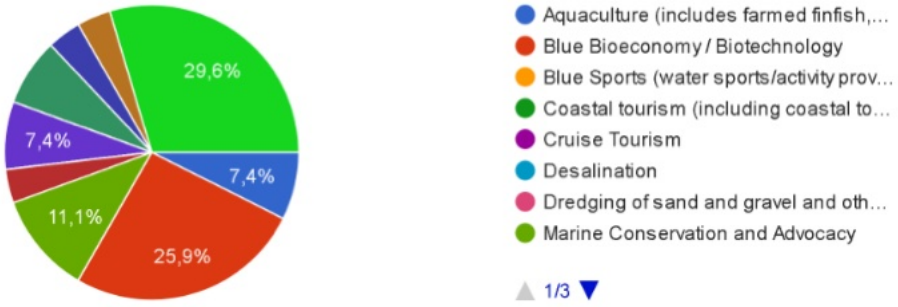
3. COUNTRY OF RESIDENCE:

27 respuestas



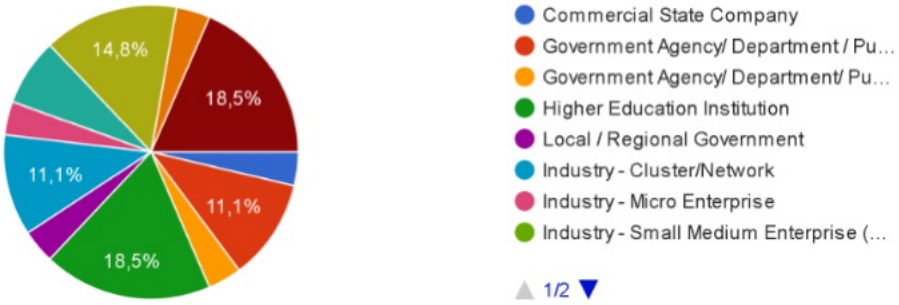
4. What sector of the BuE are you involved in?

27 respuestas



5. What type of organization do you work in?

27 respuestas

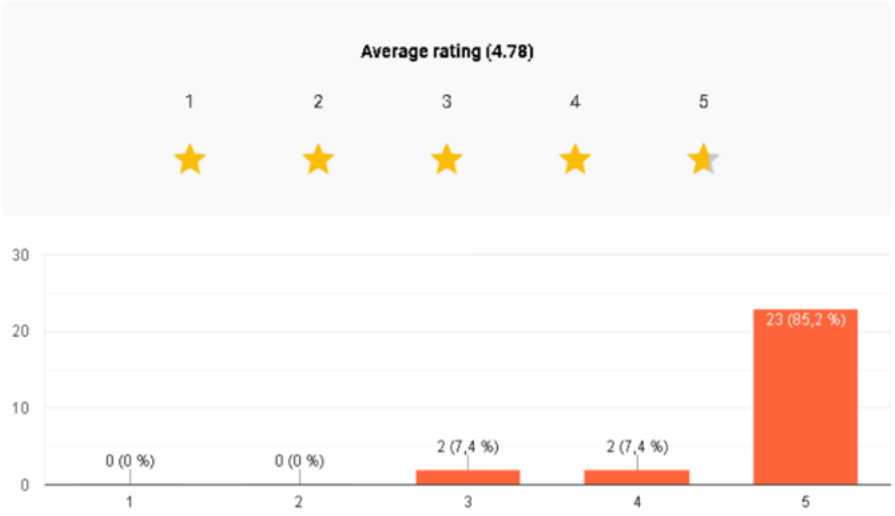


1.How would you rate the venue and organizational aspects of the Conference?

Rate from 1 (Very Poor) to 5 (Excellent)

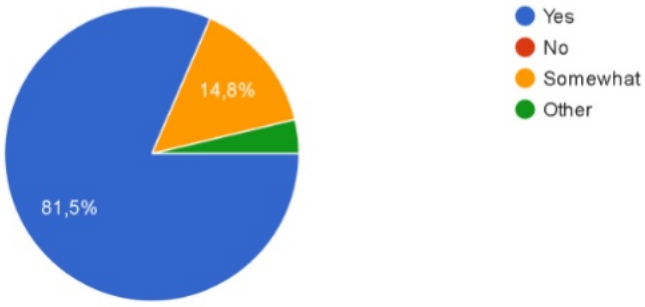
27 respuestas

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2. Have the Conference topics aligned with your current role or professional goals?

27 respuestas



3. How effective were the panel discussions in providing diverse perspectives on women's roles in the
Blue Economy? Rate from 1 (Ineffective) to 5 (Very Effective)

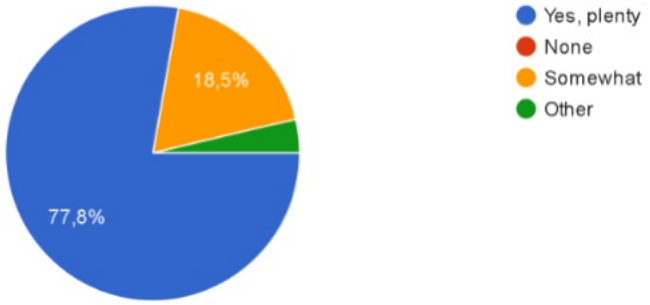
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27 respuestas



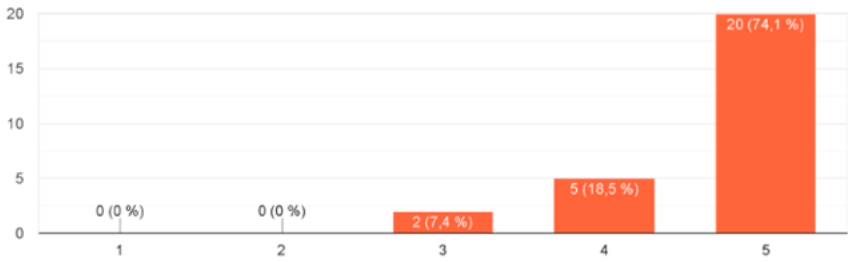
5. Did you have enough opportunities to networking during the Conference?

27 respuestas

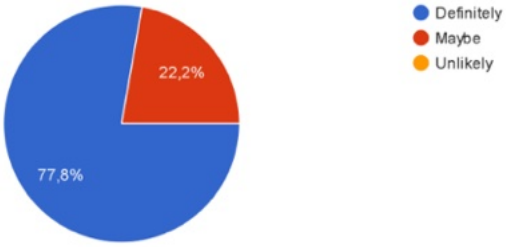


6. How would you rate the format of the sessions for your learning and engagement? Rate from 1 (Not Valuable) to 5 (Highly Valuable)

27 respuestas

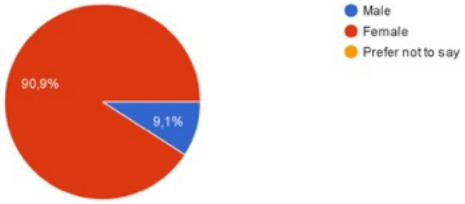


8. Do you believe the Conference will lead to future opportunities that foster women's roles in the Blue Economy?
27 respuestas

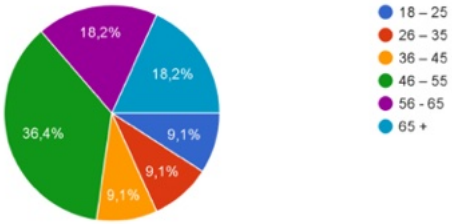


WIN-BIG ATLANTIC EVENT (MALAGA, SPAIN) - LEARNING LAB & NETWORKING DAYS SURVEYS

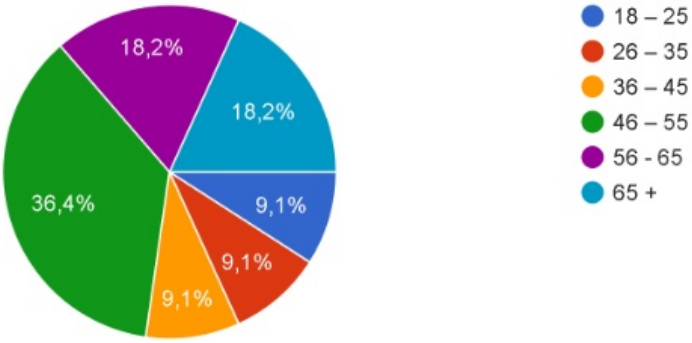
1. GENDER
11 respuestas



2. AGE
11 respuestas



2. AGE
11 respuestas



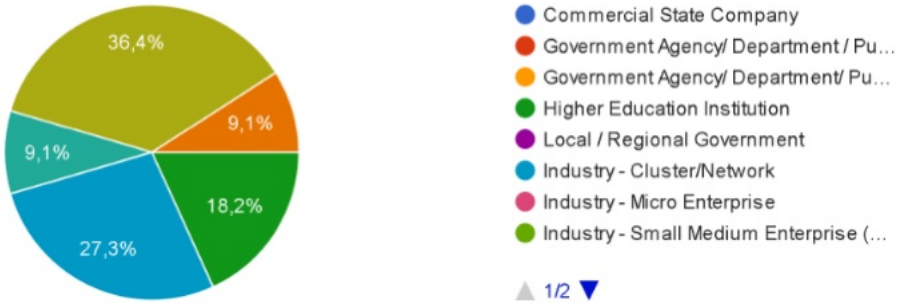
4. What sector of the BuE are you involved in?

11 respuestas



5. What type of organization do you work in?

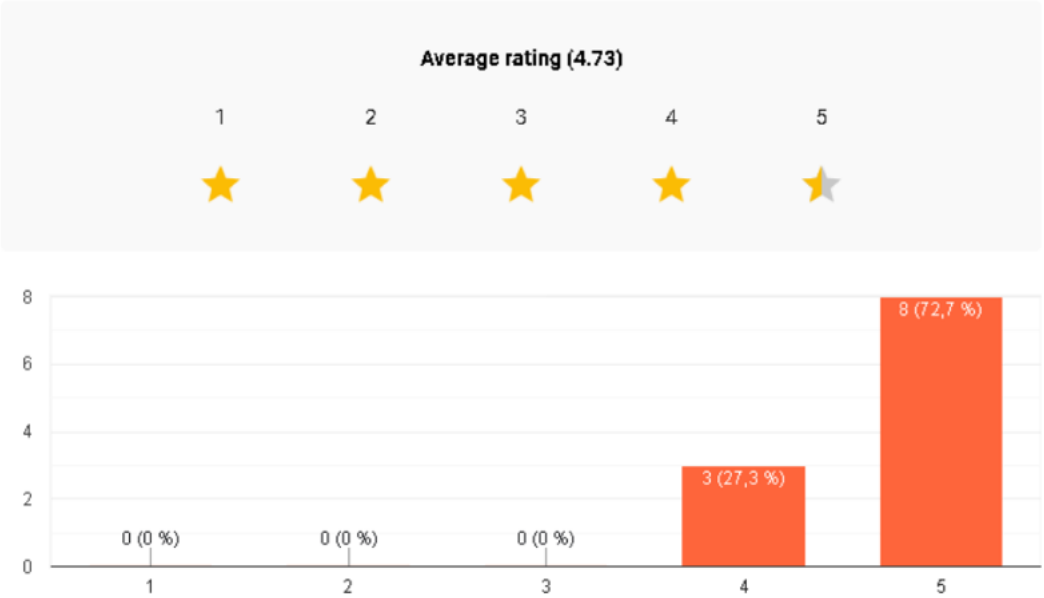
11 respuestas



1. How well-organized were the Learning Labs in terms of structure, time management, and materials provided? Rate from 1 (Poorly) to 5 (Very well)

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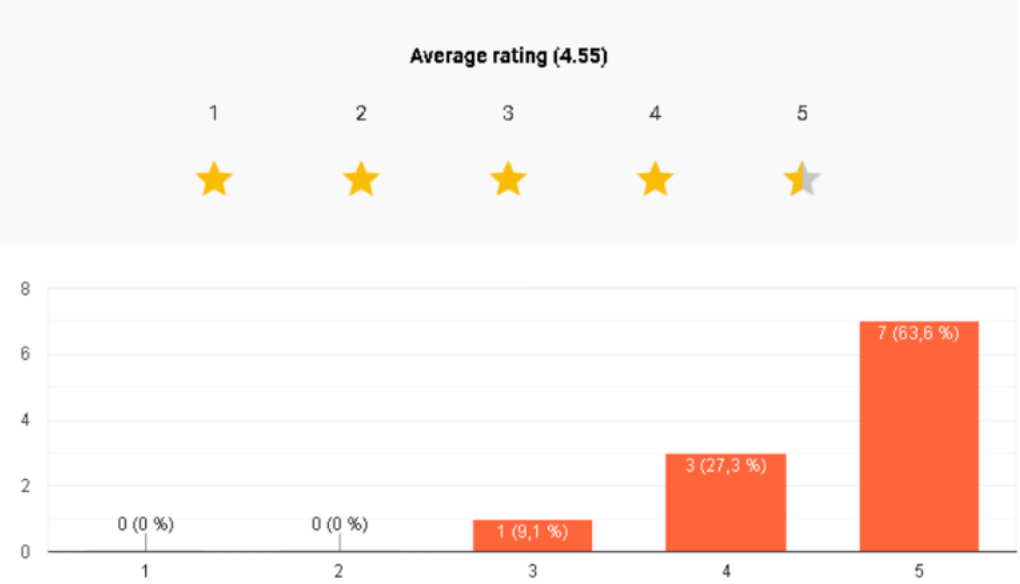
11 respuestas



3. How would you rate the interaction in the Learning Labs?

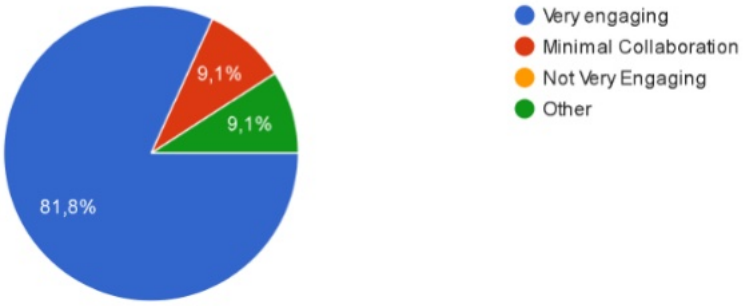
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11 respuestas



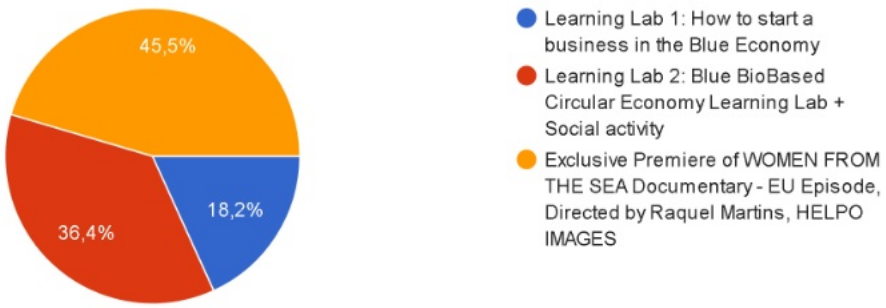
4. How engaging were the Learning Labs in terms of networking and collaboration with other participants?

11 respuestas



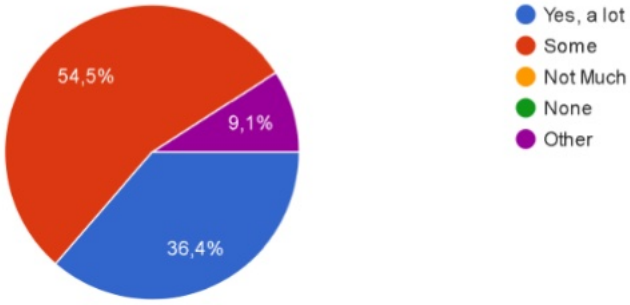
5. Which labs/activities had the most impact on your professional interest?

11 respuestas



7. Did you find opportunities to collaborate with other participants on projects or ideas during the Learning Labs?

11 respuestas



8. To what extent did the Learning Labs provide you with practical knowledge that you can immediately apply in your professional life? Rate from 1 (Not Applicable) to 5 (Highly Applicable)

Copiar gráfico

11 respuestas





SECTION 2 – LESSONS LEARNED AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Lessons learned and recommendations based on all 3 events

The three WIN-BIG sea-basin events — Mediterranean, Baltic, and Atlantic — provided a strong evidence base for understanding what makes Learning Labs and their wider event context effective for empowering women in the Blue Economy. While each event responded to the needs and characteristics of its own sea basin, the three reports show a clear set of recurring strengths, recurring challenges, and practical implications for future WIN-BIG actions and external replication. Taken together, the events confirm that the WIN-BIG approach is most effective when it combines **evidence-based discussion, practical capacity-building, visibility of women's roles, structured networking, and a supportive community dimension** within one coherent format.

1. The multi-format event structure should be repeated

A first lesson emerging across all three events is that the **combination of formats** was one of the strongest design features of the WIN-BIG model. In all three sea basins, the event structure moved beyond the traditional conference model by combining thematic panels with practical Learning Labs and visibility or community-building activities. In the Mediterranean event, this took the form of a three-day progression from conference to Learning Labs, to a dedicated Women's Retreat. In the Baltic event, the two-day structure combined conference panels, four Learning Labs, a documentary screening, an exhibition, and a retreat. In the Atlantic event, the format integrated panels, Learning Labs, documentary premiere, exhibition, keynote, and informal networking activities. Across all cases, organisers assessed the format as appropriate, and participants valued the diversity of engagement opportunities it created.

This suggests that future WIN-BIG or external replication efforts should **retain a multi-format architecture** rather than reducing the concept to isolated workshops or standalone conference sessions. The strongest results occurred when participants were able to move from strategic discussion to practical application, then into more reflective or networking-oriented spaces.

2. Learning Labs work best when they are practical, applied, and confidence-building

Across the three events, the Learning Labs consistently emerged as one of the most valuable components of the programme. Participants appreciated not only the topics covered, but also the fact that these sessions moved beyond awareness-raising into more concrete skill-building. The Mediterranean Learning Labs were valued for their interactivity, especially

around communication, sustainability, and entrepreneurship. In the Baltic event, negotiation, communication, and intellectual property were the most appreciated themes, with negotiation and communication standing out as the strongest areas of perceived impact. In the Atlantic event, entrepreneurship and circular economy innovation were considered directly relevant and applicable to professional development.

A key lesson is that Learning Labs are especially effective when they combine **technical knowledge with confidence-building and self-positioning**, rather than treating skills as purely neutral or abstract. Topics such as negotiation, communication, business development, entrepreneurship, and career management were strong because they addressed both practical needs and the gendered realities women face in professional environments.

Future Learning Labs should therefore continue to prioritise:

- applied and transferable skills,
- practical exercises and real-life examples,
- topics that help women navigate structural barriers as well as technical tasks,
- formats that encourage active participation rather than passive listening.

3. Strong interaction should be maintained, but practical application should be strengthened

A recurring pattern across the events is that participants rated the Learning Labs highly in terms of **organisation, interaction, and relevance**, but in some cases indicated that more support was needed for direct application to their own projects, careers, or organisations. This was especially visible in the Baltic event, where the Learning Labs were very well rated for structure and interaction, but somewhat lower for immediate applicability. In the Atlantic event, organisers also noted that more time for discussion and individualised exchange would have deepened the practical value of some sessions. In the Mediterranean event, feedback pointed to a desire for even more interactive depth and more time to engage.

This suggests that future editions should **strengthen the application layer** of Learning Labs by including:

- participant-specific exercises,
- guided reflection on how to use the content in one's own professional context,
- worksheets, templates, or action plans,
- clearer take-home outputs,
- optional follow-up resources or mentoring pathways.

The lesson is not that the current Learning Labs lacked value, but that their impact can become even stronger if participants leave with clearer next steps for implementation.

4. Networking should be more structured and more intentionally designed

All three events show that networking was valued by participants, but also that **informal networking alone is not sufficient** to maximise impact. The Mediterranean event fostered strong community feeling and exchange, but participants suggested more structured networking moments. In the Baltic event, respondents positively evaluated networking and collaboration, but also pointed to room for stronger collaboration pathways and follow-up orientation. In the Atlantic event, organisers noted that networking opportunities were useful but could be improved through more direct engagement with industry stakeholders and stronger post-event collaboration mechanisms.

This leads to a clear recommendation: future WIN-BIG events should not rely only on coffee breaks, lunch, or general mingling, but should **design networking as a guided and purposeful component**. This could include:

- matchmaking sessions,
- moderated networking rounds,
- thematic networking tables,
- mentor–participant pairing,
- follow-up contact lists or online communities,
- post-event mechanisms for collaboration continuation.

The events clearly show that participants want not only to meet others, but also to understand how those new contacts can evolve into mentoring, partnerships, career opportunities, or project collaboration.

5. Visibility and storytelling elements should be retained and strengthened

Another strong cross-event lesson is that **visibility actions are not secondary add-ons**, but central to the WIN-BIG event model. In all three events, visibility was built not only through communication and dissemination, but also through the actual content and design of the programme. The Mediterranean event used women's testimonies and strong policy framing; the Baltic event used the Women Ocean Champions exhibition and the *Women from the Sea – Azores* screening; the Atlantic event consolidated this further by launching the Women Ocean Champions book, presenting the combined exhibition across sea basins, and premiering the *Women from the Sea – EU Episode* documentary. These actions strengthened inspiration, representation, and the sense that women are visible drivers of change in the Blue Economy.

The lesson is that future editions should continue to include:

- role-model visibility,

- storytelling-based components,
- exhibitions, portraits, or media showcasing women's journeys,
- documentary or narrative formats that make women's experiences relatable and inspiring.

These components were particularly important because they connected the professional and strategic content of the events to a broader emotional and motivational dimension.

6. Reflective and women-centred spaces add value, but require careful framing

The Mediterranean and Baltic events both included retreat or retreat-like women-focused reflective components, and these generated important benefits in terms of **community-building, confidence, and peer support**. The Mediterranean retreat helped transform professional challenges into a shared and supportive space. The Baltic retreat was positively assessed for inclusiveness, facilitation, and sense of community. At the same time, feedback from the Baltic event also showed that such spaces do not resonate equally with everyone, and that the purpose and expected mode of participation need to be more clearly framed in advance.

This suggests that retreat or reflection-oriented components should **not be dropped**, because they clearly add value, but they should be:

- clearly explained beforehand,
- better connected to the professional aims of the wider event,
- designed with a clear balance between reflection, empowerment, and relevance,
- positioned as a purposeful part of the event architecture rather than an optional or separate add-on.

7. Event design should be adapted to audience profile and basin context

One of the most important lessons from comparing the three events is that while the overall WIN-BIG model is transferable, the **content of each event needs to respond to the specific audience profile and basin context as it was across the three events**. The Mediterranean event engaged strongly with institutional, maritime-cluster, and cross-border Mediterranean stakeholders and placed strong emphasis on policy, inclusion, and women's visibility across maritime sectors. The Baltic event attracted a strongly research-, innovation-, and blue-bioeconomy-oriented audience, which made negotiation, communication, intellectual property, and innovation funding especially relevant. The Atlantic event combined communication, entrepreneurship, circular economy, and visibility in a way that suited its final-event function and its Atlantic-sector mix.

This means that replication should not involve copying the exact same topics from one basin to another. Instead, future organisers should:

- analyse the target audience and its gaps,
- identify which topics are already familiar and which are missing,
- adapt examples and facilitation styles to sectoral realities,
- keep the overall structure, but tailor the thematic content.

The common architecture is transferable; the content should remain context-sensitive.

8. Leadership, financing, and structural barriers need stronger future emphasis

Across the surveys and organiser reflections, participants repeatedly indicated that while the events were valuable, future editions should go even further in addressing **leadership progression, access to funding, workplace barriers, sexism, and women's access to senior decision-making positions**. This was especially explicit in the Baltic feedback, where future topics suggested by participants included leadership and organisational skills, salary negotiation, transparency in work, protocols for calling out sexism, philanthropic investors, and policy approval processes. The Mediterranean and Atlantic reports also point to the need for stronger links between inspiration and direct advancement mechanisms, including access to networks, investors, industry actors, and structured opportunities.

This suggests that future event design should **strengthen the "power and progression" dimension** of the WIN-BIG model. In practice, this could mean more Learning Labs or sessions focused on:

- leadership development,
- access to finance and investors,
- navigating workplace discrimination,
- public speaking and visibility in decision-making spaces,
- risk management,
- intellectual property and negotiation,
- policy and institutional change tools,
- private-sector entry and career advancement.

9. Communication and dissemination should remain embedded from the outset

The three events also demonstrate that communication and dissemination are most effective when they are planned as part of the event architecture from the beginning. The Mediterranean event generated broad pre-event and post-event media coverage. The Baltic event

created a consistent pre-event, during-event, and post-event communication trail across project, partner, host, and stakeholder channels. The Atlantic event also integrated strong visibility components directly into the event programme.

This leads to a practical recommendation: communication should be treated as an enabling condition for impact, not as a final reporting exercise. Future events should continue to plan:

- save-the-date campaigns,
- partner amplification,
- newsletter and website coordination,
- real-time coverage or livestreaming where useful,
- post-event recap materials,
- visible documentation of women role models and event outputs.

10. No core element should be dropped; instead, some should be deepened or refined

Looking across the three events, there is no evidence that any of the core pillars of the WIN-BIG model should be removed entirely. On the contrary, the comparison suggests that the most valuable route forward is to **retain the core model** while refining and strengthening specific dimensions.

What should be repeated

- the multi-format structure,
- the combination of panels and Learning Labs,
- role-model and visibility actions,
- strong women-centred spaces,
- interactive and practical formats,
- basin-tailored thematic design.

What should be strengthened

- structured networking and matchmaking,
- direct application and take-home outputs from Learning Labs,
- leadership and advancement-related topics,
- funding/investor-oriented support,
- stronger follow-up after the event,
- clearer framing of reflective/retreat elements,

- private-sector involvement where relevant.

What should be changed

- some sessions should include more direct application exercises,
- more continuity should be built between event components,
- collaboration pathways should be more intentionally designed,
- audience analysis should more explicitly guide topic selection.

What should be dropped

- no full component emerges as ineffective enough to justify removal. The evidence suggests adaptation and improvement rather than elimination.

Concluding synthesis

Overall, the three events demonstrate that the WIN-BIG model is both **effective and transferable**. Its effectiveness lies in the combination of evidence, inspiration, practice, and community. Its transferability lies in the fact that the underlying structure can be preserved while the content is adapted to different sea basins, audiences, and priorities. The strongest general conclusion is that Learning Labs work best when they are not isolated training sessions, but part of a wider event ecosystem that prepares participants through discussion, supports them through practical learning, and reinforces their confidence and visibility through role models and community-building. This is the main strategic lesson that informs the model template developed in the next section.



SECTION 3 – MODEL TEMPLATE OF LEARNING LABS

Model Template of Learning Labs

The WIN-BIG Model Template of Learning Labs is designed as a **practical replication framework** for organisers, projects, institutions, and networks that wish to implement similar learning formats in other sea basins or on other Blue Economy topics. The model does not prescribe a fixed curriculum. Instead, it captures the core architecture that proved effective across the Mediterranean, Baltic, and Atlantic events: linking Learning Labs to identified needs, embedding them within a wider event format, organising facilitation and participation in a structured way, documenting evidence, and preparing the ground for later consolidation into more scalable resources such as MOOCs. In this way, the model template is both a synthesis of the WIN-BIG experience and a transferable tool for future use.

1. Purpose of the model

The purpose of the model is to ensure that Learning Labs are not treated as isolated training sessions, but as **strategic capacity-building interventions** that respond to identified barriers, skills gaps, and professional-development needs for women in the Blue Economy. Across the three WIN-BIG sea-basin events, Learning Labs proved most valuable when they were embedded in a wider programme that also included discussion spaces, visibility actions, networking, and supportive women-centred exchange. The model therefore starts from the principle that a Learning Lab is most effective when it is part of a broader event logic rather than a stand-alone workshop without context.

2. Core design principles

The WIN-BIG experience shows that every Learning Lab should be built on a common set of design principles, regardless of topic or basin.



First, the Learning Lab should be **need-driven**. Topics should emerge from identified capacity gaps, structural barriers, or recurring themes in the target community, rather than being selected only because they are generally interesting. In the Mediterranean event, this meant focusing on sustainability, business planning, communication, and career management in relation to women's professional development. In the Baltic event, the strongest themes were negotiation, communication, intellectual property, and funding/innovation. In the Atlantic event, the Learning Labs focused on entrepreneurship and circular economy innovation. These differences show that the model should preserve a common structure but allow strong contextual adaptation.



Second, the Learning Lab should be **practical and participatory**. Across the three events, the most appreciated labs were those that moved beyond presentation into role play, guided exercises, co-creation, demonstrations, structured discussion, storytelling, or reflection linked to action. Participants repeatedly valued sessions that gave them concrete tools, examples, and

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professional confidence, especially when those sessions addressed not only technical capacities but also the realities of working in gendered professional environments.



Third, the Learning Lab should be **empowering as well as informative**. The WIN-BIG events showed that women in the Blue Economy benefit most from sessions that combine knowledge transfer with confidence-building, visibility, and self-positioning. Communication, negotiation, leadership, and career-oriented sessions were consistently appreciated because they addressed both competence and agency.



Fourth, the Learning Lab should be **embedded in a wider experience**. A Learning Lab is strengthened when participants are already primed through conference discussion, evidence, role models, and peer exchange, and when follow-up or reflection is possible afterwards. This was a key common lesson across all three sea-basin events.

3. Model architecture

The WIN-BIG model can be replicated through a sequence of six stages:

Stage 1. Needs identification

The first step is to identify the **specific barriers, capacities, and professional needs** that the Learning Lab should address. This can be done through project research, gender mapping, stakeholder consultation, registration forms, survey findings from previous events, interviews, or organiser experience. The key point is that the Learning Lab should answer a need that is explicit and relevant for the intended audience.

Questions to guide this step include:

- What are the main professional or structural barriers affecting the target group?
- Which skills are missing, underdeveloped, or not sufficiently accessible?
- Which topics are urgent in this sea basin or thematic area?
- Which topics are already overrepresented, and which are missing?

Across the three WIN-BIG events, one lesson was consistent: Learning Labs are most effective when they respond to clearly identified gaps rather than applying a standard set of topics. At the same time, **topic selection also benefited from choosing themes that were sufficiently horizontal across different Blue Economy sectors, so that they remained useful for participants coming from diverse professional backgrounds**. This was particularly important in WIN-BIG, where audiences often brought together participants from research, policy, entrepreneurship, industry, communication, conservation, and innovation support. **Needs**

identification is therefore not only about selecting urgent topics, but also about selecting topics that are broad enough to create shared value across a multidisciplinary audience while still addressing real professional barriers and capacity gaps.

Stage 2. Audience definition

The second step is to define the **participant profile**. A good Learning Lab is never designed for a generic audience. It should be adapted to:

- career stage,
- sector profile,
- level of prior knowledge,
- sea-basin context,
- balance between research, policy, entrepreneurship, and industry backgrounds,
- whether the group is women-only or mixed.

Across the WIN-BIG events, **audience profile clearly influenced what worked best**. Mediterranean participants responded strongly to communication and career-management content. Baltic participants, many of whom were research- and innovation-oriented, particularly valued negotiation, communication, intellectual property, and funding innovation. Atlantic participants responded strongly to entrepreneurship, circularity, and visibility components. This confirms that the model must always begin with a participant-profile analysis.

Stage 3. Positioning the Learning Lab within the wider event

The third step is to determine **where the Learning Lab sits within the event architecture**. The WIN-BIG experience suggests three possible positions:

- after a conference or evidence-based discussion, when participants first need framing and shared context;
- as the core capacity-building block of the event;
- in connection with a visibility or reflective component that reinforces role models, storytelling, or peer exchange.

The Mediterranean event used a three-day progression from conference, to Learning Labs, to retreat. The Baltic event combined conference panels with Learning Labs, documentary screening, an exhibition, and retreat over two days. The Atlantic event integrated Learning Labs into a broader final-event structure including exhibition, keynote, documentary premiere, and networking. **This shows that Learning Labs are strongest when they are intentionally placed in a wider flow**.

Stage 4. Topic selection and learning outcomes

Once the needs and audience are clear, the organiser should select the topic and define **clear learning outcomes**. These outcomes should specify what participants should know, be able to do, or feel more confident about by the end of the session.

Each Learning Lab should ideally define:

- the topic,
- the problem or gap it responds to,
- the capacities it aims to strengthen,
- the expected professional relevance,
- the type of outcomes it should produce.

For example:

- a communication lab may aim to strengthen pitching, storytelling, and confidence in public speaking;
- a negotiation lab may aim to improve self-advocacy, structured negotiation, and handling of gendered barriers;
- a funding lab may aim to strengthen financial literacy, innovation positioning, and understanding of support ecosystems;
- a circular economy lab may aim to strengthen awareness of sustainable materials, innovation pathways, and practical product thinking.

The WIN-BIG evidence suggests that Learning Labs are clearest and most replicable when these outcomes are made explicit from the start.

Stage 5. Format and methodology design



This is the core pedagogical step. The WIN-BIG events show that Learning Labs should not rely on lectures alone. **The model should combine content input with active learning methods.** The exact methods can vary by topic, but the strongest sessions across the three events used combinations such as:

- role-playing scenarios,
- practical case studies,
- group work,
- business-plan drafting,
- product demonstrations,
- storytelling exercises,
- self-reflection tools,
- bridge-building or communication exercises,
- co-creation activities,
- facilitated discussion,
- action-planning moments.

The model therefore recommends that each Learning Lab include:

1. a short framing input,
2. one or more interactive exercises,
3. space for peer exchange,
4. a synthesis or reflection moment,
5. a clear take-home outcome.

This structure worked well across very different sessions: business planning in the Mediterranean event, negotiation and communication in the Baltic event, and entrepreneurship and circular product demonstration in the Atlantic event.

4. Standard template for designing a Learning Lab

To support replication, each Learning Lab should be planned using the following template.

4.1. Strategic framing	
Sea basin / region	
Event name	
Date and venue	
Organising partner(s)	
Identified need or barrier addressed	
Target audience	
Why this topic is relevant in this context	

4.2. Learning Lab # profile	
Title of the Learning Lab	
Facilitator(s)	
Duration	
Planned capacity	
Delivery mode (in-person / hybrid / online)	
Required room setup / materials	

4.3. Objectives and capacities	
Purpose of the Learning Lab	
Main skills, knowledge areas, or professional capacities to be strengthened	
Specific learning outcomes	

Connection to women's empowerment, gender equality, or career progression	

4.4. Format and methodology	
Type of format (workshop, role play, demonstration, co-creation, reflection lab, etc.)	
Sequence of activities	
Balance between input and interaction	
Individual vs group work	
Use of real-life case studies, examples, or role models	
Type of final synthesis or output	

4.5. Immediate outputs	
What participants leave with	
Practical tools, ideas, or draft outputs produced	
Opportunities for mentoring, networking, or follow-up	
Whether the session generated strong discussion points for future work	

5. Recommended Learning Lab duration and group size

The WIN-BIG events show that Learning Labs work well when there is enough time to balance delivery and interaction. Sessions of **75 to 120 minutes** can be effective, but some formats benefit from longer slots. For instance, the Baltic negotiation session was highly successful but the facilitator explicitly suggested a longer time slot to allow more consolidation and practice. Mediterranean and Atlantic organisers also observed that additional time could deepen interaction and application.

As a general rule:

- **75–90 minutes** can work for focused, well-scoped interactive sessions;
- **90–120 minutes** is preferable when the session involves exercises, reflection, or co-creation;
- longer sessions are useful when the goal is to produce something tangible or to allow deep discussion.

Group size should be adapted to facilitation capacity and activity type. Labs involving discussion, roleplay, or reflection benefit from manageable group sizes or break-out mechanisms. Demonstration-based or showcase labs may accommodate larger groups, but should include opportunities for interaction.

6. Delivery Guidance

This section should help organisers not only plan the Learning Lab, but also **run it well on the day**. The WIN-BIG events showed that effective Learning Labs depend not only on good topic selection and strong design, but also on clear facilitation, active participation, inclusive methods, and a structure that helps participants turn discussion into usable learning. Delivery, therefore, needs to support a full learning process: participants should understand the purpose of the session, feel able to contribute, engage with the topic through practice and exchange, and leave with a clear takeaway they can apply afterwards. The following infographic provides practical guidance for facilitators and organisers to support this process in a structured and accessible way.

HOW TO DELIVER A WIN-BIG LEARNING LAB



1. OPEN THE SESSION WITH CLARITY

- What the session is about,
- Why the topic matters,
- What they will do during the session,
- What they should be able to take away afterwards.

2. BALANCING INPUT AND INTERACTION

The facilitator should avoid loading the session with too much theory. The strongest WIN-BIG labs worked because input was quickly linked to examples, exercises, reflection, or discussion. Participants should not spend most of the session only listening.





3. SUPPORTING PARTICIPATION ACROSS CONFIDENCE LEVELS (INCLUSIVENESS)

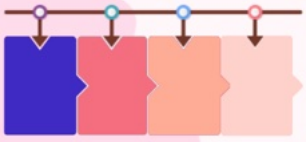
- Small-group work first,
- Optional speaking opportunities,
- Reflection time before sharing,
- Examples that connect to different realities,
- A facilitation style that values different kinds of participation.

** Don't let only confident voices dominate*

4. PROTECT THE CORE

Across the WIN-BIG events, participants often appreciated the sessions but still asked for more time for practice or discussion. A useful lesson is to protect the interactive part of the session rather than allowing the introductory input to consume too much of the time.





5. CLOSE WITH ACTION

- Ask for key takeaways
- Discuss next steps
- Capture shared reflections

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6. Implementation checklist for organisers

This section provides a practical implementation template for organisers planning and delivering a Learning Lab. Its purpose is to make the WIN-BIG model easier to apply in practice by translating the main design principles into a simple before–during–after structure. Rather than describing general good practice, this section can be used as a working checklist during event preparation, delivery, and follow-up. It is intended to help organisers ensure that the Learning Lab is coherent, well prepared, relevant to the target audience, and properly documented for future replication and possible adaptation into broader training formats.

6.1 Pre-event preparation template

Before delivery, organisers should ensure that:

Item	Yes / No	Notes
The purpose of the Learning Lab is clearly defined		
The topic responds to an identified need or barrier		
The topic is relevant across the likely participant backgrounds		
The target audience has been clearly defined		
The facilitator has been selected and briefed		
The intended learning outcomes are clear and realistic		
The session format matches the topic and audience		
The duration is appropriate for both content and interaction		
The room setup supports participation and exchange		
All materials and technical needs have been prepared		
The Learning Lab is clearly connected to the wider event flow		
The evaluation and documentation method has been planned		

6.2 During the event

During delivery, organisers should ensure that:

Item	Yes / No	Notes
The session started with a clear explanation of purpose and expected outcomes		
Participants were informed about the structure of the session		
The balance between input and interaction worked well		
The facilitator used examples relevant to the Blue Economy context		
Participants had space to contribute in different ways		
The session was inclusive across different backgrounds and confidence levels		
The practical or interactive core of the Learning Lab was protected		
Time management supported both delivery and exchange		
Key outputs, ideas, or reflections were captured		
The session ended with a synthesis or takeaway moment		

Immediate observations from facilitators/organisers:

[Insert short notes on participation, atmosphere, pacing, engagement, notable reactions, or practical issues]

6.3 After the event

After the session, organisers should:

Possible outcome	Yes / No	Notes
New contacts or exchanges among participants		
Interest in mentoring or follow-up support		
Requests for additional training		
Ideas for collaboration		
Practical outputs from the session		
Strong discussion points for future activities		
Content suitable for future MOOC or training adaptation		
Other		

7. Evidence and evaluation template

This section provides a practical template for collecting evidence and evaluating each Learning Lab in a structured way. In the WIN-BIG events, participant feedback was primarily collected through **online post-event surveys**, enabling organisers to gather both quantitative and qualitative reflections on the Learning Labs and their broader event context. However, the same logic can also be applied through other tools, depending on the format and scale of the event, such as **Slido, online forms, live polling tools, short paper forms, facilitator-led reflective sessions at the end of the Learning Lab, or a closing group discussion**. What matters is that evidence is collected consistently enough to understand what was delivered, how it was experienced, what worked well, what should be improved, and what can be reused for future replication or adaptation into broader training formats. The template below is based on the types of questions and evidence used across the WIN-BIG sea-basin events and is intended to make evaluation easier to implement in future editions.

Intro — Basic information shown to participants

Instruction: Please complete this short feedback form to help us understand how the Learning Lab was experienced, what worked well, and what could be improved in future editions.

- Event name:
- Sea basin / region:
- Learning Lab title:
- Date:
- Facilitator(s):
- Main topic / focus of the Learning Lab:
- Main skills or capacities the Learning Lab aimed to strengthen:

Participant feedback questions

The following questions can be used directly in an online form or survey. Depending on the format, time available, and level of detail needed, organisers may use all of them or select a shorter version. These questions can also be adapted into different response formats, such as **open-ended questions, 0–5 rating scales, multiple-choice questions, yes/no answers, or short comment boxes**. In practice, a mixed format often works best, combining a small number of rating-scale questions to capture comparable feedback with a few open questions that allow participants to explain what they found most useful, less effective, or worth improving. This makes the template flexible enough to work across different event sizes,

delivery modes, and evaluation tools, while still generating consistent evidence for future reporting and replication.

A. Relevance and usefulness

1. How relevant was this Learning Lab to your professional goals or interests?
2. Which topics or parts of the Learning Lab were most relevant to you?
3. Which topics or parts felt less relevant?
4. To what extent did this Learning Lab provide useful knowledge, skills, or tools?
5. To what extent do you think you will be able to apply the learning in your professional life?

B. Quality of delivery

6. How well organised was the Learning Lab in terms of structure, timing, and materials?
7. Was the duration appropriate?
8. Was there enough time for both content delivery and interaction?
9. Was the pace too fast, too slow, or appropriate?
10. Was the format suitable for the topic?
11. Did the room and physical setup support participation and exchange?
12. Were there any issues with seating, visibility, acoustics, movement, or logistics?

C. Participation and interaction

13. How interactive was the Learning Lab?
14. Did you feel that participants had enough opportunities to contribute?
15. Did the format support exchange across different backgrounds and confidence levels?
16. How engaging was the Learning Lab in terms of networking and collaboration?
17. Did you identify any opportunities to collaborate with other participants?

D. Memorable value and impact

18. Which elements of the Learning Lab were most useful or memorable for you?
19. Which activity or part had the strongest impact on your professional interest?
20. What best practice, example, or insight did you gain from the session?
21. In what ways do you plan to use the learning afterwards?

E. Future-oriented questions

22. What topics would you suggest adding or expanding in future Learning Labs?
23. What could be improved in future editions of this Learning Lab?
24. Would you be interested in follow-up support, mentoring, or more training on this topic?
25. Do you think this topic would be useful for future training resources such as MOOCs or online modules?

Participant feedback questions

If organisers want a more reflective version of the form, or wish to include one final open-response section, the following questions can be added:

- What was the main thing you are taking away from this Learning Lab?
- Did anything in the session change the way you think about your work, your career, or your role in the Blue Economy?
- Was there a moment, activity, or example that stood out particularly strongly for you? Why?
- Is there anything else you would like to share about your experience of this Learning Lab?

These questions are especially useful when the session includes reflective, confidence-building, storytelling, or women-centred components.

Organiser and facilitator reflection template

This part is **not for participants**. It should be completed by organisers and/or facilitators after the session to complement the participant feedback.

Organiser reflection questions

1. Which elements of the session were most successful?
2. Which parts seemed most useful or memorable for participants?
3. What did not work as planned?
4. Which aspects were less effective?
5. Was the duration appropriate?
6. Did the format match the audience profile?
7. Was the topic sufficiently horizontal and relevant for participants from different Blue Economy sectors?
8. Did the Learning Lab fit well within the wider event flow?
9. Would you repeat this Learning Lab in future editions?
10. What would you change next time?

Facilitator reflection questions

1. How did you experience the session overall?
2. How engaged did participants seem during the Learning Lab?
3. Which parts of the session worked especially well?
4. Were there any difficulties with timing, level of content, or interaction?
5. Did the participant profile match the session well?
6. What would you recommend changing in future editions?
7. Would you be open to contributing again, providing follow-up support, or adapting the content for future use?

8. From Learning Labs to MOOCs

A distinctive strength of the WIN-BIG approach is that Learning Labs are not treated as one-off workshops, but as part of a wider capacity-building ecosystem, transforming them into **training modules and MOOCs**. This requires organisers to think beyond the event itself and consider from the start which parts of the session could later become reusable learning content. If this is of the organisers' interest, then the model should help them think about **scalability from the beginning**.

In WIN-BIG, the Learning Labs were accompanied by a multimedia team that recorded video and audio with the creation of an e-learning already in mind. Later on, **the resulting modules were developed by combining the facilitators' presentations with edited video excerpts from the sessions and additional visual aids.** This made it possible to preserve not only the conceptual content of the Learning Labs, but also part of their practical and human dimension, including the facilitators' explanations, examples, and the overall logic of the sessions. For future replication, this means that organisers should consider from the start which elements of a Learning Lab may later be transformed into reusable learning material. In practice, this includes:

- Recording the session — Make sure to have different angles and a microphone on the facilitators to have a clear sound. If possible, have a microphone close to the crowd for recording their participation as well.
- Saving the facilitator's presentation in an editable and reusable format,
- Identifying key segments that can be turned into short video chapters,
- Extracting practical frameworks, exercises, or guiding questions,
- Complementing the core material with additional visual aids, graphics, prompts, or summaries that make the content easier to follow asynchronously.

The WIN-BIG experience shows that this conversion is particularly effective when the Learning Lab already has a clear internal structure: a well-defined topic, explicit learning outcomes, a logical sequence of explanation and application, and concrete takeaways. Sessions designed in this way are easier to edit into coherent e-learning chapters and more useful for learners accessing the material later without the live facilitation context.

The transition from Learning Labs to MOOCs or e-learning modules, therefore, should not be seen as a separate stage that begins only after the event. It should be treated as part of the design logic from the beginning. If organisers plan for recording, documentation, and reuse early enough, the Learning Lab can function simultaneously as a live capacity-building activity and as a prototype for a broader training resource. This is one of the main ways in which the WIN-BIG model extends its impact beyond the event itself and supports longer-term access to women-centred learning resources in the Blue Economy.

9. Conclusion of the Model Template for the replication of WIN-BIG Learning Labs

The WIN-BIG Model Template of Learning Labs should be understood as a **flexible implementation framework**, not as a fixed curriculum. Its purpose is to help future organisers replicate the core logic that proved effective across the Mediterranean, Baltic, and Atlantic events: start from identified needs, define the audience carefully, choose topics that are both relevant and horizontally useful across different Blue Economy backgrounds, embed the Learning Lab within a wider event flow, prioritise practical and participatory methods, collect evidence in a structured way, and plan from the outset for possible reuse in broader training formats such as MOOCs or e-learning modules. In this way, the model preserves the coherence of the WIN-BIG approach while remaining adaptable to different sea basins, audiences, and thematic priorities.

What should be replicated is therefore not a fixed set of topics, but a tested way of designing Learning Labs so they are context-responsive, useful in practice, and transferable to future settings.

