News Release

**IMPROVING SEAFARER SAFETY AND WELFARE: INNOVATION CHALLENGE SEEKS SOLUTIONS**

World Ocean Council (WOC) Supports Thetius’ Call for Proposals from Startups and SMEs to Improve Life at Sea for Mariners

17 August 2020

In partnership with Inmarsat and Shell Shipping and Maritime, Thetius has launched an Innovation Challenge in search for novel solutions to improve crew safety and welfare. Applications close on 16 September.

WOC – the Global Blue Economy Business Organization – invites support for Thetius’ efforts to seek solutions across four challenge areas:
1) Improving the safety of deck operations
2) Minimizing fatigue on board
3) Reducing administration onboard ships and enabling remote auditing
4) Improving the overall welfare of seafarers on board

From the submitted applications, a shortlist will be generated, and successful solutions invited to pitch their idea to a decision-making jury. The majority of the jury will be made up of serving seafarers, with representatives from Inmarsat, Shell and the welfare sector also taking part.

The team behind the selected proposal will be awarded a £10,000 GBP cash grant, funded by Inmarsat, to test their idea by implementing a proof of concept onboard a Shell vessel equipped with Inmarsat’s communication and digital capabilities. The cash will be awarded upfront to the winning solution provider, and the winner startup will receive support from Thetius, Shell and Inmarsat to implement their idea.

Paul Holthus, WOC Founding President and CEO, stated, “The men and women working in shipping and the other sectors of the ocean economy are vital to all of us, especially in this time of crisis. They are essential to the flow of food, medicine, medical supplies, energy and other goods though global supply chains. This innovation challenge is an important opportunity to identify and test practical solutions to the very real issues affecting seafarer welfare.”

The deadline for solution proposals is **16 September at 23:00 UTC.**
For more information and to apply, [click here](#).
Blue Economy by the Numbers

Estimated worldwide population of seafarers serving on internationally trading merchant ships: 1,647,500 (1)
Percent of marine accidents that can be attributed to human error: 75% to 96% (2)
Percent of vessel casualties and maritime injuries for which fatigue is the main factor: 16% of vessel casualties; 33% of injuries (3)

Sources:
(1) International Chamber of Shipping: https://www.ics-shipping.org/shipping-facts/shipping-and-world-trade/global-supply-and-demand-for-seafarers#:~:text=The%20worldwide%20population%20of%20seafarers,officers%20and%203,500%20are%20ratings

Recent and Upcoming WOC Outreach and Engagement

27 August, 10:00 CET, Webinar
The Blue Economy Hub: Blue Opportunities in Island Blue Economies (Panelist)

2-3 September, Online Summit
Global Arctic Shipping Summit (Speaker)

23-24 September, Online Summit
Shipping & the Blue Economy Virtual Forum (Partner)

World Ocean Council (WOC) – The Global Blue Economy Business Organization

The WOC is the international, cross-sectoral alliance for private sector leadership, collaboration and action on ocean sustainability, stewardship and science. Companies from a range of industries worldwide are distinguishing themselves as leaders in “Corporate Ocean Responsibility”, including: shipping, oil and gas, tourism, fisheries, aquaculture, mining, renewable energy, ocean technology and investment.

WOC Members are listed here, a part of the WOC Network of 35,000+ ocean industry stakeholders around the world. The WOC is a registered not-for-profit organization in the US and France.

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