

# PHOTO AND ART CONTEST: TERMS AND CONDITIONS

## 1. Introduction

Fifteen years ago, JPI Oceans set out to align the research and innovation activities of European countries in the ocean sphere. Since then, its Joint Actions have tackled questions that few were asking at the time, from the ecological impact of deep-sea mining to the spread of microplastics, from the ocean's role as a carbon sink to the consequences of artificial light beneath the waves. Some of these questions have since entered the mainstream. Others remain largely unknown beyond the scientific community.

Art and photography have the rare ability to close that gap, and convey ideas, create urgency, or invite reflection in ways that policy or technical language cannot. With this contest, organised on the occasion of our 15th anniversary, JPI Oceans invites artists and photographers to engage with the science behind our Joint Actions and give it a visual language.

## 2. Who can participate

The competition is open to all forms of visual art and photography. Participants are free to use any technique or medium (such as scientific imaging, painting, digital composition, collage or photography) to convey their perspective.

The competition is open to individuals aged 18 and above. Members of the JPI Oceans Secretariat and of the judging panel are not eligible to participate.

## 3. Submission guidelines

### 3.1 Thematic Link to JPI Oceans Joint Actions

All submitted works must have a direct thematic link to one of our Joint Actions: JPI Oceans' central implementation mechanism, which are collaborative initiatives addressing pressing ocean-related research and innovation priorities. A complete and up-to-date overview of all Joint Actions can be found at <https://www.jpi-oceans.eu/en/joint-actions>

Participants are required to indicate which Joint Action their work relates to at the time of submission. Works that do not demonstrate a clear connection to JPI Oceans' areas of work may be excluded from the competition.

### 3.2 Submission process and deadline

The competition will open on 8 June 2026. Submissions must be received no later than 6 September 2026 at 23:59 CEST, via email at [info@jpi-oceans.eu](mailto:info@jpi-oceans.eu). Each participant may submit up to 2 entries.

Each submission must include:

- the title of the work;
- the name of the participant;
- the relevant JPI Oceans Joint Action connected to the work;
- a brief description of the artwork and its thematic link.

Files should be submitted in JPG, PNG or PDF format. The submitted file should be named using the title of the work, followed by the participant's name. Incomplete submissions or submissions received after the deadline may not be considered.

Winners will be announced in October 2026.

### **3.3 Language**

Participants are asked to complete their submission in English.

### **3.4 Format**

Photos must be submitted in high resolution (minimum 300 dpi), suitable for printing. Drawings or paintings may also be entered by submitting a photograph of the work. Due to the digital nature of the competition, sculptures are excluded as a form of art.

### **3.5 Use of Artificial Intelligence**

Submitted photos and artworks must not be fully generated by artificial intelligence (AI). While the use of AI tools as part of the creative process is permitted (e.g. for minor editing or enhancement), the core creative work must be the original product of the participant's own effort and artistic vision. Works that are determined to be entirely or predominantly AI-generated will not be considered.

### **3.6 Eligibility**

All works must fulfil the conditions previously stated, including appropriateness to the theme, format and submission of all material within the stated deadlines.

The works must not contain obscene, offensive, inappropriate, or objectionable material, and must not infringe any person's or organisation's rights to privacy, copyright, trademarks, or intellectual property.

Participants should not use any material that is subject to the rights of a third party (e.g. other people's or organisations' photos). If the work includes images of minors, participants must obtain necessary consent from the parents or legal guardians. The participant will declare that none of these has been infringed and all rights have been obtained.

JPI Oceans reserves the right at any time during the competition to remove or disqualify any submission that does not comply with the requirements and conditions stated in this document.

By entering the contest, the participants agree that JPI Oceans shall not be liable for any claims, costs, liabilities, damages, expenses and losses arising out of (i) JPI Oceans' use of the piece; (ii) the entrant's participation in the competition.

### 3.7 Prizes

The winner will be awarded a prize of €1,000, and each of the two runners-up will receive €500. Winning works will be showcased at the JPI Oceans office in Brussels and featured across our communication channels and at events throughout the anniversary year. A dedicated exhibition will also be planned.

Prizes awarded in the context of this competition cannot be transferred to individuals or entities listed in, or residing in countries subject to, International, Belgian or European Union's financial sanctions. In the event that a prize winner is found to be subject to such restrictions, JPI Oceans reserves the right to withhold the prize. The applicable sanctions lists can be consulted [here](#).

### 3.8 Evaluation Criteria

A panel of three judges will evaluate entries based on the following criteria:

**Thematic adherence:** Does the work address a JPI Oceans Joint Action? Does it effectively communicate or interpret the related scientific, environmental, or societal themes?

**Visual impact:** Does the work captivate the viewer's attention, for example, by means of a strong composition and colour balance?

**Technical execution:** Does the work exhibit technical skills appropriate to the medium, whether photography, painting, digital art, or other visual formats?

**Artistic quality:** Does the work demonstrate creative ambition that elevates it beyond its technical or informational content?

### 3.9 Copyright

Participants retain copyright of their submitted works. By entering the competition, participants grant JPI Oceans a permanent, royalty-free, worldwide license to use, reproduce, publish, display, and communicate the submitted works in connection with the competition and JPI Oceans communication activities, with credit to the creator. Participants accept that the works might be exhibited at the JPI Oceans office and related events, and/or used in JPI Oceans' internal and external communication activities.

### 3.10 Privacy policy

Personal data submitted as part of the competition will be processed solely for the purposes of administering the competition and related communication activities, in accordance with applicable data protection legislation. You can consult JPI Oceans' detailed privacy policy [here](#).

*For any questions regarding this competition, please contact [info@jpi-oceans.eu](mailto:info@jpi-oceans.eu)*