

Activity 3.5. Organisation of Innovation Open days

D.3.5.1. Innovation Open days

21 May 2025, Sala Unicorn, Piazza IV Novembre 1, Ancona.

22–23 May 2025, Faculty of Engineering,
Università Politecnica delle Marche, Ancona.





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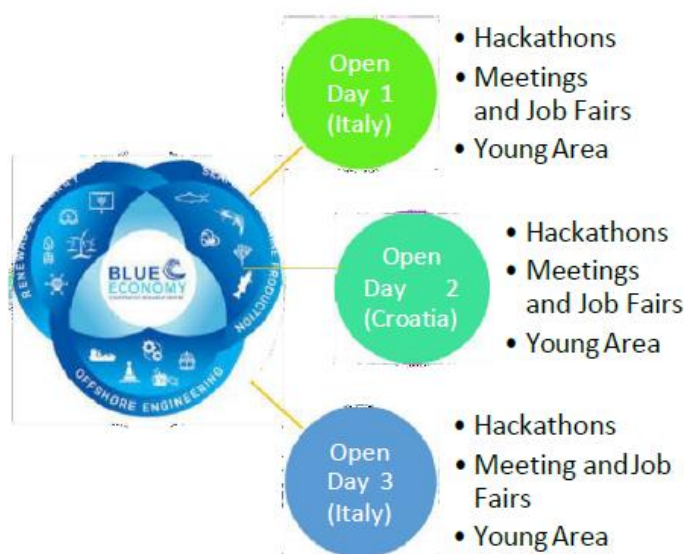
Innovation Open Day on Nautical and Linked Services

Innovation Open Days are instruments/events adopted by the BLUESLINKS project, including the match-making mechanisms within Blue Economy, in the following sectors:

1. **Aquaculture and fisheries;**
2. **Fisheries tourism;**
3. **Nautical and Linked Services.**

Each **Innovation Open Day** revolves around the organization of the following **three initiatives**, to be organised according to different paths and timelines, according to logistical needs:

- **Hackathon competitions:** aimed at graduates and/or start uppers, who will compete in an open competition lasting 24/48 hours max, during which they will develop project ideas relating to the BE sectors connected to the BLUESLINKS project, with a jury of experts, composed of SMEs and other stakeholders, who will award the winning idea;
- **Open Day:** classic format, as an open job fairs, to be organized also in the context of more already organized trade fair events, aimed at potential matching jobseekers with SMEs of the BE sectors.
- **Young Areas:** where students selected under study visits of A2.5 of BLUESLINKS project and other selected classes present, under the supervision of their professor, their experience in the SMEs of the Blue Economy.



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The First Innovation Open Day on **Nautical and Linked Services**, it was organized in the context of the **Tipicità in Blu Fair**, which took place in Ancona from 17 to 23 May 2025. The following matchmaking events were organized as part of the event:

- **Hackathon Competition:** on May 22–23, the event took place at the Faculty of Engineering of the Università Politecnica delle Marche. It brought together 31 graduates and aspiring entrepreneurs from both Adriatic shores, 12 staff members from project partners (including mentors), and 21 SMEs (with jury representatives included), for a total attendance of 64 individuals. During the closing ceremony on May 23 at the Mole Vanvitelliana in Ancona, four project concepts were highlighted.
- **Open day:** the event was held on 21 May 2025 in Ancona, at Sala Unicorn, with all partners invited to join. It featured networking areas and thematic discussion tables where SMEs, researchers, students, and institutional actors shared perspectives on innovation, skills growth, and job prospects in the Blue Economy sector;
- **Young Area:** it was also carried out. However, because the implementation process with the schools—required by the AF—in Period 2 did not give partners the opportunity to arrange the Study Visits planned under D2.5.1, this initial phase concentrated on reciprocal online and face-to-face presentations involving the five schools, at cross-border level.

Project Partners and stakeholders' involvement

Project partners were involved during the organisation of Hackathons, Open Days and Young Area, as follows:

- **Hackathon competition**¹:

The **organisation, logistics, contacts, awards** and other aspect of the first Hackathon Competition were edited by **PP2-Polo Alto Adriatico**, in the context **Tipicità in Blu Fair**. Here is reported the number of representatives per each partner:

- LP:** 2 representatives;
- PP2:** 2 representatives;
- PP3:** 1 representative;
- PP4:** 2 representatives;
- PP5:** 0 representatives;

¹ List of presence and signatures has been provided to the JS within **D3.4.3. Hackathons for innovative solutions in nautical sector and linked services**, attached to the progress report 3, in JEMS.



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- PP6:** 2 representatives;
- PP7:** 2 representatives;
- PP8:** 1 representative.

In total for this first Hackathon competition **were involved** 31 graduates/start-uppers from both sides of the Adriatic, 12 representatives from project partners (including mentors), and 21 SMEs (including jury members), totalling **64 people**.

- **Open day:**

The **organisation, logistics, contacts and other aspect** of the first Open Day on Nautical and linked services were edited by **PP2-Polo Alto Adriatico**, in the context Tipicità in Blu Fair. Here is reported the number of representatives per each partner:

PP2: 2 representatives (event organiser and facilitators).

The event was organised by PP2 – Polo Tecnologico Alto Adriatico, which coordinated the logistical aspects, identification of SMEs, and overall on-site management. Stakeholders involved were:

- Emanuele Frontoni (Università di Macerata);
 - Valentina Giannini (Università Politecnica delle Marche);
 - Massimiliano Colombi (Nomisma);
 - Lucia Trenta (CNA Nautica Ancona);
 - Autorità portuale, Camera di commercio delle Marche, Comune di Ancona, Comando del porto, Assonautica, Marina Dorica.
- **Young Area²:**

The **organisation, logistics, contacts and participation of schools** to the Young Area on Nautical and linked services were edited by **PP2-Polo Alto Adriatico**, in the context Tipicità in Blu Fair, with the support of the Lead Partner-Delta2000, PP4-FLAG CT and PP7-ARGONAUTA, which contributed with the engagement of their schools connected online, for this first exchange. Here is reported the number of representatives per each partner, connected online with the participating schools:

- LP:** 1 representative;
- PP2:** 1 representative;

² Please consider how project partners organized this event in the framework of other linked events, namely: Hackathon competition, Info Day on Nautical and Linked Services, and Innovation Open Day. Since schools were connected online, presence of partners already registered in other events were not included to not create redundancy of list of signatories.



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PP4: 1 representative;

PP7: 1 representative.

PP8: 1 representative.

In total for this first Young Area on Nautical and Linked Services, were involved online: Istituto TECNICO COMMERCIALE VERSARI MACRELLI and Istituto TECNICO INDUSTRIALE NULLO BALDINI DI RAVENNA (Delta2000), Prometno-tehnička škola Šibenik e Gimnazija Antuna Vrančića (Argonauta) and Istituto TECNICO NAUTICO ACCIAIUOLI DI ORTONA (Flag CT).

Hackathon³

To assist and mentor graduates and aspiring entrepreneurs during the Hackathon Competition, the BLUESLINKS partnership took part in a two-day training session hosted by PP2 on May 20–21. The purpose of the training was to equip partners with the skills needed to effectively support participants. The first Nautical Hackathon Competition was then held on May 22–23 at the Faculty of Engineering of the Università Politecnica delle Marche.

A total of **64 people** joined the event: 31 graduates/start-uppers from both sides of the Adriatic, 12 representatives from project partners (including mentors), and 21 SMEs (including jury members). After the introductory session, participants collaborated in teams across six working phases over nearly 24 hours:

- A. idea sharing and brainstorming;
- B. initial development;
- C. design and prototyping;
- D. advanced development;
- E. final refinement;
- F. pitch to the jury.

Four project concepts were created and highlighted during the closing event on May 23 at Mole Vanvitelliana in Ancona:

- **BlueAccess** – a software/app facilitating accessibility for people with disabilities;
- **Knot** – a digital platform offering customized, job-focused training paths;
- **PortPulse** – a modular digital solution that can be integrated into marina apps or websites;
- **Wave** – a platform for marinas encouraging environmentally sustainable behaviour.

³ Comprehensive material for the Hackathon competition was provided by partners to the JS, within Report 3 in JEMS, as an attachment to D3.4.3, including the Agenda, Photographs, Team Presentations, Winners and Attendance List.



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BlueAccess was declared the winner of the competition. During the implementation of the Hackathon Competition, partners may adopt the BLUE WAY editorial format developed by PP2, particularly for communication activities, video production, and uploading materials to the project's YouTube channels.

<https://www.youtube.com/@BLUESLINKSITALY-CROATIA>

https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLJ9xn0eU5enUQUmiJls6IKOQY_R3i_Sn

Open Day & Young Area.



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tipicità IN BLU

La Bussola e il Vento

Tecnologia, coraggio e alleanze per imprese che vogliono navigare il cambiamento

MERCOLEDÌ 21 MAGGIO
SALA UNICORN - PASSETTO, ANCONA

Ore 10.00 Conferenza di apertura
Coordinata dal prof. Emanuele Frontoni Università di Macerata

Ore 11.30 B2B Tra cantieri navali e imprese del territorio

Evento su prenotazione.
Gratuito per soci CNA.
Per info Lucia Trenta
348 3178563 ltrenta@an.cna.it

In the framework of Festival delle Tipicità in Blu, Ancona a **specific area / exhibition** has been created as a real meeting point between young people, businesses and the territory. Within this space it was also possible for students to send their CV and organized short interviews or informal meetings with the participating companies. In the area, video and /or power point and/or interview realized by students have been also presented, jointly with:

1. **Meetings** among SMEs, startups, and young talents.
2. **Involvement of CNA and Tipicità in Blu partners.**
3. **Activation of the "Young Area"** – presentations by students selected through dissemination activities and study visits.

The event was organised by PP2 – Polo Tecnologico Alto Adriatico, which coordinated the logistical aspects, identification of SMEs, and overall on-site management.

The Polo Tecnologico Alto Adriatico actively promoted the participation of the entire BLUESLINKS partnership in the event by setting up a dedicated stand equipped with workstations, **PCs and remote Zoom connections**, ensuring the possibility for partners to connect online and interact during the initiative. The stand served as an information point for the BLUESLINKS project, where visitors could receive detailed explanations on the project objectives, its matchmaking mechanisms and the opportunities offered to SMEs, young talents and students in the Blue Economy sectors.

The Open Day took place within the framework of the event *“La Bussola e il Vento”*, organised by CNA Ancona, which included a structured programme meetings among SMEs, startup and young talents in the nautical sector. The event featured matchmaking sessions between SMEs and startups, involving



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major shipyards from the Marche region and Adriatic zone and research centres, with the aim of fostering new collaborations and strengthening the local supply chain. The main companies operating in the regional naval shipbuilding sector and technology providers were present with their own desks, creating a highly qualified professional environment.

Given the strong demand from companies for skilled and specialised personnel, entrepreneurs whose profiles were most aligned with the BLUESLINKS target were invited to visit the project stand and to attend the live connections with schools involved in the Young Area. This interaction allowed companies to gain insight into students' educational paths and experiences, while young participants were able to better understand the expectations and needs of the labour market.

The event was also open to the general public, students and young people; however, all individual interviews, exchanges of personal information and data processing activities, such as the submission and evaluation of CVs, were conducted privately and directly between companies and candidates, in full respect of confidentiality and data protection principles.

More concretely, the morning, entirely dedicated to the world of nautical business, attracted numerous industry players, startups, research centers, and institutions. After the introductory greetings, the talk "**La Bussola e il Vento**" offered significant insights thanks to contributions from academics and experts such as Emanuele Frontoni (**University of Macerata**), Valentina Giannini (**Polytechnic University of Marche**), and Massimiliano Colombi, sociologist at **Nomisma**, who explored the themes of change, innovation, and sustainability in the nautical industry and local production systems.

Afterwards, Lucia Trenta, coordinator of **CNA Nautica Ancona**, presented the **concrete opportunities offered to nautical SMEs** by the Interreg Italy-Croatia BEST4.0 and **BLUESLINKS** projects, emphasizing the value of cross-border cooperation in strengthening competitiveness and the digital and green transition of the sector.

Numerous stakeholders attended, including the **Port Authority**, the **Marche Chamber of Commerce**, the **Municipality of Ancona**, the **Port Authority**, **Assonautica**, **Marina Dorica**, and other key players in the regional port and nautical system, confirming their shared commitment and support for the development of the sector.

Reference and feedback:

- <https://cnapicena.it/ad-ancona-successo-per-la-giornata-della-cantieristica-cna/>
- <https://www.facebook.com/cnaterritorialeancona/posts/pfbid02JZJLdEWcc45GrCcCj4qS3VRjURdqRt8Drrv955kyckrraZabqS4wyczEiqxPbg3Pl>



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As for the **Young Area**, this special space was dedicated to **secondary school students** involved in the BLUESLINKS project, who have participated in activities dissemination day. **The goal of the Young Area** is to give voice to young people, highlight their field experiences, and create a tangible bridge between schools, businesses, and territorial innovation actors. Under the coordination of Polo Alto Adriatico, Delta 2000, FLAG CT, ARGONAUTA and UNIDU, involved the following schools:

- ISTITUTO TECNICO COMMERCIALE VERSARI MACRELLI DI CESENA (PP OF REF. LP DELTA 2000)
- ANTUN VRANČIĆ HIGHSCHOOL - LANGUAGE PROGRAM (PP OF REF. PP7 ARGONAUTA)
- ISTITUTO TECNICO INDUSTRIALE NULLO BALDINI DI RAVENNA (PP OF REF. LP DELTA 2000)
- TECHNICAL AND TRANSPORT SCHOOL ŠIBENIK (REF. PP7 ARGONAUTA)
- ISTITUTO TECNICO NAUTICO ACCIAIUOLI DI ORTONA - CLASSE 3° A (PP OF REF PP4 FLAG CT)
- POMORSKA ŠKOLA DUBROVNIK (NAUTICAL HIGHSCHOOL DUBROVNIK) – (REF. PP8 UNIDU)
- ITS MOST DI ORTONA (REF. PP4 FLAG CT)

The morning of May 21st included a joint session from 10:00 to 12:00, bringing together Italian and Croatian students, who had the chance to interact directly with entrepreneurs and company representatives. This session was designed as a moment of **dialogue and exchange**, where students can introduce themselves, share their journeys, and gain meaningful insight into careers in the Blue Economy. The event started with an introduction by the coordinator, followed by **presentations from each school**. A facilitator (teacher or external expert) introduced their school and explained its motivation for participating in the BLUESLINKS project. After that, student representatives from each class **shared their experience**—whether from the classroom activities or from the dissemination days— with each school given approximately 20 minutes.



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Conclusion.

The first **BLUESLINKS Innovation Open Day on Nautical and Linked Services**, organised within the Tipicità in Blu Fair in Ancona, generated strong engagement across all target groups—graduates, start-ups, SMEs, researchers, institutions, and schools—demonstrating clear added value for participants.

- **Hackathon Outcomes:** the Hackathon gathered 31 young innovators from both sides of the Adriatic, supported by 12 trained partner mentors and 21 SMEs. Participants worked intensively through structured phases of idea creation and development, producing four high-quality project concepts addressing accessibility, training, marina digitalisation, and environmental sustainability. The cross-border and multidisciplinary team setting enabled participants to receive tailored mentoring and direct feedback from industry experts. The winning solution, *BlueAccess*, was selected by an SME jury, showing strong relevance to real market needs. Feedback highlighted appreciation for the practical, competitive format, the continuous interaction with companies, and the opportunity to transform initial ideas into concrete prototypes.
- **Open Day Outcomes:** the Open Day hosted networking spaces and thematic tables involving SMEs, students, researchers, and institutions. Participants valued the opportunity to interact with major regional shipyards, technology providers, and authorities in a highly professional environment. SMEs particularly appreciated the visibility offered through the BLUESLINKS stand and the chance to connect directly with young talents. The public programme—featuring expert inputs on innovation, sustainability, skills and sectoral transitions—was positively received for its practical insights and relevance.
- **Young Area Outcomes:** despite delays in school study visits foreseen in Period 2, the Young Area successfully connected five Italian and Croatian schools through online and on-site presentations. Students shared experiences, visited companies, and interacted with entrepreneurs. Feedback emphasised how the initiative increased awareness of professional opportunities in the Blue Economy and helped students understand labour-market expectations. Companies appreciated the chance to observe students' motivations and pathways, supporting future internship or collaboration opportunities.

Overall Added Value and Feedback:

The combined event enabled real matchmaking between companies and young talents, fostered SME–startup exchanges, and reinforced cross-border cooperation. Stakeholders recognised the value of





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integrating Hackathon creativity, Open Day networking, and school engagement into a single comprehensive format. Feedback from participants—graduates, SMEs, and students—was overwhelmingly positive, noting high organisational quality, relevance of topics, and the usefulness of direct interaction in generating ideas, partnerships, and career insights.

