Notice

Fourteenth Annual

International Student Design Competition

For Safe Affordable Ferries

A project of the Worldwide Ferry Safety Association

The mission of the Worldwide Ferry Safety Association (www.ferrysafety.org) is to reduce ferry fatalities and expand the use of safe ferries worldwide. The objective of the International Student Design competition is to reduce ferry fatalities with designs of safe affordable vessels.

For the past 13 years, awards of $10,000 annually have been made to student teams, with the top prize each year being $5000. An impressive roster of internationally recognized maritime professionals act as judges. Awardees have been recognized at international maritime conferences and through media reports. The competitions for preceding years were to design: a passenger ferry for the Bangladesh river system, an inter-island RoPax for Papua New Guinea, an inter-island RoPax for Indonesia; a passenger ferry for Bangkok; a passenger ferry for the Singapore Straits between Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore; a passenger ferry for the Pasig River of Manila; a RoPax for the Winam Gulf region of Lake Victoria in Kenya; a RoPax for the Amazon River in Brazil; a RoPax for the Brahmaputra River in Assam, India; an electric ferry for the Pasig River of Manila; a RoPax ferry for the Niger River in Nigeria, an electric ferry for Lagos; and a market-passenger ferry for the Niger River also in Nigeria.

For the 2026-2027 Design Competition for a Safe Affordable Ferry, we are seeking designs for safe ferries to address several emerging issues, specifically designing a 6000 GT RoPax ferry that will travel between the Port of Tanjung Perak, East Java, to the Port of Makassar, South Sulawesi. There are three major design challenges:

a. The ROPAX must consider carrying Battery Electric Vehicles (BEV) of at least 10 percent line-meter ship's capacity. Thus, the designer must consider the safety aspects of loading and stowage operations, as well as the onboard mitigation system, in case of BEV fire.
b. The loading of an over-dimensioned and overloaded lorry (ODOL) is an issue that has to be addressed. Some current problems with ODOL vehicles include cargo manifest inspection (loaded by vehicle), vehicle securing systems, and ship stability calculations.
c. The vessel design has to consider the issue of increasingly high swells/waves that are increasingly powerful and often not predicted.

Student teams that register between now and November 30, 2026 will be provided with the Terms of Reference. Design submissions are due on March 25, 2027. For questions, kindly contact Dr. Roberta Weisbrod, executive director of the Worldwide Ferry Safety Association (WFSA), at ferrysafety@gmail.com.

Please register through:

www.ferrysafetydesigncompetition.org. https://www.ferrysafetydesigncompetition.org/registration .

Initial registration should be by the team captain and provide captain's name, academic institution, address, phone number and email address; faculty advisor, name, address, phone number and email address, and other team members' names and email addresses. There is no limitation on the size of the team. All team members must be students. Only one team may submit their design from each school. Students may join teams from other schools. Teams will be provided with a registration number and will receive the detailed Terms of Reference.

The adventure continues!

Roberta Weisbrod, Ph.D.
Executive Director, WFSA