



The 7th [Student Autonomous Underwater Vehicle Challenge – Europe](#) was closed on 13 July at the Centre.

The 2nd prize went to University of Luebeck from Germany (2011 Champion) with its AUV "Hanse", while ENSTA Bretagne – team Sauc'isse and Sardine from France took home the 3rd prize.

The other prizes were awarded to the University of Florence team that won the "Rookie of the year Award", the University of Luebeck with team SMART-E that won the "Design & Innovation Award", the Cambridge University that won the "Engineering Award", the University of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria that won the "Impress the Judges Award", the ESIEA Paris with Aquatis that won the "Best Use of Resources Award", the ESIEA Paris with team Ryujiin that won the "Affordability Award", the University of West England that won the "Smart Technology Award", Heriot-Watt University that won the "Multinational Award".

The competition was hosted for the third time, from 6 to 13 July 2012, by the Centre for Maritime Research and Experimentation (CMRE), formerly known as the NATO Undersea Research Centre (NURC) at its waterfront, in La Spezia, Italy.

"It is always a pleasure to see the students of today, who are the scientists of tomorrow, stretch their minds, explore new technologies and find innovative ways to solve common problems and engage challenges placed before them." said Mr. Andy Pickup, CMRE Deputy Director. "This

Written by CMRE PAO
Friday, 06 July 2012 08:39

year, as before, all teams performed admirably and the competition was fierce. Overall the whole event was a great success".

The first three winners' prizes for the main competition are 3000, 2500, 2000 Euros to be used by the team to improve their equipment for future competitions. Special awards have been released also to École Polytechnique and ENSTA Bretagne with team CISSAU that impressed the judges with their creativity, as well as University of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria. All the other teams received 750 Euros each to encourage their work.

Each year the competition challenges multidisciplinary University teams (consisting at least of 75% students members) to make their AUVs performing realistic missions, as series of tasks, autonomously, with no control, guidance or communication from a person or from any off-board computer including GPS systems. The student AUVs must perform a series of tasks autonomously in a sheltered sea harbour, with no control, guidance or communication from a person or from any off-board computer including GPS systems. The competition encourages students to think about underwater technology and related applications while fostering innovation and technology in cooperation within the NATO countries; SAUC-E was in fact identified as an event that matched CMRE's mission to use AUVs as new way of thinking and in the spirit of Smart Defence.

The 2012 edition saw the debut of the [new NATO Engineering Support Team \(NEST\) for Student Autonomous Underwater Challenge - Europe and of the new SAUC-E Collaborative Platform](#), both aimed at strengthening scientific knowledge and engineering competences.

The SAUC-E Collaborative Platform is where the students from the participating teams, professors, AUV enthusiasts, government and industry partners, sponsors can share ideas and software. This wiki web site forum encourages the students to post valuable comments, questions, answers, documents, software and allows for rating of the responses which will be used by the judges in giving discretionary points during the competition.

The NATO Engineering Support Team (NEST) consists of the Subject Matter Experts (SME) to write documents especially addressing the challenges of SAUC-E environment, to provide additional guidance to the students in the design of the AUVs that can perform well in realistic environments, and to answer the students' questions on AUV hardware, software and sensor design via email or phone calls.

The Student AUV Competition Europe 2012 (SAUC-E) also partnered with the [MORPH](#) European Project summer school, with top international researchers giving [lectures](#)

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In addition, for the first time, some more expensive AUV components have been purchased by CMRE as the competitors can loan and then post the integration software and data from in-water tests on the collaborative web page which encourages collaboration among teams and help the teams to spend their limited budgets wisely.

The SAUCE competition has the objective to go beyond the state of the art in AUV technology by improving platforms, autonomy, and cognition of cutting-edge technologies. The overall efforts could not have happened without the sponsorship of [Office of Naval Research \(ONR\)](#) and

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