

What this looks like elsewhere: Globally significant case studies

How comparable port-city regions and blue economy platforms are organised, what each is good for, and where the TIDE differs. Together they show the model works; none of them combines what Greater Hobart is putting together.

THE PIER · HALIFAX, CANADA (OPENED 2021)

Canada's first transportation living lab, established by the Halifax Port Authority under its then President and Chief Executive Allan Gray, now Chief Executive of TasPorts, in a repurposed seaport facility, with tiered membership that includes the municipality and Dalhousie University. Its focus areas, including an interconnected port city and workforce development, closely mirror our own framing, which is useful validation that the model works at a comparable scale.

The asset: Greater Hobart has first-hand experience of standing up a port-led living lab at the table, in the chief executive who did it.

The difference: The PIER sits inside one port authority, while the TIDE is a multi-party program between the port and the Greater Hobart councils, designed to become independent, with a formal international pairing attached.

BEIP WA · WESTERN AUSTRALIA (LAUNCHED 2026)

A venture platform and single front door for ocean innovation in Western Australia: it diagnoses ventures, accelerates them, and helps them reach markets. Delivered by Ocean Impact Organisation, For Blue and the UWA Oceans Institute.

The core difference: they work on ventures, we work on a place. The TIDE runs pilots on working port infrastructure, commissioned by the institutions responsible for the place. Complementary rather than competing: in time, ventures from platforms like BEIP could pilot here.

WASHINGTON MARITIME BLUE · SEATTLE, UNITED STATES (FORMED 2018–19)

A statewide cluster organisation implementing Washington State's blue economy strategy, running an accelerator, joint innovation projects and workforce programs. It is now the anchor tenant and operator of the Port of Seattle's new Maritime Innovation Center, opening this year. It shows what a mature, state-backed cluster looks like, and it took roughly seven years to get from strategy to an operating facility.

The difference: the TIDE starts from a different end: anchor institutions and governed pilots first, facility questions later.

PIER71 · SINGAPORE (SINCE 2018)

Co-owned by the Maritime and Port Authority and NUS Enterprise, running an annual Smart Port Challenge with pilot grants. It is the reference for durable co-ownership between a public authority and a knowledge institution, but its work is challenge-based startup programs rather than place-based pilots.

HOMEPORT · HAMBURG AND OPENTOP · VALENCIA

Working-port test environments where the port authority brokers permitted trial access. Together with The PIER they founded the first international network of port innovation hubs. The TIDE is designed to be able to work with that network in time, alongside the EU IURC channel, and Opentop sits in our Catalan partner region.

PORTXL · ROTTERDAM (SINCE 2015)

The longest-running port accelerator, built on an annual cohort rhythm and a consortium in which industry pays for first access to ventures. Useful on operating rhythm, but it is venture acceleration, not place governance.

BLUE ECONOMY CRC · AUSTRALIA

The national blue economy research consortium, with strong Tasmanian participation. It is a research vehicle rather than a place-based delivery program. The TIDE draws on that research base and gives it somewhere to land in a working port-city region.

WHAT NONE OF THEM HOLD TOGETHER, AND WE DO

Anchor institutions commissioning the work; a formal pairing between Greater Hobart and Catalonia under the EU IURC program, with joint pilots and a shared evaluation protocol; a pathway to European co-funding; and a design that becomes an independent entity owned by its partners.

No other Australian port-city region holds the pairing.

THREE KEY MESSAGES

- **Complementary, not competing.** Platforms like BEIP find and ready ventures; the TIDE is where a port-city region tests and proves them, for scaling with Catalonia.
- **The Greater Hobart–Catalonia pairing is the distinctive asset.** Formal, joint, and funded through a European channel.
- **The TIDE produces evidence for the port-city region itself:** planning, infrastructure and workforce. A different product from venture services.

See accompanying overviews for Industry, Government, Research and Community & Civil Society stakeholders.