



## AGENDA

### ICOMIA + IFBSO Diversity Committee Session

#### Waves of Change

Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> May 2026, 15:30 – 16:30 EDT

Algonquian, InterContinental Hotel, The Wharf, Washington DC

<https://teams.microsoft.com/meet/364445207995125?p=Jfelx2SrnKO7SVn2By>

Meeting ID: 364 445 207 995 125

Passcode: zV9vy6ri

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#### Wave of Change: Attracting Talent to the Marine Industry

The marine industry faces a defining challenge: how do we attract the next generation of diverse talent — and ensure our businesses, events, and associations are places where young people see a future?

This session combines short, high-impact speaker stories with an interactive audience workshop and a true panel discussion. The objective is not only to explore why the challenge exists, but to co-create realistic actions that organisations can take forward.

A study has shown that 75% of the global workforce will be Millennial or Gen Z within a decade. And yet many young people do not see themselves represented in the marine industry — or are simply unaware that it offers meaningful careers. This session puts that challenge on the table and asks participants to help solve it.

Expect an energetic, interactive hour: three panellists share personal stories in Pecha Kucha format, a moderated discussion unpacks the barriers, and a structured workshop — powered by Slido — invites every person in the room to contribute ideas and commit to actions they can implement within 12 months.

#### Panellists

*Aymee Sinclair | The Magenta Project*

Aymee Sinclair is a leading voice on inclusion in sailing and the wider marine industry. Through her work with The Magenta Project — an organisation dedicated to creating pathways for women in offshore sailing — she has championed access, visibility, and structural change at the highest levels of the sport. Aymee brings both personal experience and advocacy expertise to the conversation about what it takes to make the marine world genuinely welcoming to new talent.

*James Spear | SUNY Maritime College*

James Spear is the Director of Professional Mariner Training at SUNY Maritime College and an experienced maritime professional with a background spanning shipping, energy, and sustainability. Having worked with Shell, ExxonMobil, and Cheniere Energy, he now focuses on preparing future maritime professionals through education, training, and industry leadership.

*Sharah Connor | Mahogany Yacht Charters*

Sharah Connor is the COO and Managing Partner of Mahogany Yacht Charters, a Washington, D.C.-based luxury charter company focused on expanding access, representation, and community within the maritime industry. Since co-founding the company in 2022, she has become a strong advocate for diversity and inclusion, helping create greater visibility for Black women in boating and marine careers.

## **Moderators**

*Patricia Becker | Metstrade & Superyacht Forum*

Patricia Becker is an experienced exhibition and events professional. In her role as Exhibition Manager Metstrade and Conference Manager Superyacht Forum, she leads complex trade shows and stakeholder programmes, working closely with industry leaders, associations, and global partners to deliver high-impact platforms for collaboration and innovation.

As Co-Chair of the IFBSO / ICOMIA Diversity Committee, Patricia is committed to advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion across the global leisure marine sector. She actively champions practical initiatives that promote broader representation, inclusive leadership, and long-term cultural change not only the industry but also in her private life. With her passion for helping people forward, Patricia brings both operational expertise and a values-driven approach to her committee work, helping to shape a more inclusive and future-focused industry.

*Sarah Walbank | August Race*

Sarah Wallbank is an executive-level business founder and board member with extensive experience in launching products and building international distribution networks through August Race, the company she co-founded. This network now spans six continents and includes many of the marine industry's most significant distribution partners.

In 2026, Sarah was awarded a Fellowship by the Chartered Institute of Export & International Trade, the highest honour bestowed by the Royal Charter institute, and has previously received the British Marine David Coleman Award for Excellence in Exporting. She serves as Chair of British Marine South West, representing the region at the British Marine Council, where she has championed inclusion initiatives and represented member companies at UK government level.

As CEO of August Race, Sarah has also led an international environmental campaign promoting MARPOL Annex V compliance across the leisure marine industry. She is delighted to step into the co-Chair role alongside Patricia Becker and looks forward to driving real-world change through the committee's work.