MATE ROV COMPETITION MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 2026

MATE MASHUP

Kicking off a New Year, and New Competition Season!

Dear MATE Community,

We're grateful to have spent time with friends and family over the holidays and are now diving into the new year energized for the upcoming MATE ROV 2026 competition season ahead!

The **2026 World Championship in Newfoundland & Labrador, Canada** promises to be full of exciting opportunities and first-time experiences! Along with multiple specialized competition venues that allow for real-world conditions (including ice, waves, and currents!), a mission scenario will be staged in **saltwater for the very first time,** and **sonar** (the real thing, not a simulation!) will be incorporated into a mission task.

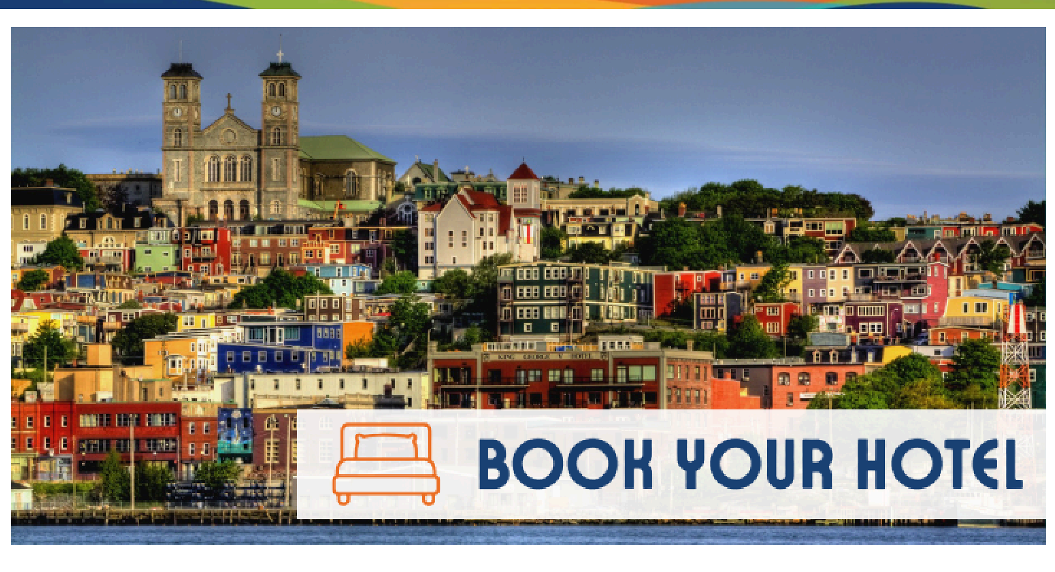
As you prepare for travel, don't forget to check your **passports and visas** — in this newsletter, we'll also be sharing **hotel details and additional logistics**.

And while your team is hard at work preparing your designs, keep an eye out for big-picture opportunities, including upcoming **faculty professional development workshops** and **student training sessions** (like the NAVIGATOR class workshop being held in Egypt in just a few weeks — more on that below!)

With so much happening around the world, we're reminded how fortunate we are for our **global community of learners**, collaborating and innovating together to solve challenges and push the boundaries of underwater robotics — and prepare for careers in ocean tech and beyond!

Jill Zande
MATE Executive Director
Marine Technology Society

STAY AFLOAT



Book Your Hotel for the 2026 World Championship!

📆 **Date:** (Check-in & safety inspections June 23-24) | June 25-27, 2026

It's not too early to book your accommodation for the **MATE ROV 2026 World Championship!**

We have five contracted hotels ready for participants to book in **Downtown St. John's** — close to opening and closing award ceremonies, dining, waterfront views, and local culture — all the while offering the most convenient and immersive World Championship experience for students, mentors, and their families.

Why stay downtown?

📍 Downtown hotels are within easy walking distance of the Opening and Closing Ceremonies at the JAG Soundhouse — no transportation planning is required.

📍 The MATE ROV Competition will provide shuttle service from contracted hotels, including downtown properties, to competition venues (this is open to all — no hotel reservation required).

📍 Step outside your hotel and you're instantly surrounded by some of St. John's best restaurants, local shops, and historic landmarks.

📍 Enjoy harbor views and the coastal charm that make St. John's unique, with colorful architecture, historic streets, and a lively downtown atmosphere.

FULL BOOKING INFORMATION HERE >>>

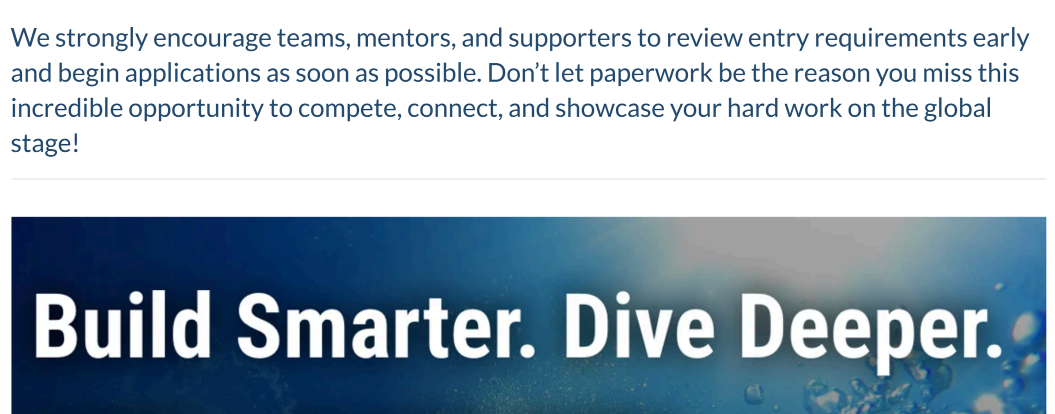


Remember to Get Your Passports and Visas Ready for the MATE ROV Competition 2026!

One of the best parts of the MATE ROV Competition is that it brings together participants from all over the world — but that requires some planning ahead of time!

Now is the time to check your travel documents. If you'll be traveling internationally to attend the 2026 World Championship in Canada, make sure your passport is valid for at least six months beyond your travel dates and has enough blank pages. Some travelers may also need a visa, which can take weeks — or even months — to process depending on your country of origin.

We strongly encourage teams, mentors, and supporters to review entry requirements early and begin applications as soon as possible. Don't let paperwork be the reason you miss this incredible opportunity to compete, connect, and showcase your hard work on the global stage!



Build Smarter and Dive Deeper with MATE ROV x NEPI

We have an exciting new tool to share that will help you and your **MATE ROV team** level up your preparation for the **2026 World Championship**!

NEPI is a plug-and-play **edge AI and automation platform designed specifically for MATE ROV teams building underwater robots.** It brings your ROV hardware, sensors, cameras, AI models, and control logic into one unified interface, making it possible to add real AI capability to your ROV without building complex software from scratch.

By handling the underlying software layer, NEPI allows teams to focus on **robot behavior, mission strategies, and automation** instead of debugging infrastructure. This is the same technology used in real subsea robotics and is now available to student teams competing in MATE.

With **NEPI, MATE ROV teams can**:

- 📷 **Access and Save live camera feeds** with visual overlays for navigation with just a few button clicks
- 🤖 **Train and Run Custom AI vision models at the edge** for object detection, targeting, and tracking data
- ⚙️ **Create low-code automation scripts** that trigger actions based on streaming AI and Target data
- 🤖 **Connect with other robotic subsystems** using NEPI's built in ROS interfaces
- 💻 **Run everything on edge computer** such as an NVIDIA Jetson

NEPI helps teams rapidly integrate AI and automation into their mission strategies.

LEARN MORE AND GET STARTED WITH NEPI >>>

SEAS THE DEALS

Kick Off Hands-On Learning with SeaMATE ROV Kits!

Starting a hands-on robotics or underwater STEM program can feel intimidating — especially if you're new to engineering, teaching STEM for the first time, or coordinating an after-school or homeschool program. That's where **SeaMATE ROV Kits** come in!

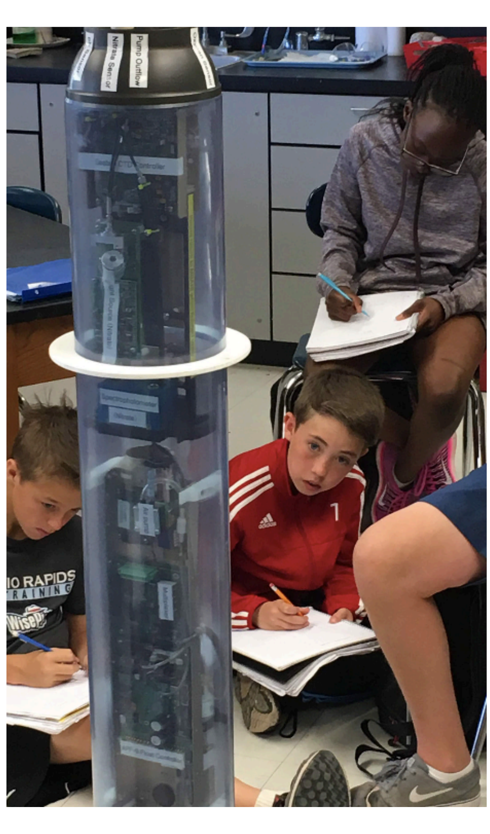
Designed specifically for educators, SeaMATE ROV Kits make it easy to bring **real-world, project-based learning** into your classroom or program — no prior robotics experience required. With clearly defined kit levels, built-in curriculum alignment, and strong connections to the **MATE ROV Competition**, these kits support students as they plan, build, test, and iterate just like professional engineers.

Check out our guide on how to get started with our ROV Kits, including:

⚙️ A helpful layout outlining key differences between each kit, and who they're best for;
⚙️ How to choose the right kit for your student or classroom;
⚙️ Applications for practicing with MATE ROV kits in the classroom, and beyond!

READ OUR PRODUCT GUIDE AND GET STARTED >>>

GUIDING THE ROVolution

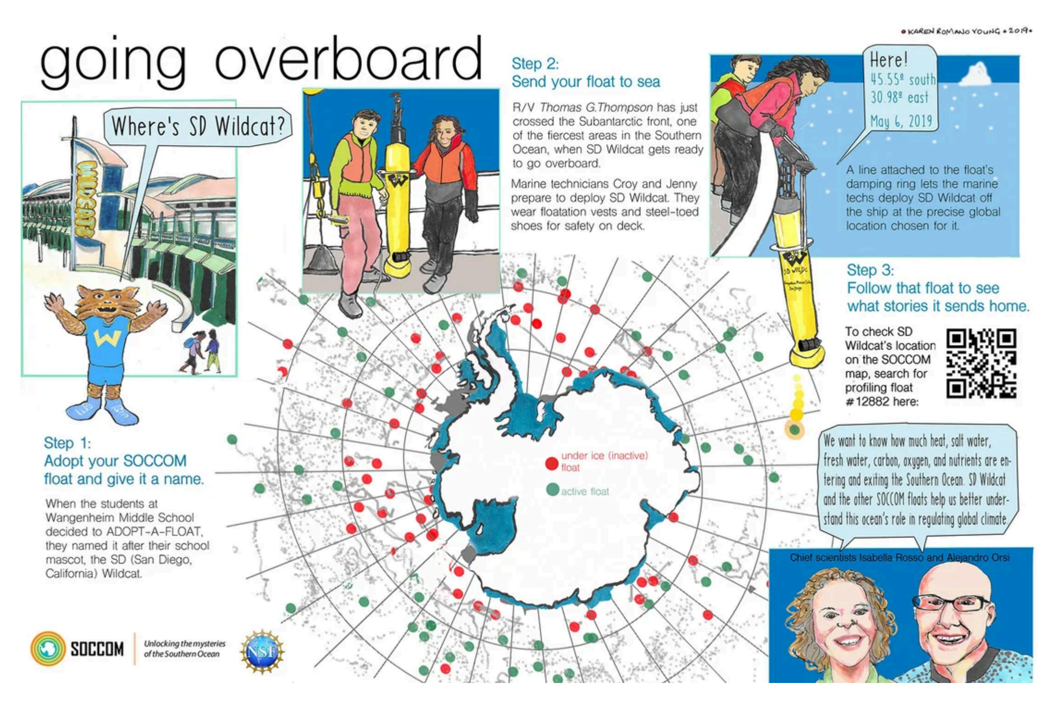


Adopt-a-Float and Take Your Students to International Seas!

Hundreds of data-collecting floats are currently deployed by the Global Ocean Biogeochemistry Array (GO-BGC) in oceans across every corner of the globe — and now, your students can claim one of these groundbreaking pieces of technology for themselves!

The Adopt-A-Float Program offers educators a unique, no-cost way to bring real-world ocean science into the classroom. By adopting, naming, and tracking a biogeochemical float, students engage directly with active research on ocean chemistry and climate change while interacting with world-class scientists.

LEARN MORE >>>



Get Creative with the Adopt-a-Float Sticker Contest

If you're looking for a way to bring together art and science in your classroom, look no further than the Adopt-a-Float Sticker Contest! This creative challenge invites participants to design a sticker celebrating the Adopt-a-Float program. Designs must be submitted as a digital image and include the words "Adopt-a-Float," both program websites, and the NSF logo. This is a fun way for students to combine science and art while showcasing their connection to real ocean research. Get designing and share your creativity with the global ocean science community!

Deadline: February 9, 2026 | Midnight PST LEARN MORE AND APPLY >>>

LEARNING LEAK

Ready to Dive Deeper Into the NAVIGATOR Class?

If you're a MATE ROV 2026 NAVIGATOR class participant and you're based in Egypt, this one's for you!

Don't miss this hands-on workshop designed to get your team competition-ready: over the course of four days, you'll hone your skills in ROV systems, mechanical design, electronics & waterproofing, and control & mission skills — not to mention teamwork, collaboration, and creativity.

Feb 1—3, 2026 | 10:00 AM—2:00 PM | Arab Academy for Science and Technology, Alexandria

🔗 REGISTER NOW >>>

Live! The 2026 Prop Demonstration Q&A

📆 **February 13, 2026 | 2:30 PM PST**

Get a closer look at the 2026 mission props during our live Prop Demonstration Q&A on Twitch! Broadcasting from the University of Washington, Competition Technical Manager Matthew Gardner will walk through prop and missions tasks for all classes and answer questions live in the chat.

Can't attend in real time? No problem! The full recording will be posted on the MATE ROV Competition website after the event!

🔗 LEARN MORE >>>

(NOT SO) HIDDEN TREASURES

MOTOROLA SOLUTIONS FOUNDATION

Apply Now - The SeaMATE ROV Kit Scholarship

The MATE ROV Competition is excited to partner with the **Motorola Solutions Foundation** again this year to support team development through the SeaMATE ROV Kit Scholarship. This program is designed to inspire and equip student teams participating in the MATE ROV Competition. The initiative aims to both support the formation of new teams and strengthen the capabilities of existing teams!

Faculty, teachers, mentors, robotics club advisors, and leaders of community organizations (such as Boys & Girls Clubs, Boy Scout and Girl Scout troops, and other community groups) across **South Florida, USA,** can request SeaMATE ROV Kits through this scholarship. These kits include the AngelFish, PufferFish, TriggerFish, and Barracuda ROV Kits. Applicants can also request specific tool kits for assembly that correspond to their selected ROV Kit. Additional available add-ons include the Wire Soldering Lab Kit, PufferFish Practice Board, Hydraulics Kit, Video System Kit (not compatible with the AngelFish), Power Supply, and Underwater Robotics: Science, Design, and Fabrication Textbook.

For more information about the SeaMATE ROV Kits, please visit SeaMATE.org. You can also access a kit comparison chart to assist you in determining the appropriate level for your team.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to reach out to **Tawni Gott, MATE Operations Manager**, at tawni.gott@mtsociety.org.

Deadline: January 30, 2026 LEARN MORE AND APPLY >>>

WHAT'S ON DECK

The MATE ROV 2026 Competition is in Full Swing!

The new year will be full of events as we head full speed towards the MATE ROV 2026 World Championship — so be sure to keep checking in as important dates and deadlines are announced!

- Registration for the **World Championship** is now open!
- **MATE ROV 2026 Mission Tasks and Competition Manuals** are now live!
- Registration for regional events in **Newfoundland & Labrador, Quebec, Egypt, Pakistan, Scotland, and several U.S. states** are now live!
- Make sure to sign up for the MATE 2026 ALL CLASSES Prop Demonstration Q&A!
- Registration for **even more regional events** will continue to open up throughout February!

Stay On Board with MATE ROV 2026!

As the MATE ROV Competition progresses in the new year, make sure to keep checking in throughout the beginning of 2026 — we will be posting dates and info for regional competitions regularly!

2026 SEASON UPDATES >>>

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