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SEA Lab Haus

JOINT REPORT

III Regional Seminars 2026

SEA*Lab*Haus Volunteers' Network

ad elo
associação de desenvolvimento
local da bairrada e mondego

Index

Introduction **2**

Regional Seminars Summary **3**

III Regional Seminar in France - Brest Métropole 3

III Regional Seminar in Portugal – AD ELO 4

III Regional Seminar in Galicia - Xunta de Galicia 5

III Regional Seminar in Canary Islands - ULPGC 6

III Regional Seminar in Ireland - Meath County Council, University College Dublin, SETU and WIN (EU) 7

Participation **8**

Key Insights – Volunteers' Network Synthesis **8**

Key Orientations for the SEALabHaus Volunteers' Network **9**

Mission and Objectives **9**

Participation and Coordination **9**

Activities and Engagement **9**

Resources and Sustainability **9**

Conclusions **10**

Joint Report: III Regional Seminars (2026)

SEALabHaus Volunteers' Network

Introduction

During 2026, the third and final round of Regional Seminars was held across the SEALabHaus partner regions.
Following the work carried out in 2024 and 2025, this final round focused on the creation of the SEALabHaus Volunteers' Network, conceived as a way of supporting the continuation, dissemination and further development of the results and relationships generated throughout the project.
The seminars followed a common participatory framework based on the World Café methodology. Discussions were organised around two complementary areas: the Structure of the Volunteers' Network, addressing its mission, objectives, participation and coordination; and the Functioning and Sustainability of the Network, focusing on activities, engagement, resources and continuity after the end of the project.

The Regional Action Groups and other stakeholders were invited to reflect on what the network should be, who should be involved, how it could operate and what would be needed to keep it active. The contributions collected during the seminars will support the preparation of the Volunteering Plan and the definition of the future SEALabHaus Volunteers' Network.
This final round also completes the sequence of Regional Seminars developed throughout the project. The first round focused on collecting regional knowledge, good practices and resources; the second moved towards strategic reflection; and the 2026 seminars looked ahead to how the work, connections and results developed through SEALabHaus could continue beyond the project.

The following section summarises the main outcomes of the seminars held in each partner region.

Regional Seminars Summary

III Regional Seminar in France- Brest Métropole

Date: 29 May 2026

Location: Espace Kaori, Landéda

The French seminar combined a presentation of the SEALabHaus project and its main results with a participatory World Café dedicated to the future Volunteers' Network. The session also provided an opportunity to discuss challenges affecting coastal territories, existing initiatives and the actors that could contribute to future actions.

Participants described the network mainly as a flexible space for knowledge exchange, rather than as a formal structure imposing strong obligations on its members. It should be open to a broad range of profiles, including citizens, businesses, non-profit organisations, public authorities and academic and research institutions.
The proposed network would provide a space to discuss issues affecting Atlantic coastal territories, such as climate change, coastal erosion, marine pollution, over-tourism and environmental protection. It could also help disseminate existing initiatives, connect actors working on similar challenges and create opportunities for new collaborations.
The discussion highlighted the importance of keeping participation open and accessible. At the same time, participants recognised that some form of coordination and resources would be needed to maintain the network over time. Future European projects working on related themes were mentioned as one possible way of providing continuity and organisational support.

The World Café also generated proposals more closely linked to territorial challenges. Sustainable mobility, visitor-flow management, participatory tourism, better links between coastal and inland areas and stronger involvement of visitors in conservation activities were among the ideas discussed.

France - **29 May 2026**





III Regional Seminar in Portugal – AD ELO

Date: 6 June 2026
Location: Cabedelo Beach, Figueira da Foz

The III Regional Seminar in Portugal brought together approximately 25 participants, including members of the Regional Action Group, representatives of public and private organisations, project partners and other stakeholders linked to maritime culture, blue tourism and territorial development.
The seminar began with a review of the work developed since the creation of the Regional Action Group in 2024. The presentation recalled the contribution of the previous seminars to the identification of good practices, the SWOT analysis and the CAME Matrix, and presented some of the main outputs produced by SEALabHaus, including the Atlas of Good Practices, training resources and pilot initiatives.
The central part of the session was the World Café. Participants worked on the two themes proposed for the 2026 seminars: the structure of the future Volunteers' Network and its operation and sustainability. The discussions addressed its mission and composition, possible coordination arrangements, activities, member engagement, resources and ways of maintaining the network after the project.
The discussion underlined the importance of preserving the relationships and results developed through SEALabHaus and of involving a wide range of stakeholders in future activities. Community participation, awareness-raising, capacity building and knowledge sharing were identified as relevant areas of work.
Participants also pointed to the need for clear coordination and communication mechanisms and for conditions that would allow the network to remain active beyond the project period. The intention was not simply to maintain a contact list, but to provide a basis for continued exchange and cooperation between actors already involved in the project and others that may join in the future.
The seminar was held alongside activities developed under the Intercultural Surf for Kids pilot project, allowing participants to see one of the SEALabHaus-supported initiatives in practice and linking the discussion on future cooperation with activities already taking place in the territory.

Portugal – **6 June 2026**





III Regional Seminar in Galicia- Xunta de Galicia

Date: 18 June 2026

Location: FOGGA, José Luis Díaz Room, Xunta de Galicia – Sea Department, Galicia

The Galician seminar presented the main results achieved by SEALabHaus and introduced the Volunteers' Network as one of the ways of extending the project's work beyond its formal implementation period. The opening contributions placed particular emphasis on citizen participation and on maintaining links between people and organisations connected with maritime culture and coastal communities.

During the participatory activity, participants identified several elements for the future structure of the network. Its mission should include maintaining the results of SEALabHaus, disseminating maritime heritage, strengthening cooperation between territories and reaching new generations.
Generational renewal was one of the strongest points raised during the discussion. Participants proposed closer links with schools and educational institutions, activities aimed at younger people and greater visibility for maritime professions and the opportunities associated with them. The network was also seen as a way of supporting grassroots organisations already working on maritime heritage and helping to connect their work with other actors.
Educational centres, associations, civil society and representatives of maritime sectors were identified as important participants. Rather than replacing existing organisations, the network should help connect them, give greater visibility to their work and provide access to useful resources and contacts.

The discussion also addressed the practical question of coordination. Participants considered that a stable structure, supported by sufficient human and financial resources, would be needed to manage the network effectively. Day-to-day coordination should not depend only on volunteers.
Possible activities included workshops, educational projects, small-scale experimental laboratories, dissemination initiatives and the inclusion of maritime-related content in school and university contexts.

Galicia – **18 June 2026**





III Regional Seminar in Canary Islands- ULPGC

Date: 21 July 2026

Location: University of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, Canary Islands

The Canary Islands seminar continued the participatory process developed through the Regional Action Group since 2024. After the identification of regional needs and good practices during the first seminar and the SWOT–CAME exercise carried out in 2025, the third seminar focused on the creation of the future Volunteers' Network.

Participants considered that the network should help maintain cooperation between the organisations involved in SEALabHaus, support more sustainable forms of blue tourism and encourage citizen participation in the conservation and promotion of maritime heritage. Preserving and sharing the knowledge accumulated during the project was also considered an important objective.

The discussion showed a preference for a cross-sectoral network, bringing together universities and research centres, associations, volunteering organisations, public administrations and other actors linked to maritime culture and the territory. The Regional Action Group was mainly associated with connecting organisations, identifying needs and opportunities and supporting the development of the network.

Participants proposed a combination of activities, including volunteering, education and awareness-raising, events and workshops, collaboration in new projects and dissemination through websites, social media and the organisations participating in the network. Active participation, working groups and the exchange of knowledge and resources were suggested as ways of keeping members involved.

In terms of resources, the discussion referred to organisational coordination, communication and collaboration tools, training and support for participants. For the longer term, stable coordination, new projects and collaborations and the inclusion of new members were considered relevant to maintaining the network.

Canary Islands – **21 july 2026**





III Regional Seminar in Ireland - Meath County Council, University College Dublin, SETU and WIN (EU)

Date: 22 September 2026

Location: UCD Village, University College Dublin, Belfield, Dublin

The III Regional Seminar in Ireland brought together regional stakeholders, community representatives and SEALabHaus project partners to review project progress and discuss opportunities for continued collaboration beyond its completion.

During the World Café, participants focused on strengthening connections between coastal communities and preserving local knowledge, traditional skills and cultural practices. Intergenerational learning was a central theme, with particular attention to engaging younger generations through mentoring, practical activities and community participation.
A broad range of potential members was identified, including young people, entrepreneurs, artists, craftspeople, community organisations, education providers, tourism bodies, local authorities and heritage groups. Participants favoured building on existing networks and community structures rather than creating an entirely new organisation, with Regional Action Group members helping to maintain regional links and cooperation.
Proposed activities included traditional craft workshops, local history and storytelling projects, community events, mentoring, exchanges between coastal communities and environmental awareness activities. The idea of "learning by doing" tourism experiences was also discussed as a way of linking heritage transmission with sustainable tourism.

For the longer term, participants highlighted the importance of community ownership and of making use of existing organisations, skills and resources to support continued activity beyond the project.

Ireland - **22 September 2026**





Participation

The III Regional Seminars brought together members of the Regional Action Groups and a broad range of stakeholders connected with maritime culture, blue tourism and coastal development.
Participants included representatives of public administrations, universities and research institutions, associations, cultural and heritage organisations, businesses, tourism professionals, maritime-sector organisations, community and voluntary groups and other civil society actors.
This diversity was also reflected in the discussions on the future network. Across the seminars, participants generally favoured a model that would remain open to different profiles and sectors, allowing existing organisations and individual actors to participate according to their interests and capacity.

Key Insights – Volunteers' Network Synthesis

The five Regional Seminars reveal several shared directions, while also reflecting different territorial priorities and approaches to the future Volunteers' Network.
Continuity emerged as one of the clearest common themes. Across the regions, the network was seen as a way of keeping relationships, knowledge and project results active after the end of SEALabHaus. This does not necessarily imply creating a new formal organisation. In France, participants favoured a flexible space for knowledge exchange, while Galicia stressed the need for a stable coordinating structure with adequate resources. Ireland placed greater emphasis on building on existing community networks and organisations, while Portugal and the Canary Islands also highlighted the need for coordination, communication and continued collaboration.

There was also broad agreement on the composition of the network. Participants generally supported an open and cross-sectoral model involving public administrations, universities and research centres, associations, businesses, tourism and maritime-sector organisations, cultural actors, voluntary groups and citizens. The Regional Action Groups were often seen as an important starting point and a possible link between organisations, but not as the only actors involved in the future network.
The proposed activities also go beyond the dissemination of project results. Education, awareness-raising, training, workshops, volunteering, knowledge exchange and collaboration in new projects appeared across several regions. Other priorities reflected specific territorial contexts.

Galicia placed particular emphasis on younger generations, schools and maritime professions, while France linked the network closely to coastal management, sustainable mobility and participatory tourism. The Canary Islands highlighted volunteering, capacity building and collaboration between sectors, and Portugal stressed community participation and the continuation of relationships created through the project. Ireland brought a strong focus on intergenerational learning and community-led activity. Participants proposed practical initiatives such as traditional craft workshops, mentoring, local history and storytelling projects, community events and exchanges between coastal communities. The idea of visitors "learning by doing" was also discussed as a way of combining heritage transmission with sustainable tourism experiences.

Across the regions, the discussions also showed that the future network will need some degree of organisational support to remain active. The proposed solutions vary — from stable coordination structures to lighter models based on existing networks and organisations — but communication, access to resources, local leadership and links with future projects were repeatedly identified as relevant factors.

Key Orientations for the SEALabHaus Volunteers' Network

Mission and Objectives
The future network should support the continuity and dissemination of SEALabHaus results, preserve and share the knowledge generated through the project, strengthen collaboration among Atlantic coastal actors and encourage new initiatives related to maritime culture, sustainable blue tourism and coastal communities.
Participation and Coordination
The network should remain open and cross-sectoral, bringing together institutional, professional, academic and community actors. Regional Action Groups can continue to support connections between participants, while coordination should remain flexible and build on existing organisations and networks wherever possible.
Activities and Engagement
Activities should promote active participation through volunteering, education, awareness-raising, workshops, knowledge exchange, mentoring and collaborative projects. Practical and community-led initiatives can help maintain engagement while creating opportunities for learning, intergenerational exchange and local participation.
Resources and Sustainability
Long-term continuity will depend on appropriate coordination, communication tools, organisational support and access to resources. Existing organisations, local networks, future projects and funding opportunities can help sustain activities, strengthen partnerships and keep project knowledge and results in use beyond SEALabHaus.

Conclusions

The III Regional Seminars complete the cycle of Regional Action Group meetings held within SEALabHaus.

The three rounds of seminars reflected the evolution of the project itself. The first round focused on gathering regional knowledge, good practices and resources. The second supported the strategic work developed around Maritime Culture and Blue Tourism. In 2026, the discussion shifted towards what could continue after the project and how the relationships, knowledge and experience generated through SEALabHaus could remain useful.

The results of this third round provide practical contributions to the future Volunteers' Network. They address its purpose, possible participants, activities, coordination and the conditions needed to maintain it over time. At the same time, each territory brought its own perspective to the discussion: generational renewal and maritime professions in Galicia; coastal management and participatory tourism in France; community participation in Portugal; cross-sectoral cooperation and capacity building in the Canary Islands; and intergenerational learning, traditional skills and community-led action in Ireland.

Despite these different emphases, the seminars show a shared interest in maintaining cooperation beyond the project, keeping project results accessible and creating opportunities for further exchange and joint initiatives. The future network is therefore understood not as a fixed structure, but as a framework that can connect people and organisations, support new activities and make use of the knowledge already created through SEALabHaus.

These contributions will support the preparation of the SEALabHaus Volunteering Plan and the definition of the network's future model.

As the final seminars foreseen under Activity 1.2, they also mark the completion of the regional participatory process initiated in 2024. The work developed through the Regional Action Groups provides a basis for continued exchange among the actors involved, as well as for the transfer and use of SEALabHaus results beyond the end of the project.