

## Maritime Career Market: SMM mobilises talent



**At SMM, the maritime industry will highlight its appeal to the young generation.**

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The global flagship fair in September will feature the Maritime Career Market (MCM), where pupils and students can learn about many fascinating and varied training options and jobs in the maritime sector. Young talents will be able to make contact with potential employers and pave their way to their professional future.

From navigation systems used on the bridge to machinery for ship engine rooms, and through to refitting in docks, more than 2,000 exhibitors from 70 countries will show at SMM 2024 what makes the maritime industry so unique

and intriguing. This fascinating diversity is reflected in a wide range of training options and job profiles young jobseekers can learn about at the Maritime Career Market (MCM), a career platform at the flagship fair that brings together young talent and potential employers. A concept that has proved successful: This year MCM takes place for the fifth time. "We provide interested people with direct insights into various career paths in the maritime sector to support recruiting. Since this is such an important concern for the industry, we have extended the duration of this event from one to two days this year," says Claus Ulrich Selbach, Business Unit Director – Maritime and Technology Fairs & Exhibitions at Hamburg Messe und Congress.

### **Trained specialists are in short supply**

On 5 and 6 September, around 25 companies will present their employer brands to the younger generation in Hall B2. They include the likes of gearbox manufacturer Reintjes, technology company Kongsberg, yacht builders Abeking & Rasmussen, bearing and seal manufacturer SKF Marine, or propulsion specialist Baudouin, along with maritime education institutes such as Hochschule Emden/Leer. "The bottleneck that is making it difficult for companies in our industry to fill orders and deliver products to customers in a timely manner is the shortage of skilled labour. We are constantly looking for talented people and have increased our recruiting efforts," says Martin Johannsmann, Chairman of the Board, VDMA Marine Equipment and Systems, and CEO of SKF Marine.

The MCM is an opportunity for universities, enterprises and industry associations to introduce themselves and provide visitors with specific information about various professional careers. Speeches on the Career Forum stage will address current developments, such as the digital transformation and the 'greening' of the shipping sector. "Young people are especially concerned about sustainability. At this event, employers can demonstrate that the maritime industry's green transformation opens up many perspectives for them," says Selbach. What is more, all SMM exhibitors are welcome to register for the "Job Route". This makes

it easier for pupils, students and other job seekers to locate potential employers in the Visitor Guide, the online Exhibitor Directory, or the SMM app.

## **Building awareness of the importance of women in maritime**

To secure the future of the maritime industry, companies must adapt to changing expectations of younger generations. This includes overcoming stereotypes and driving diversity. "A variety of challenges are facing women in the maritime industry, such as the gender pay gap and discrimination in a traditionally male-dominated environment, to name just a few. Overcoming these inequalities is something our industry has to accomplish by working together – with the males in the sector," emphasizes Dr Gaby Bornheim, President of the German shipowners association. The industry must become aware that its future depends on diversity, she adds. "Women are roughly half of the population – no-one can make do without us." Mentoring and maintaining a constant dialogue can increase the attractiveness of the maritime industry for women, says Bornheim. Career entrant Karina Tammen from the German Maritime Centre, urges her industry to make a greater effort to inform the public about career opportunities: "There are 38 professional training options and a wide variety of academic programmes in the maritime industry – this needs to be communicated better."

## **SMM: Diverse, inclusive, inspiring**

Networking and support initiatives: This is the objective of WISTA Germany, the Women's International Shipping & Trading Association. At SMM, the WISTA network traditionally awards a prize for exceptional achievements in the maritime sector to a woman. Its aim is to support women in the shipping industry. A goal the entrepreneur Kerstin Brooks, herself a WISTA member, is firmly committed to. She calls for more women to be included in panel discussions: "There are so many conferences and panel discussions in the maritime sector, but in many cases only men participate, although there are many competent women. Our network aims to make women more visible." The

Association of Singapore Marine & Offshore Energy Industries (ASMI) is also hosting a "Diversity & Inclusion - Women in Maritime" workshop on 6 September. In a panel discussion, successful women will talk about their careers - with the aim of inspiring more young female talent to pursue a career in the maritime industry.

## **A career within easy reach**

The "Career Happy Hour" on the open stage at the upper level of Hall B2 on 5 September (17:30 to 19:30 CET) will provide the perfect ambience for relaxed networking and career planning: Over some drinks, snacks and DJ sets, company representatives will be able to engage in conversations with potential future employees. Thanks to a cooperation arrangement with the Danish Marine Group, 120 Danish students will be present at the event, among others. Furthermore, SMM is launching a special campaign on TikTok, Snapchat, Instagram and other media to make young audiences aware of the MCM. On 5 and 6 September, admission to SMM and the Maritime Career Market will be free for young talents and their accompanying instructors. The official partner of the MCM is VDI, the German Engineers Association.

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