



Sail Training International

ANNUAL REVIEW

2025

SAIL TRAINING INTERNATIONAL



CHAIRMAN'S FOREWORD

2025 has been an exceptional year, highlighted for me by a very memorable experience during this year's Tall Ships Races. Over the course of the summer, we welcomed thousands of trainees on board the fleet, and gave them the opportunity to discover resilience, teamwork, and confidence through life at sea.

I had the absolute pleasure of visiting Aberdeen during The Tall Ships Races 2025, where the warmth of the welcome and the enthusiasm of the trainees and local community were particularly inspiring. This was my first exposure to the vision of Sail Training International, which was made real after spending time with all manner of individuals during my stay, from the ships, the port, and all the support staff that make these events happen. This was a powerful reminder of the unique value of sail training and the energy it brings to every individual it touches. Which was abundantly evident during the crew parade and awards!

We are living through a period of rapid change, and young people are feeling the effects more intensely than ever. The pressures of technology, uncertainty, and shifting societal expectations mean that opportunities for real, hands-on adventure are increasingly rare. Sail training continues to fill that gap in an extraordinary way, offering space for connection, personal challenge, and shared purpose. The importance of this mission has never been clearer.

As we look ahead to 2026, and Sail Training International's 70th year, we know we must ensure that we align to the challenges of the world around us, and that we always seek to be 'future fit', so that we, as a family, are equipped to support the next generation of trainees and sail training organisations around the world. This will require clarity of purpose, strengthened partnerships, and a continued commitment to innovation in the way we operate and deliver our events.

We have firm plans in place for our future races and are already exploring opportunities with potential Host Ports through to 2029 and beyond. I look forward to meeting many of you during the coming year and at our next conference in Bordeaux.

Once again, I want to extend my sincere thanks to the volunteers, staff, funders, ships, and Host Ports whose commitment makes all of this possible.



James George
Chairman, Sail Training International



THE TALL SHIPS RACES 2025

The Tall Ships Races 2025 visited five host ports in four different countries (Le Havre, France; Dunkerque, France; Aberdeen, UK; Kristiansand, Norway; Esbjerg, Denmark) and we were delighted to see the participating fleet size return to pre-pandemic numbers.

We welcomed a total of 63 vessels from 18 different countries around the globe, all of whom contributed to giving 3,674 young people from 66 different nationalities the opportunity to go on a sailing voyage and live the experience of a lifetime. They challenged themselves, overcame their fears, learnt new skills, made new friends and celebrated their many achievements.

The 1,250 nautical mile race route delivered some challenging weather conditions, notably the arrival of Storm Floris, but also some breathtakingly beautiful stopovers along the Norwegian coastline during the Cruise-In-Company leg.

In each of the five Host Ports, we celebrated many successes both on and off the water. The final prizes were awarded during the last prize giving ceremony in Esbjerg and were given to Fryderyk Chopin (Poland), who came first overall on elapsed time and finished first overall in Class A, Pascual Flores (Spain) who finished first overall in Class B, Belfer (Poland) who came first overall in Class C and Corsaro II (Italy) who won first overall in Class D.

The most prestigious and sought after trophy of all, The Friendship Trophy, which is voted for by the captains, was awarded to Shabab Oman II. A hugely deserving win for a vessel and crew that, once again, went above and beyond to ensure that fellow participants and visitors were warmly welcomed on board - demonstrating the true essence of international friendship and understanding.



63
VESSELS

18
NATIONS

66
COUNTRIES REPRESENTED

1,250
MILES SAILED

783
HOST PORT TRAINEES

3,674
TRAINEES

5,757
TOTAL CREW

132
DECK RENTALS

1.5M +
VISITORS







B.A.P. UNION & A.R.A. LIBERTAD JOINED THE TALL SHIPS RACES FOR THE FIRST TIME

Two South American vessels made debut appearances at The Tall Ships Races in 2025.

B.A.P. Unión, the Peruvian Navy's Class A sail training vessel, and A.R.A. Libertad, Class A vessel of the Argentine Navy, joined the race fleet this year and were among over 60 vessels to delight thousands of visitors in ports across Europe.

For B.A.P. Unión, who was first commissioned in 2016 and is the largest tall ship in the Americas, this was her first time participating in The Tall Ships Races in Europe. She took part in race three from Aberdeen to Kristiansand and race four from Kristiansand to Esbjerg. She was a fantastic addition to the fleet and attracted the interest of visitors in each of the Host Ports she visited.

Whilst A.R.A. Libertad did not participate in a race leg, we were thrilled for her to join us for a guest appearance in Kristiansand, where she welcomed many visitors on board. For A.R.A. Libertad, Kristiansand was the furthest the ship had ever sailed to from her home port in Argentina.

Both ships offered generous hospitality to all those who visited them and were wonderful showcases for their countries and culture: two true floating embassies!



THE SAIL TRAINING INTERNATIONAL HOST PORT SEMINAR

This year's Host Port Seminar was held in Aberdeen during The Tall Ships Races stopover in the city and we were delighted to welcome over 60 delegates from around the world to join us in a series of sessions that were both informative and enjoyable.

The programme this year had a strong emphasis on raising awareness of sail training and making sail training and The Tall Ships Races accessible to as many young people as possible. It provided a great opportunity to encourage the sharing of ideas and strategies to highlight ways in which we can continue to improve the success of The Tall Ships Races.

Attendees had the opportunity to experience the organisation of Aberdeen's hugely successful event first-hand and to hear details of their approach and delivery of The Tall Ships Races.

We would like to give a special mention and thanks to The Tall Ships Races 2025 Aberdeen team, for hosting this event for the day, to all the speakers and also to all those who made the effort of attending the seminar.

We are delighted to confirm that in 2026, the Host Port Seminar will take place in Stavanger on 24th July, during The Tall Ships Races 2026 stopover. It will coincide with celebrations for the 70th Anniversary of The Tall Ships Races – we very much look forward to welcoming you all there!



OMAN VOYAGE 2025

A VERY SPECIAL INTERNATIONAL SAIL TRAINING VOYAGE ON BOARD SHABAB OMAN II, HOSTED BY THE ROYAL NAVY OF OMAN

In November, 20 trainees from around the world embarked on a rare and unforgettable adventure. The 20 young people were selected out of more than 200 applicants to take part in a unique cultural and maritime experience.

Upon arrival in the Sultanate of Oman, the trainees were warmly welcomed by the crew of Shabab Oman II and quickly adapted to life at sea.

They were joined on the voyage by Phoebe Leach, a Sail Training International Youth Council representative, who served as an inspiring mentor throughout the voyage.

The first few days were filled with hands-on learning: mastering knots, chartwork lessons, climbing the masts to the second platforms, boat rides, ship tours and essential safety drills such as anchoring and man-overboard procedures.

After participating in a historic fleet review, the trainees set sail on a four-day voyage from Muscat to the northern port of Khasab. There, they immersed themselves in local culture, explored Khasab's rich history, and enjoyed endless games of beach volleyball. While anchored, they honed seamanship skills - splicing ropes, attending fire safety lectures, mastering lines, setting sails and climbing even higher.

As friendships blossomed and teamwork strengthened, the group returned to Muscat for a deeper dive into Omani culture.

Representatives from Sail Training International had the privilege of travelling to Oman to join the trainees on completion of their sea voyage.

Upon arrival in Muscat, James George, Chair of Trustees, was delighted to renew the Oman Bursary Agreement with the Royal Navy of Oman (RNO) for another five years. Accompanied by Vanessa Mori, Deputy CEO, Magda Makowska, Race Director, and Abi Haywood, Digital Marketing Executive, the team were warmly welcomed to the RNO Headquarters by Commodore Ali Al Hosni and Rear Admiral Saif bin Nasser Al Rahbi, Commander of the Royal Navy of Oman.



The visit to the RNO headquarters, was followed by a magical evening at the historic Al Mirani Fort, held in honour of the award of the 2025 Sultan Qaboos Trophy. During the ceremony the Sail Training International team was joined by representatives of the winners of the Sultan Qaboos 2025 Trophy: Tall Ships Aberdeen.

'Aberdeen was chosen for this award because they embraced the values that sit at the heart of the Sultan Qaboos Trophy: youth development, international friendship, and a genuine commitment to opening the world of sail training to all. They showed what is possible when a Host Port leans fully into the purpose - not just the spectacle - of The Tall Ships Races.

For the first time since the trophy was established in 2011, it is being awarded to a Host Port team. A powerful message that when a city steps forward with vision, partnership, and heart, extraordinary things can happen.

To our friends and colleagues from Aberdeen - you set a new benchmark. Your work changed lives. You honoured the values of His late Majesty (Sultan Qaboos). And you reminded all of us what sail training is truly about.'

- James George, Chair of Trustees of Sail Training International

The trophy was presented by His Highness Sayyid Harib Bin Thuwaini Al Said and was followed by a sumptuous banquet.



The adventure didn't end there. After celebrations in Muscat, the group travelled to Nizwa, where they explored the famous Friday souq, visited Nizwa Fort, sampled traditional Omani cuisine, and even stargazed under the starry sky.

It was heartwarming to see just how powerful the impact of the experience had been on all participants and when the team caught up with them here is what they said:

"A once-in-a-lifetime experience."

"I learned so much - sailing is very different from ship to ship."

"I've never been more happy that I did this."

"I'm extremely glad I did this."

"The best thing was sharing time and this experience with these people from around the world."

"Just do it! That's what I did, and it has changed my life forever!"

"The best part of the whole adventure? It's so hard to answer! The sailing was really cool. I think I've made friends for life and I hope to sail with them again."

"It's always special to be in an international community, getting to know so many people from different countries!"

Sail Training International is extremely grateful to the Royal Navy of Oman for their continued support and generosity in making this amazing experience possible. Our special thanks to the Captain and crew of Shabab Oman II, who through their dedication, kindness and commitment to sail training, supported these young people and allowed them to have an experience which they will never forget.

BURSARIES AND FUNDING OVERVIEW

2025 saw another successful year for delivering a wide range of bursaries and funding that supported the delivery of sail training across the world. Over £57,000 in funds were provided through the Oman Bursary Scheme, the Youth Development Fund and the Canada Legacy Fund. These funds have provided opportunities for youth from across the globe, to participate in a life changing sail training experience. These funds provide an additional pathway for youth to engage with sail training, who may not be able to participate without this support.

FUNDING IN 2025

29 BURSARIES WERE AWARDED THROUGH THE OMAN BURSARY SCHEME

9 NATIONALITIES FROM 10 COUNTRIES WERE REPRESENTED BY THE YOUNG PEOPLE WHO TOOK PART IN THE TALL SHIPS RACES 2025 THROUGH BURSARY FUNDING

7 MAJOR PROJECTS WERE FUNDED THROUGH THE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT FUND AND THE CANADA LEGACY FUND

250 YOUNG PEOPLE TOOK PART IN THE VARIOUS PROJECTS FUNDED BY THE CANADA LEGACY FUND AND THE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT FUND

We would like to extend our thanks to the Royal Navy of Oman, whose generosity has made the Oman Bursary Fund and Youth Development Fund possible. Their continued support means we are able to bring the transformative experience of sail training to young people around the world.



PROJECT FUNDING

The Canada Legacy Fund and the Youth Development Fund support innovative and meaningful sail training projects around the world. These funds are provided to support the development of more effective sail training programmes for young people, helping them build essential life skills such as resilience, teamwork and confidence through an adventure at sea. In 2025 approximately £38,000 was provided to support these amazing programmes, continuing our commitment to supporting sail training across the globe.

If you know of, or are part of, an organisation delivering sail training projects that would benefit from these funds, we warmly welcome all applications and encourage you to get in touch!



YOUTH DEVELOPMENT FUNDED PROJECTS

- **The Excelsior Trust:** The 'Harbouring Potential' programme is designed to introduce disadvantaged young people to the maritime industry through sail training experiences. The programme offers a holistic approach to empower participants and foster community involvement. It aims to provide a pathway to maritime careers and equip disadvantaged youth with essential skills to open new opportunities within the maritime industry for future volunteering and employment opportunities.
- **FECAMP:** This programme offers the opportunity for youth to join the association and actively contribute to the project alongside the employees. Participants will assist in setting up the project and in doing so will learn how associations work, as well as how to take initiative, set up a project, and look for partners. This holistic approach will target local working and disadvantaged youth who wouldn't be able to take this opportunity themselves.
- **ISPA Japan:** This cultural exchange programme aims to develop young people who are self-sufficient and have the leadership and cooperative skills to thrive in the international community. The programme is offered to a group of young people from different cultural backgrounds and provides not only sail training but also opportunities to learn about the challenges of international society and the diversity of people with different values through exchange programmes such as discussions on various issues that take place during the programme period.
- **MTU Sail United:** This programme focused on creating a supportive and inclusive environment for young adults with ADHD through sail training. Participants engaged in structured sailing activities that encourage teamwork, trust, and fast decision-making, which play to the strengths of those with ADHD. The watch system whilst sailing introduces a balance between work and rest, helping participants practice structured living whilst building trust and teamwork.

CANADA LEGACY FUNDED PROJECTS

- **Nova Scotia Sea School:** This programme offered opportunities for youth affiliated with ISANS and other newcomer services; many of whom were refugees from Syria, Lebanon, Africa and Ukraine, an opportunity to engage with ocean literacy and maritime heritage and experience a strong sense of community which aimed to build their identity as Maritimers. In addition to building leadership skills, this programme opens doors to career opportunities within Atlantic Canada's Blue Economy.
- **Gimili Yacht Club:** This programme engaged less represented demographics in sailing by offering free sailing classes. The 'Learn to Sail' programme provides a recreational activity in a rural area that might have fewer opportunities for youth than in larger, urban environments.
- **Bytown Brigantine Inc:** This programme was designed to empower at-risk youth by blending maritime skills training, leadership development, and career exploration. Through this initiative, participants developed confidence, resilience, and technical skills, preparing them for future job and educational opportunities.

SAIL TRAINING RESEARCH

"Research is creating new knowledge." – Neil Armstrong

In the 2024-2025 year, Sail Training International continued to support a wide range of research projects from across the globe. Approximately £20,000 was awarded to projects covering topics such as maritime heritage, sustainability and the impacts of youth programmes.

Proposed research programmes are reviewed by a working group of experienced representatives from the sail training community including a member of the Sail Training International Youth Council and are funded based on their capacity to:

- Demonstrate the effectiveness of a sail training programme,
- Identify new and innovative outcomes of sail training programmes,
- Enhance the development and understanding of maritime heritage,
- And/or offer greater understanding of the impact of sail training activities on the environment.

"Nothing has such power to broaden the mind as the ability to investigate systematically and truly all that comes under thy observation in life." - Emperor Marcus Aurelius

In 2024-2025 the following projects were funded:

- Norway – A case study into how sail training can shape sustainable mindsets.
- Norway – Can sail training serve as a sustainable model within tourism and recreation?
- Hungary – Enhancing the development and understanding of maritime heritage.
- Finland – Investigation of microplastics in the Baltic Sea.
- United Kingdom – Impact of research protocols for STEAM education in sail training.

The final reports from these projects are made available on the Sail Training International website as part of the growing research library.

"The goal is to transform data into information, and information into insight." - Carly Fiorina, former CEO of Hewlett-Packard.

In 2025-2026 Sail Training International aims to support a further £10,000 in research funding.



SAIL TRAINING INTERNATIONAL YOUTH COUNCIL PROJECTS

This year has been a period of real momentum for the Sail Training International Youth Council, with several new initiatives launched and existing projects taken to the next stage. One of our standout achievements has been the launch of The Next Watch, our new youth-led newsletter created to keep trainees inspired and connected beyond the sailing season. Two editions were released after The Tall Ships Races, featuring interviews, opportunities, and even practical skills like knot-tying to keep sailing alive in the off-season. Though still young, the newsletter has already begun building a steady audience and shows strong potential for growth in the year ahead.



Work has also continued on the development of the Seafair programme, in partnership with Workforce Warriors and Miawpukek Horizons. Building on last year's successful pilot, discussions this autumn have explored the possibility of using a marine science vessel as the platform for a new day-long experiential voyage. Recent conversations with the vessel's lead scientist, Bertrand Cherry, demonstrated real enthusiasm, though both partners recognise that a full-scale relaunch may be better suited to 2026 as the programme matures.

Alongside this, the Youth Council has been preparing to launch a new training bursary, aimed at helping 18–25-year-olds overcome financial barriers to progressing within the sail training sector. The bursary will support young volunteers and aspiring sail trainers in gaining essential qualifications, from tender-driving to first aid. Set to open in early January, it represents a significant step toward making the pathway into sail training more accessible, and we would greatly appreciate support in spreading the word once it goes live.

Finally, this year marked the first time that Youth Council representation was embedded within the Sail Training International race team at every Host Port during The Tall Ships Races. Our representatives, Abbey (Canada), Francesca (USA), Phoebe (UK), Jonas (Belgium), and Eline (Norway), supported the Host Port events, contributed to media work, and delivered speeches at each port's prize-giving ceremony. Their presence brought youth voices to the heart of the event and showcased the leadership, energy, and commitment that young people continue to bring to sail training worldwide.

Overall, the year has strengthened the Youth Council's role within Sail Training International and laid exciting groundwork for 2025 and beyond.

MARKET RESEARCH - KEY INSIGHTS

In 2025, Sail Training International commissioned its first focused market research project, with the aim of achieving the following objectives:

- To measure the awareness and perception of The Tall Ships Races and Sail Training International
- To identify motivations and barriers for participation
- To recommend strategic actions to increase awareness and participation

THE FINDINGS

The results validated some of our instincts and highlighted exciting opportunities which will not only strengthen our messaging, but inform our strategic direction going forward.

Whilst the study was UK focused, we believe that the data is largely applicable to the attitudes and behaviours of young people and their caregivers in European countries and beyond.



Here are some of the highlights:

- Sail Training International brand awareness was low in comparison to other experience/activity providers.
- Travel, learning new skills, challenging themselves and meeting new people are strong drivers for young people's engagement.
- TikTok, Instagram and YouTube are the platforms of choice for young people for information gathering.
- Costs, finances and funding are a significant factor/concern.

What is working in Sail Training International's favour:

- The target audience is motivated to engage in experiences where they can learn new skills.
- Word of mouth is key – shared experiences are powerful.
- Young people are enthusiastic and their parents are encouraging.



IT'S NOT THAT PEOPLE AREN'T INTERESTED, THEY JUST SIMPLY AREN'T AWARE OF THE POSSIBILITIES.

Based on these data driven insights, we are now able to make more informed decisions regarding our communications strategy, to not only capture the attention of young people, but to deliver the information that they need simply and effectively.

We look forward to sharing the full findings of the study and to working together with you, our stakeholders, to raise awareness of sail training and The Tall Ships Races amongst young people globally.

**TO VIEW THE FULL MARKET
RESEARCH STUDY, SCAN
THIS QR CODE:**



TESTIMONIALS

'WHAT DID I EXPECT FROM THE TALL SHIPS RACES? ADVENTURE, WIND IN MY FACE, AND SAILS FULL OF STORIES. WHAT I GOT WAS EVEN BETTER. NEW FRIENDSHIPS AND UNFORGETTABLE MOMENTS, AND THE FEELING OF TRULY BEING ALIVE AT SEA!'



'SAILING IN THE TALL SHIPS RACES HAD A POSITIVE EFFECT ON MY MENTAL HEALTH, BECAUSE IT ALLOWED ME TO DISCONNECT FROM EVERYDAY STRESS AND FOCUS ON THE PRESENT MOMENT. THE RHYTHM OF LIFE AT SEA, SURROUNDED BY FRESH AIR AND OPEN WATER, BROUGHT A CALMING SENSE OF PEACE. WORKING AS PART OF A CREW GAVE ME PURPOSE, BELONGING, AND A SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT. ALTOGETHER, THE EXPERIENCE BOOSTED MY CONFIDENCE, REDUCED ANXIETY, AND LEFT ME FEELING HAPPIER AND MORE BALANCED.'

'GET READY TO EXPERIENCE ONE OF YOUR MOST BEAUTIFUL ADVENTURES, YOU ARE GOING TO BOARD ONE OF THE LARGEST SAILBOATS IN THE WORLD. GET READY TO DISCOVER MANY THINGS, MANY PEOPLE AND ESPECIALLY TO WANT TO DO IT AGAIN THE FOLLOWING YEAR.'

'I WAS UNBELIEVABLY LUCKY TO TAKE PART IN THE TALL SHIPS RACES THIS YEAR, AND I DON'T THINK I COULD EVER HAVE ENOUGH WORDS TO EXPLAIN HOW LIFE CHANGING IT WAS FOR ME. I WOULD DEFINITELY RECOMMEND IT TO MY FRIENDS, AS I BELIEVE AS MANY PEOPLE AS POSSIBLE SHOULD HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO FIND THEMSELVES ON THIS CHARACTER BUILDING ADVENTURE.'



'I LEARNED HOW IMPORTANT IT IS TO WORK AS A TEAM IN A TOTALLY UNFAMILIAR ENVIRONMENT. I ALSO DISCOVERED THE VALUE OF COMMUNICATION, ADAPTABILITY, AND MUTUAL RESPECT WHEN LIVING TOGETHER IN A SMALL SPACE FOR AN EXTENDED PERIOD.'

'THE MOST REWARDING PART OF THE EXPERIENCE WAS THE DEEP SENSE OF CAMARADERIE THAT DEVELOPED AMONG THE CREW. WE CAME FROM DIFFERENT BACKGROUNDS BUT WORKED TOGETHER AS ONE TEAM, CREATING UNFORGETTABLE MEMORIES AND FRIENDSHIPS THAT I WILL CHERISH FOR A LIFETIME.'



'THE FEELING OF CLIMBING THE MASTS, STEERING IN THE WIND, BRACING THE SAILS IS SOMETHING REALLY HARD TO DESCRIBE: IT EMPOWERS ME AND MAKES ME FEEL FREE AND HAPPY. THANKS FOR MAKING IT POSSIBLE.'

'IT'S AN EXPERIENCE THAT BRINGS OUT THE BEST IN YOU. ON TOP OF THAT, IT'S INCREDIBLY FUN - YOU GET TO MEET PEOPLE WHO ARE ALL DIFFERENT AND FULL OF STORIES, AND IF YOU LOVE THE SEA AND SAILING, THE CHANCE TO SAIL ON SUCH STUNNING TALL SHIPS IS SIMPLY UNMISSABLE.'



THE TALL SHIPS RACES 2026



The Tall Ships Races 2026 is set to return to Northern Europe calling at five experienced and consistently successful Host Ports including Aarhus, Denmark; Harlingen, The Netherlands; Antwerp, Belgium; Stavanger, Norway; and Aalborg, Denmark.

The series will offer three exciting and challenging race legs and a scenic Cruise-in-Company leg. With each Host Port having hosted several magnificent events during previous editions of The Tall Ships Races, there is sure to be a stunning reception for the fleet at every stop.

"Between them, all ports have hosted over 20 editions of The Tall Ships Races. With this rich and storied legacy, we are confident they will all once again welcome the tall ships fleet with a spirit of adventure, and a commitment to our core values of youth development, and international friendship and understanding.

Each edition of the event presents a truly unique opportunity for young people from around the world to do something amazing as they rise to challenges, overcome fears, build new friendships, and enjoy the adventure of a lifetime. We are sure that each Host Port will once again deliver some world-class celebrations to perfectly compliment this lifechanging experience."

Alan James,
Chief Executive Officer (Sail Training International & TSRIL)



Aarhus:
24 - 27 June



Harlingen:
3 - 6 July



Antwerp:
11 - 14 July



Stavanger:
22 - 25 July

BALTIC



Aalborg:
30 July -
2 August



THE TALL SHIPS RACES 2027



Looking further ahead, plans are in motion for The Tall Ships Races 2027. Host Port representatives from the three confirmed host cities, and the Sail Training International team met in October in Lisbon for a joint Host Port meeting. This event saw an exciting and productive exchange of ideas and marked the start of an active collaboration between all participants to ensure that in 2027 The Tall Ships Races will deliver another remarkable series of events.

We are excited to welcome back A Coruña as one of our most experienced Host Ports, which has already hosted The Tall Ships Races ten times and is one of Sail Training International's Anchor Ports. A Coruña has consistently delivered fabulous tall ships race events and we look forward to the return of the fleet to this welcoming city in Northern Spain.

Bordeaux last welcomed the fleet in 2018 on the occasion of the Three Festival Regatta and plans are already well underway to ensure an unforgettable stop over for participating vessels, their crews, captains and trainees.

Whilst Sines was a major port of the RDV Regatta in 2017, this will be their first time as a Tall Ships Races Host Port and we are very much looking forward to working with them to ensure a warm Portuguese welcome to all participating vessels.

Discussions are ongoing with a potential fourth Host Port for the 2027 race series and we hope to be able to share some good news soon.

"We are very much looking forward to working with the local organising teams, to ensure that each of the Host Ports will offer a unique experience to participating vessels and their crews. Each of the Host Ports is fully committed to making participation to their in-port event attractive to vessels and trainees alike and are looking forward to discussing opportunities during the conference".

Vanessa Mori,
Deputy CEO & Commercial Director

ARMADA ROUEN
STI Endorsed Event
17 - 27 June



Bordeaux:
8 - 11 July



A Coruña:
16 - 19 July



Sines:
29 July -
1 August



THE TALL SHIPS RACES 2028



2028 will see a return of The Tall Ships Races to the Baltic Sea and we are very much looking forward to working with the Host Ports to ensure another spectacular event in this popular sea area.

We are excited to welcome Kiel to The Tall Ships Races for the first time; to working with Tallinn again after their hugely successful event in 2024 and of course with the very experienced teams in Turku (Anchor Port) and Szczecin – all of whom are certain to deliver a truly world class event.

“The race comprises of two extended passages and a relaxing Cruise-in-Company, which will take the fleet through the breathtaking Finnish archipelago to Tallinn Bay, guaranteed to be a race highlight. Although a challenging race route in terms of race leg duration, this course provides the chance for young people to experience everything that the Baltic Sea has to offer.”

Magda Makowska, Race Director



Kiel:
22 - 25 June



Turku:
6 - 9 July



Tallinn:
12 - 15 July



Szczecin:
22 - 25 July

BIDDING PROCESS FOR 2029

In 2029, The Tall Ships Races will be sailing in the Western Approaches Sea area.

The deadline for bid submissions from cities interested in becoming Host Ports is: 30th January 2026. We are excited to have received letters of intent from both new cities and some very experienced ones.

We hope that we will be able to announce which cities have been successful, along with the racecourse in the coming weeks.

Any cities interested in learning more about the bid process, please contact Vanessa Mori, by emailing:

Vanessa.mori@sailtraininginternational.org

WELCOME TO THE TEAM



SAM LEONARD
HEAD OF MARKETING

Sam first joined the team as a Marketing Consultant in 2023 and took on the role of Head of Marketing for Sail Training International at the beginning of 2025.

An experienced marketer, with extensive experience working in the maritime industry Sam very quickly embraced Sail Training International's mission and is passionate about making it possible for as many young people as possible to experience growth and development through the sail training experience.

Sam was Media Manager in port during The Tall Ships Races 2025 and enjoyed talking to young trainees to better understand what the experience of The Tall Ships Races meant to each of them. Able to think strategically, she is leading on an awareness strategy to raise the profile of sail training and The Tall Ships Races among young people and their parents, with many exciting plans for the coming year. This will include, planning an exciting programme of events to celebrate the 70th anniversary of The Tall Ships Races in 2026.

Sam has been responsible for streamlining the Sail Training International website to ensure clarity of messaging and navigation. She has introduced a hugely popular facility for stakeholders to directly download images from the website and has also made great progress in streamlining and maximising some of Sail Training International's asset management.



ABI HAYWOOD
DIGITAL MARKETING EXECUTIVE

Abi joined the team in February 2025 in the role of Digital Marketing Executive, and she has very quickly become an integral member of our small staff team.

Abi experienced her first Tall Ships Races in 2025 and very quickly embraced the spirit of sail training. With her fresh approach to event communications, she has played a key part in our increased engagement with stakeholders during our events and beyond. Abi has both increased and improved our social media presence.

Abi is highly skilled in design and has taken on the responsibility for the creation of our race paraphernalia and some of our other assets.

She will be Media Manager in some of The Tall Ships Races Host Ports going forward and is looking forward to working with the local teams to ensure their best possible marketing and communications.



HOLLIE WEATHERHEAD
COMMERCIAL EXECUTIVE

We were excited to welcome Hollie Weatherhead to the team in November 2025.

We first met Hollie as part of The Tall Ships Races 2025 Aberdeen team, where as Project and Events Officer, she played a key role in the success of the Aberdeen Event and was specifically responsible for their extremely successful Trainee Programme. We are therefore delighted that Hollie has decided to join our team.

She is passionate about sail training and its benefits to young people and will be working very closely with the Commercial Director in supporting Host Ports in every stage of planning for their Tall Ships Races Events.

Hollie brings an abundance of enthusiasm and energy to the role, and we are all very much looking forward to working with her.



A NEW CHAPTER

The Sail Training International Youth Council is pleased to announce a transition in leadership this year. After completing his term as Chairperson, Jack Dignan (United Kingdom) has handed the role to Abbey Stroud (Canada), with Jonas Willems (Belgium) stepping into the newly established position of Vice Chair.

Abbey, formerly the Council's Treasurer and Canadian Representative, brings a deep passion for youth development shaped by her early experiences as a deckhand aboard schooner Bluenose II in Nova Scotia. Her work in governance and policy roles across Canadian sail training organisations has strengthened her commitment to helping young people access the sea. Abbey looks forward to building on the work of past representatives, empowering trainees, and expanding opportunities for young people to experience the "transformative power of sail training," fostering a more connected and inclusive global community.



Jonas, who has represented Belgium on the Youth Council for the past four years, steps into the role of Vice Chair with equal enthusiasm. He describes the Youth Council as a place that has "done a lot of good work for young people interested in sailing, both during The Tall Ships Races and beyond," and he is eager to work with Abbey and the wider representatives, to broaden outreach so that even more young people can explore the world under sail.



Reflecting on the transition, outgoing Chair Jack Dignan shared that leading the Youth Council since 2020 has been "a huge privilege," noting the two major online conferences during the COVID pandemic led by youth representatives from around the world, the strengthening of the Youth Council involvement in The Tall Ships Races, and the many inspiring projects developed by representatives from around the world. Jack added that the Youth Council is "in very safe hands with Abbey and Jonas," and that he looks forward to watching the next chapter of the Council unfold and seeing the projects they will lead in the years ahead.

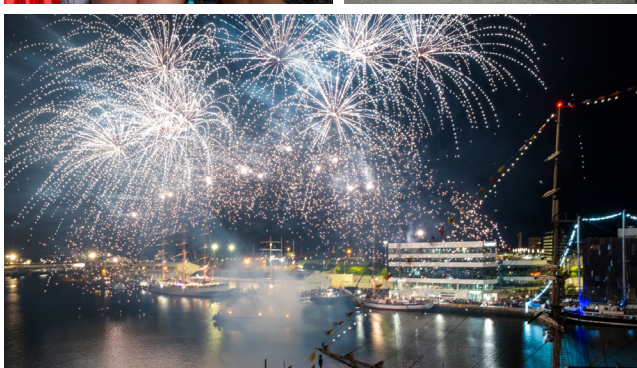
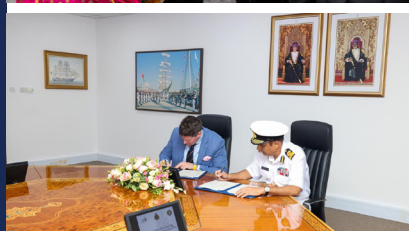
Together, Abbey and Jonas will guide the Youth Council's efforts to broaden youth participation across Sail Training International programmes, support youth-led initiatives, and encourage cross-cultural engagement throughout the global sail training community.

The Sail Training International community is warmly invited to welcome Abbey and Jonas as they begin their terms and continue shaping the future of youth involvement in sail training.

For further information or to connect with the Sail Training International Youth Council, please contact:

stiyyc@sailtraininginternational.org.





***"IT TAUGHT ME THAT
TRUE PROGRESS
COMES FROM
COOPERATION, NOT
INDIVIDUAL EFFORT.
THIS LESSON WILL
STAY WITH ME FAR
BEYOND THE SHIP!"***

- WOJCIECH (AGE 19)

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