

# Global Underwater Hub

## Underwater Robotics Conference 2025

Thursday, 27 November

Global Underwater Hub, Westhill



Credit: Saipem

Global Underwater Hub  
is the leading trade and  
industry development  
body for the UK's  
underwater sectors.

Owned and governed by industry, Global Underwater Hub represents, promotes and supports all sectors of the underwater industry. As the UK's underwater industry organisation, we support our member companies by enabling access to market opportunities, expertise, contacts and specialist support to accelerate market growth and build value.

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## Conference overview

Global Underwater Hub's annual Underwater Robotics Conference will once again bring together those with a vested interest in the development and application of underwater robotic technology.

This central strand in the organisation's programme of activity offers an opportunity to learn from and network with colleagues working at the forefront of subsea robotic technologies. The Underwater Robotics Conference provides delegates with the opportunity to explore the wealth of possibilities offered by underwater robotic technology and how it can support the energy transition and contribute to efforts to tackle global warming.

Underwater robotic technology has become an essential tool within the oil and gas sector, enabling safe, efficient and cost-effective operations. The technologies and their applications are now being utilised in many marine operations, including offshore renewables, defence, ocean science and aquaculture. Alongside remotely operated vehicles (ROVs), autonomous underwater vehicles (AUVs), seabed crawlers, gliders and autonomous surface vessels (ASVs) or uncrewed surface vessels (USVs) are driving forward underwater robotic technology and its applications.

Previous editions of the conference have welcomed representatives of oil and gas operators, subsea contractors, equipment manufacturers, service providers and many more, keen to share knowledge and experience that helps to keep driving forward this innovative industry.

The programme for this year's conference has been created in consultation with Global Underwater Hub's recently formed Underwater Robotics Forum. It will focus on three key themes:

- Success stories
- Challenges
- Innovation

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## Conference programme

08:30 – 09:00	<b>Registration, coffee and networking</b>
09:00 – 09:10	Welcome from Steve Fernie, GUH
09:10 – 09:30	Technology Market Overview from Lewis Scorgie, GUH
<b>Session 1</b>	<b>Success stories  </b> Moderated by Lewis Scorgie, GUH
09:30 – 09:40	Francesco Cavallini, Saipem
09:40 – 09:50	John Polson, Rovtech
09:50 – 10:00	Andrew Douglas, Voyis
10:00 – 10:10	Graceann Robertson, Verlume
10:10 – 10:30	Panel Discussion
10:30 – 11:00	<b>Coffee and networking</b>
<b>Session 2</b>	<b>Challenges  </b> Moderated by Steve Fernie, GUH
11:00 – 11:20	Andy Gower, TotalEnergies
11:20 – 11:40	Lindsay Smith, SMD
11:40 – 12:00	Nils Morozs, Institute for Safe Autonomy / University of York
12:00 – 12:20	Adam Wright, Ocean Special Risks
12:20 – 12:40	Panel Discussion
12:40 – 13:30	<b>Lunch</b>
<b>Session 3</b>	<b>Innovation  </b> Moderated by Mark Collins, SMD
13:30 – 13:50	James Cowles, ACUA Ocean
13:50 – 14:10	Nick Swift, Wavefront Systems
14:10 – 14:30	Nils Coe, Nortek
14:30 – 14:50	Panel Discussion
14:50 – 15:00	<b>Closing Remarks</b> from Steve Fernie, GUH

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## Confirmed speakers

Delegates to the **Underwater Robotics Conference** on Thursday, 27 November 2025 will hear insight from representatives of the following organisations:



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## Speaker biographies



### Steve Fernie

Strategy & Policy Director  
Global Underwater Hub

Steve Fernie is the Strategy & Policy Director at Global Underwater Hub, a role that sees him identify core areas of focus where products, services and experience can be transferred across numerous underwater markets. In addition, he ensures that the intelligence offering of GUH is value-adding and aligned to the requirements and strategy of members, stakeholders and the organisation itself in realising the opportunities offered by the blue economy.

Steve has over 12 years' experience in market analysis and strategy support across the subsea sector, including eight years managing business intelligence, market analysis, forecasting and strategy for a range of global business units within Subsea7. In addition to UK conventional subsea operations, his remit covered global ROV and bespoke tooling, subsea decommissioning, early-stage energy transition, automation and digitisation, and the associated market-expansion opportunities of these. Steve has previously held intelligence and analysis roles within other key product and service providers within the underwater space.

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## Speaker biographies



### Lewis Scorgie

Market Intelligence Analyst  
Global Underwater Hub

Lewis joined Global Underwater Hub after graduating with an MSc in Management from Robert Gordon University in Aberdeen. Since then, he has engaged in key research and analysis projects, including insightful industry-wide business surveys, supply chain mapping and producing targeted intelligence reports highlighting the market opportunities across all underwater sectors.

Lewis is skilled at obtaining, interpreting and analysing data across all facets of the underwater sectors to allow members and GUH to realise the value offered by industry.

A key part of Lewis's role involves the daily management of Global Underwater Hub's Market Intelligence Platform. This comprehensive, interactive online system offers GUH members exclusive access to sought-after strategic industry information on projects across the underwater industry, both in the UK and overseas.

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## Speaker biographies



### Francesco Cavallini

Head of Commercial  
Saipem

Francesco holds a master's degree in aerospace engineering from Politecnico di Milano and he has been working with Saipem in the offshore energy industry for almost 20 years, making experiences in different countries and several roles within the company, spanning from technical to management positions.

At present, Francesco holds the position of global Head of Commercial, Sonsub and Subsea Technologies & Services, and he is currently engaged in the promotion and implementation of disruptive technologies such as underwater drones, pipeline repair solutions and subsea factory, both in the offshore energy and defence segments.

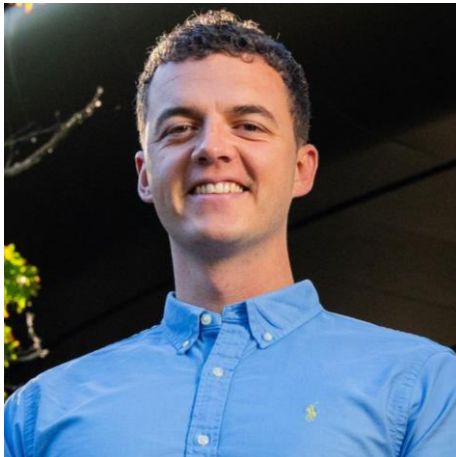


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## Speaker biographies



### John Polson

CEO

Rovtech

Leading Rovtech's mission to deliver world-class subsea and nuclear robotics solutions for the energy transition, John has expertise in robotic intervention, hazardous environment engineering, and integrated tooling.

Rovtech's goal is to help clients achieve safer, faster operations in offshore wind and nuclear decommissioning.

With a background in ROV operations, John is now working together with some extremely talented individuals to try to build subsea equipment.

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## Speaker biographies



### Andrew Douglas

Business Development Manager

Voyis

With over a decade of offshore energy experience, Andrew specialises in subsea systems, robotics, and tooling.

He has played a key role in developing subsea technologies and has shared insights at global conferences through presentations and technical papers.

An active voice in shaping discussions on offshore energy and subsea robotics, Andrew blends technical expertise with commercial insight, offering a unique perspective that links engineering excellence and business strategy to drive progress in subsea optical imaging systems.

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## Speaker biographies



### Graceann Robertson

Marketing Manager

Verlume

Graceann Robertson is an international marketing and communications professional with almost 10 years of experience in the energy industry. Throughout her career, she has developed a strong interest in the wider energy landscape, including technology integration and the role of innovation in shaping the future of the sector. A graduate of the University of Aberdeen, Graceann holds a joint honours degree in Business Management and French.

She previously served as co-chair of the Aberdeen Renewable Energy Group Young Professionals Network and currently sits on the Energy Institute Aberdeen, Highlands and Islands branch committee.

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## Speaker biographies



### Andy Gower

R&D Subsea Robotics Lead  
TotalEnergies

Andy Gower brings over 25 years of expertise in subsea engineering, specialising in production control systems and advanced robotics.

As Project Lead for TotalEnergies' Subsea Robotics R&D initiative in Stavanger, Andy has driven the successful deployment of pioneering platforms in both demonstration and commercial settings.

His leadership ensures TotalEnergies continues to embody its pioneer spirit, delivering innovative solutions that push the boundaries of offshore technology and enhance operational performance.

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## Speaker biographies



### Lindsay Smith

Business Development Manager  
SMD

Dr. Lindsay Smith joined SMD in 2023 as Business Development Manager for New Technologies. She holds a PhD in Electrical Engineering and brings over a decade of experience working in research and development within the subsea sector.

At SMD, Lindsay leads the integration and commercialisation of many new technologies, strengthening the company's position in subsea innovation.

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### Nils Morozs

Research Fellow

Institute for Safe Autonomy / University of York

Dr Nils Morozs received the M.Eng. and Ph.D. degrees in electronic engineering from the University of York, in 2012 and 2015, respectively.

In his PhD research he developed AI-based protocols for 4G/5G wireless networks. Afterwards, he worked as a Researcher in Wi-Fi & wireless convergence at BT.

He rejoined the University of York as a Research Associate in 2016 and is currently a Research Fellow at the Institute for Safe Autonomy, working in the field of underwater communication and sensing technologies.

In addition to his academic research, he has led and participated in multiple industry projects in the aquaculture and defence sectors, which has included hardware prototype development and sea trials.

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### Adam Wright

Director

Ocean Special Risks

Adam has over 20 years' experience in the marine insurance industry, having held senior roles including Partner within JLT's Energy and Marine Division and Head of Tigermar Global's UK office.

Throughout his career he has worked with major international clients, placing complex risks across London and global markets and managing diverse portfolios.

He is now Director of Ocean Special Risks, a London-based specialty MGA focused on providing tailored solutions for the offshore, renewables, maritime and transportation sectors.

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## Speaker biographies



### Mark Collins

Innovation Director  
SMD Ltd

Mark has spent his whole career working in the subsea sector.

He started in the late 1990s as an Electronics Engineer working with ROVs and sonar/acoustic systems. And later held positions in sales and business development becoming Managing Director of SMD's ROV business in 2015.

For the past seven years Mark has been SMD's Innovation/BD Director responsible for new technologies and new products.



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### James Cowles

Business Development Director  
ACUA Ocean

James has been working in marine robotics for over 10 years.

Starting in the industry developing science and survey focussed USVs, moving on to developing and operating USVs across the commercial and defence markets.

Working on over 10 classes of USV including delivering and supporting operations across five continents.

Now as part of the ACUA Ocean team bringing the next generation of USVs to market, enabling nested robotics through the highly stable long endurance Pioneer class USVs.

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### Nick Swift

Business Development Consultant  
Wavefront Systems

Nick started his career in marine technology straight from leaving school, working on submarine sonars. He then studied Physics at University before continuing his career in the maritime industry working on seismic vessels and land survey.

After travelling the world on survey crews, Nick has spent the last 30 years delivering solutions for underwater positioning, communications and imaging and has worked on a number of autonomous systems.

Nick is now a business development consultant for Wavefront Systems, focusing on global Ocean Science markets.

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## Speaker biographies



### Nils Coe

Applications Engineer  
Nortek

Nils is an Applications Engineer at Nortek's UK office, specialising in Doppler Velocity Logs (DVLs) and integrated navigation systems for subsea vehicles.

With hands-on experience supporting customers across scientific, commercial, and defence sectors, he helps users optimise Nortek's DVL and integration navigation solutions for precise positioning in GPS-denied environments.

His work bridges acoustic sensing, inertial navigation and real-world vehicle integration to advance reliable underwater navigation solutions.

## Future events from Global Underwater Hub

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Global Underwater Hub organises a series of events throughout the year, bringing together businesses to discuss key industry topics. Full event information, including booking details and calls for abstracts can be found on our website at [www.globalunderwaterhub.com](http://www.globalunderwaterhub.com), where you can also sign up to receive our weekly e-newsletter.

### **Subsea Expo 2026**

4-5 February 2026 | **P&J Live, Aberdeen**

[Event page](#)

Subsea Expo is one of the world's leading subsea focused events. The annual exhibition and conference attracts thousands of delegates from around the world keen to learn about the latest developments, innovations and insights in the subsea sector and wider underwater industry.

Held over two days and free to attend, Subsea Expo features a multi-stream conference programme running alongside a large exhibition featuring around 100 companies and industry organisations, highlighting the capability of the subsea and underwater supply chain. Boasting a broad range of speakers and covering a variety of topics, the conference provides opportunities for learning and development, knowledge sharing, debate and networking.

### **Moorings and Anchors Conference & Workshop 2026**

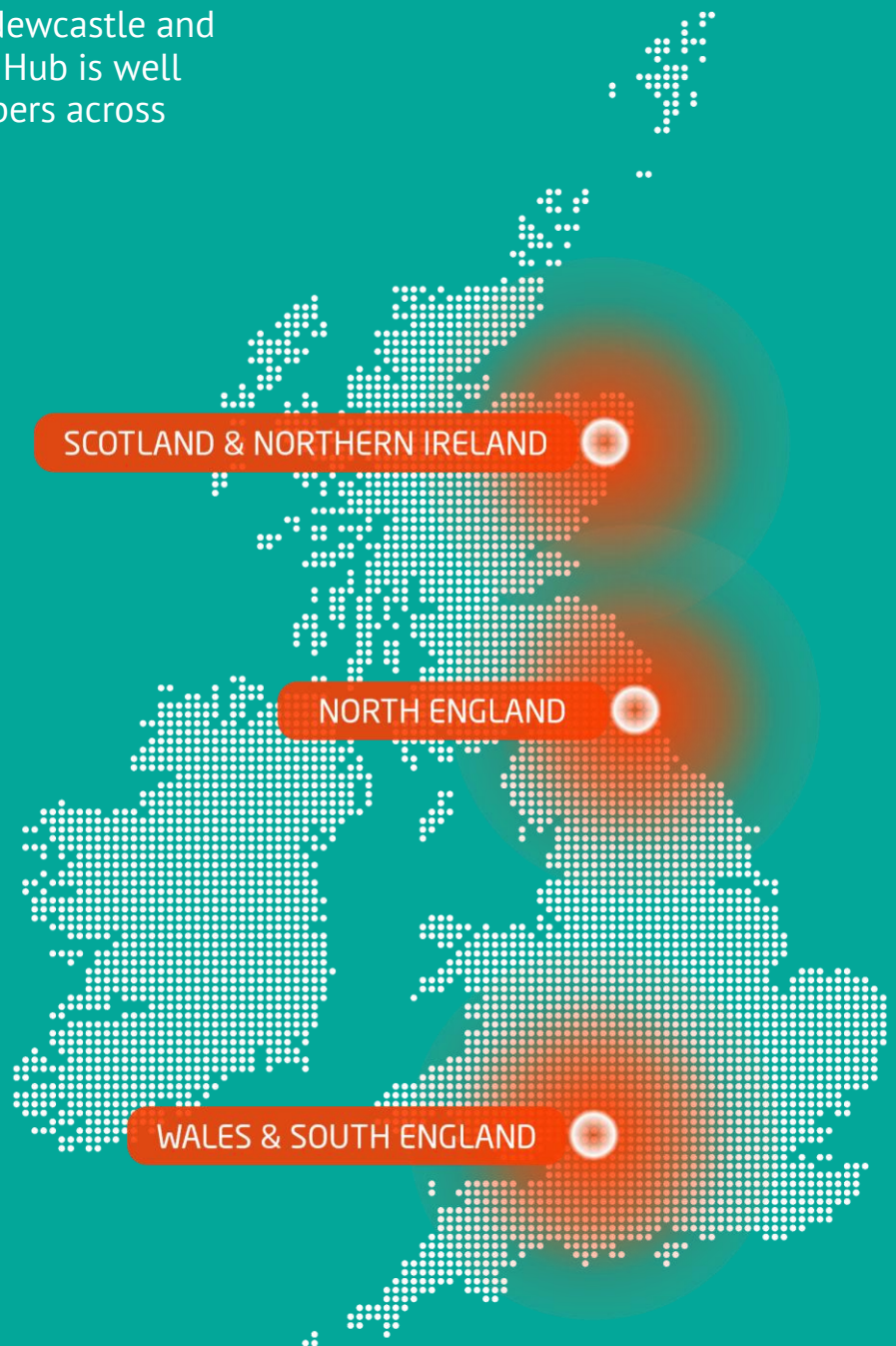
19 March 2026 | **Dynamic Earth, Edinburgh**

[Event page](#)

The third edition of this popular annual conference will provide an engaging platform for delegates to explore the key elements of the life cycle of mooring systems which are critical for offshore projects in multiple sectors.

Led and governed by industry, Global Underwater Hub is helping to transform the UK's underwater industry into one of the largest and fastest-growing industries in the country, accelerating the drive to net-zero and creating high value jobs and exports.

With offices in Aberdeen, Newcastle and Bristol, Global Underwater Hub is well placed to support its members across the United Kingdom.



Access. Connect. Grow.



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