



Call for Abstracts

Submission Guidance

#SMIConvention27

SMI Convention 2027 Overview

Venue:

Titanic Hotel/ Rum Warehouse Event Venue, Liverpool

Format:

- Monday 1 March – Welcome Evening – innovation speed pitch and networking event
- Tuesday 2 March – SMI Conference 0900-1700, SMI Conference Gala Dinner 1900-2300
- Wednesday 3 March – Visits to local maritime sites – all TBC

Conference Title

Rebuilding Britain's Maritime Advantage: Creating Growth, Strengthening Security and Building Industrial Capability

The overall theme for 2027 is growth, investment and re-industrialisation. The UK is asking how it rebuilds industrial capability, and maritime has a direct answer. Across the day we want to show what is already working, where the opportunities sit, and how civil and defence capability, major programmes and the wider supply chain can be joined up more effectively.

The four themes for the daytime conference will be:

Growth, Investment & Reindustrialisation

How maritime contributes to the Government's growth mission, industrial strategy and regional economic development, and what conditions are required to unlock further investment in industrial capability.

Delivery of the Shipbuilding & Maritime Technology Action Plan

What the emerging National Shipbuilding Office agenda means for industry in practice.

Note that this session will not be open to abstracts.

Industry-Led Growth in Practice: Innovating While Delivering

How UK companies are winning work now whilst preparing for what comes next.

Security, Sovereign Capability & Resilience

The industrial base required to support national security and critical maritime infrastructure.

What We're Looking For

Abstracts suitable for delivery as a 10-minute presentation (with or without slides) and the ability to join a panel with other session participants at the end of the session. The panel will be open to audience Q&A.

Key areas of interest per session are outlined on the following page.

1: Growth, Investment & Reindustrialisation

This session is about the conditions for investment in UK maritime industrial capability. What makes a case stack up, what makes it hard, and where the benefit lands.

The session opens with three organisations that have recently committed capital to UK shipbuilding, ship repair and vessel operation. Two speaking slots are open to abstracts, with the possibility of a further place on the closing panel. Because the openers are all companies investing in their own capability, we are looking for submissions that see the question from elsewhere in the system: ports, supply chain companies, investors, skills providers etc.

We are looking for specifics: a decision that was taken, what informed it, and what has happened since, pitched at whatever level of detail your organisation is comfortable discussing publicly. Submissions that set out the sector's importance in general terms are unlikely to be selected, and those concerned with commercial strategy or winning work are better suited to Industry-Led Growth in Practice.

As a framing question:

'What would need to change for your organisation to commit significantly more investment to UK maritime over the next five years?'

2: Industry-Led Growth in Practice: Innovating While Delivering

SMI invites abstracts from companies that are successfully adopting new technologies, manufacturing techniques or ways of working to improve competitiveness. We are particularly interested in examples that demonstrate how innovation, technology adoption and new ways of working are helping maritime businesses increase capacity, improve productivity, strengthen competitiveness and secure opportunities across commercial, defence and export markets.

Submissions could consider:

- What challenge or opportunity prompted the change.
- The technologies or approaches adopted and why they were selected.
- How the investment decision was made.
- The impact on productivity, cost, margins, workforce utilisation or business growth.
- Whether the approach has helped secure new work in commercial or defence markets.
- How the approach has strengthened the organisation's competitiveness in international markets, supported export growth, or helped secure contracts overseas.
- Lessons learned and what the organisation plans to do next.
- Assuming no additional government funding, grants or intervention were available, how would the organisation grow over the next five years, and what role would technology adoption, productivity improvements and commercial strategy play in achieving that growth?

3: Security, Sovereign Capability & Resilience

We are particularly interested in submissions that look beyond the platform. Sovereign capability is most often discussed in terms of shipbuilding, dockyards and prime contracts, but the ability to build, sustain and operate also rests on other aspects such as manufacturing capacity, energy supply and data infrastructure. Much of that capability sits across a wide supplier base, including smaller companies whose contribution is not always visible in the national conversation.

Abstracts in this section might address the industrial inputs the fleet depends on, the resilience of those supply chains under sustained pressure, or the capabilities a future force will require that are not yet being planned for. We welcome submissions from companies and organisations that do not consider themselves traditional naval suppliers.

We are looking for evidence and argument of how commercial success provides resilience , rather than capability overviews. The strongest submissions will identify a specific dependency, gap or opportunity, and set out what should be done about it.

Speaker Selection Criteria

Preference will be given to abstracts where tangible opportunities are presented and where knowledge transfer can take place. We are not looking for product and service pitches. If your submission would only make sense as a slide deck about your offer, it is not right for this call for abstracts.

After reviewing the submissions, speakers may be invited to present or be on a panel. In addition to the above topic specific criteria, proposals will be reviewed and scored based on the following criteria:

- Membership of SMI
- Relevance and originality of topic in relation to the conference themes
- Demonstrated thought leadership or technical expertise
- Diversity of voice, including representation across age, ethnicity, and gender
- Seniority and influence, with a preference for those shaping industry direction

How to Apply

Please submit your speaker proposal by 16 October 2026, including:

- Name, role, and organisation
- Proposed presentation title and 150-word abstract
- Short professional biography (max 150 words)
- Indication of which theme(s) your presentation addresses

Send your submission to info@maritimeindustries.org.

Subject line: SMI Annual Conference 2027 – Speaker Proposal.