



Socio-Oceanography Workshop 2026

Workshop information and logistics

Dates: 6,7 May 2026

Location: Royal College of Art (Rausing Building, Battersea Campus, 15 Parkgate Road, London, SW11 4NL)

SCOPE

Socio-oceanography is an emerging area of research which takes a “whole system” approach to the marine environment by explicitly factoring in human society. It focuses on the challenges which require advancement of both natural and social science components, especially on those where the feedbacks between these components are beginning to emerge.

ORGANISERS

The workshop is organised by the National Oceanography Centre (NOC) and the Royal College of Art (RCA).

CO-CONVENORS

Prof. Ashley Hall (RCA), Dr.Katya Popova (National Oceanography Centre)

SESSIONS

The 2026 Workshop will focus on three highlighted topics, aiming to bring together a diverse group of natural, social and interdisciplinary scientists and designers. Each group will work towards producing outputs such as opinion papers, funding proposals, and innovative multidisciplinary forms of communication.

Workshop Sessions

1. **Communicating ocean Tipping Points through collaborative Science–Arts practice** (Co-led by Prof.A.Hall, RCA, and Dr.K.Popova, NOC)

Using the Subpolar Gyre collapse as a scientific case study, this topic would explore how artistic interpretation, design methods, and interdisciplinary collaboration can help make abrupt ocean changes more understandable and meaningful to wider audiences.
2. **Arctic in the age of marine robotics** (Co-led by Dr.A.Marzocchi, NOC, Ms. Jacqueline Nightingale, University of Southampton and Dr. S.Sareh, Royal College of Arts)

Marine robotics is rapidly expanding into the Arctic Ocean, where it will intersect with Indigenous knowledge systems, traditional livelihoods, and established governance arrangements. How should researchers and technology developers engage respectfully with Arctic communities?

3. Vast, Vital, Invisible: Designing emotional connections to the Global Ocean Commons (co-led by Dr. A.Loveridge, NOC and Dr.E.Hodson)

The High Seas are recognised as the Common Heritage of Humankind. They cover most of the ocean and nearly half the planet, yet remain emotionally and politically distant. How can creative practice translate planetary processes into forms that resonate with lived experience and help reduce psychological distance?

ATTENDING THE EVENT

The workshop is limited to **40 participants**. The application deadline is **31 March**, and successful applicants will be notified by 3 April. Attendance is free and includes refreshments and lunch. Please note that no funding is available to support travel expenses.

REGISTRATION: <https://noc-events.co.uk/socio-oceanography-workshop-2026>

FORMAT

The workshop will be held **in person only**. Due to its interactive nature, online participation will not be possible. Each highlight topic is led by two facilitators from different disciplinary perspectives (social or natural sciences, technology, and design), working with a group of 10–15 UK-wide participants from similarly mixed backgrounds. All participants are expected to attend for the full duration of the workshop.

WEBSITE

<https://projects.noc.ac.uk/socio-oceanography/workshops>