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The Port of Barcelona and Tech Barcelona launch BlueTechPort, the blue economy innovation hub

- **BlueTechPort is integrated into the Tech Barcelona ecosystem and will host companies interested in innovating in the blue economy, using the Port of Barcelona as a sandbox.**

- **The project is the embryo of the future space that the Port of Barcelona will open in the sheds on Sant Bertran wharf to host initiatives related to innovation and recruiting and training talent.**

Today the Port of Barcelona and Tech Barcelona launched BlueTechPort, a new innovation space for companies, and aims to foster innovation in all sectors related to the blue economy. The venue, located at Tech Barcelona's Pier 01 at the Palau de Mar, will host companies and entrepreneurial projects linked to the port, logistics and blue tourism sectors, and also to more disruptive sectors like underwater robotics, artificial intelligence applied to the marine environment, the recovery of marine biodiversity or pharmaceutical components made from marine products, to name just a few.

"All of these sectors spell new opportunities for the maritime and port ecosystem, and at the Port of Barcelona we want to support these initiatives, becoming a benchmark for the blue economy in Europe", in the words of Port of Barcelona President Lluís Salvadó at the launch event.

BlueTechPort, the first area of its kind at the Port of Barcelona, represents a further step in the commitment to innovation in the blue economy embodied in the Innovation Plan approved in 2021. Through this plan, rolled out through specific initiatives such as BlueTechPort or BCN Port Innovation Foundation, the Port of Barcelona is integrating innovation into its overall strategy to become a more sustainable and competitive port and generate benefits for the logistics-port community, for its customers and for the wider public.

The collaboration with Tech Barcelona will allow the companies that set up at the BlueTechPort to enjoy all the benefits available to the start-ups that are part of the ecosystem and is a further example of the network of alliances on which the Port of Barcelona is building its open innovation strategy. This innovative ecosystem will shape the Blue District, which has been designed to generate synergies between the various institutions and companies at the Port of Barcelona while also remaining open to attracting key companies and research centres beyond the port precinct.

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"When we set up Tech Barcelona in 2013, we were pioneers in grouping together and strengthening the technological and digital ecosystem of Barcelona hand in hand with the city's best entrepreneurs. Now, ten years on, our pioneering spirit remains intact: creating BlueTechPort together with the Port of Barcelona will make it possible to consolidate and develop the blue economy, a strategic sector that will play a fundamental role in the transformation of the city", in the words of Tech Barcelona CEO Miquel Martí at the launch event.

Since 2016, Pier01, an old warehouse located next to the sea and owned by the Port of Barcelona, has been the headquarters of Tech Barcelona, the pioneering association that articulates and drives Barcelona's technological and digital ecosystem. The association represents more than 1,300 companies, from start-ups to large corporations, always with innovation and technology as a common denominator.

The building, considered by Forbes magazine in 2017 as one of the five most important innovation centres in the world, hosts dozens of projects, from innovative health or energy start-ups to innovation spaces of large companies such as CaixaBank, Naturgy or Damm, as well as venture builders like Antai or Napptilus. In short, it has become a touchstone for anyone who wants to know how the city's technological and digital ecosystem works. Barcelona, Southern Europe's main tech hub and the second-favourite city for entrepreneurs to create start-ups, has over 2,000 start-ups and 100 multinational tech hubs.

Sustainability is one of the strategic axes of the companies comprising Barcelona's technological and digital ecosystem. The alliance between the Port of Barcelona and Tech Barcelona therefore represents a unique opportunity to develop the city's blue economy and consolidate the sector as an international benchmark.

Space for companies

BlueTechPort is designed to host start-ups, scale-ups and innovative projects of established companies, which will enjoy the support and cooperation of the Port of Barcelona for performing pilot tests or testing prototypes of their projects, using the port as a sandbox in which to try out their ideas and proposals. This collaboration will also provide them access to funds and grants for the blue economy sectors linked to maritime and port activity as they integrate into the innovation ecosystem growing up around the Port of Barcelona and Tech Barcelona.

The location of BlueTechPort on Pier 01 is the embryo of the future space that the Port of Barcelona will develop in the current sheds on Sant Bertran wharf. After the summer, work will begin on the renewal project, refurbishing the sheds to accommodate the first ecosystem building intended for

the development of the blue economy. Before that, however, a second phase will take place: expanding BlueTechPort in the areas of Barcelona wharf that will be recovered after the America's Cup comes to a close.

PHOTOS. Port of Barcelona president Lluís Salvadó, accompanied by Director of Port Innovation Emma Cobos, and Tech Barcelona CEO Miquel Martí.



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Tech Barcelona

Tech Barcelona is the independent non-profit association that works to consolidate Barcelona as a world-class technological and digital hub. Set up in 2013, it represents more than 1,300 companies and has more than 80 partner organisations that are leaders in their sector and are committed to the project. The association aims to promote talent, support entrepreneurship, attract investment and improve the competitiveness of companies. Tech Barcelona has established itself as the backbone of the ecosystem, with a programme of content, activities and connections aimed at fostering the growth of the digital and tech sector and transforming the economic model of the city and the region, projecting it internationally and guiding the impact of technology on society. The Tech Barcelona ecosystem model is being rolled out with the Urban Tech Campus project, a network of singular buildings connected so that innovation and technology integrate into the city, involving and coexisting with its citizens.

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