

Planning phase · An independent plan · Nothing funded or built yet

A planned center for free or low-cost public ocean education in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania: the seafloor, marine life and the underwater robots that explore them. It would reuse an existing building and use natural energy, such as solar.

What guides it: Protect the planet first: recycle, compost, reuse and waste nothing. Money is a tool, never the goal or a barrier. Free or low-cost access is the aim, never a promise.

< 0.001%

People have directly seen, with cameras, robots or crewed submersibles, less than 0.001 percent of the deep seafloor, an area roughly the size of Rhode Island.

Sources: NOAA Ocean Exploration, April 2026; Science Advances (Bell et al.), 7 May 2025. As of 2025–2026; the figure changes as new surveys come in.

The path: gates, not dates

No timeline is set. Each step happens only if the one before it works.



Who it helps

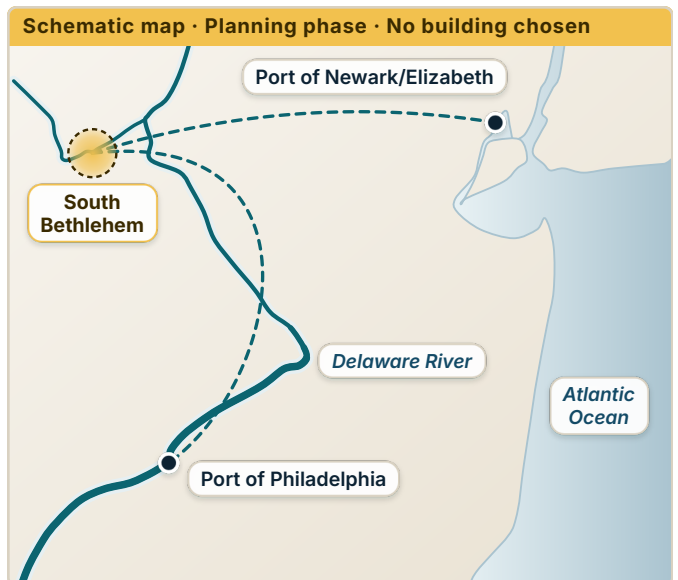
Schools and teachers, families, future engineers and scientists, curious adults, and people who need a calm space or step-free access.

Where

Planned location: South Bethlehem (the SteelStacks campus and the East 3rd Street corridor). No building has been chosen, and no owner or venue has been contacted.

Where it stands

- **Planning phase. An independent plan; nothing is funded or built yet.** No organization or opening date yet. Not an official project of, or endorsed by, the City of Bethlehem or ArtsQuest, and not an Aethon facility.
- **Partner: Aethon, the ocean data, mapping and exploration company founded by the plan's author.** Aethon supplies the maps and data; the center does public education. Aethon does not fund, own, operate or approve the center. The same person founded Aethon and is planning this center: a conflict of interest that a future board would manage.
- **No one else has agreed.** As of 20 October 2026, no other organization and no port or terminal operator has agreed or been contacted.
- **Planned seaport links:** the ports of Philadelphia and Newark/Elizabeth, for field work, field trips and data, if their operators agree. The center would run no boats.



Original schematic: north is up, positions are approximate, not for navigation. **Yellow circle:** the planned location, an area in South Bethlehem on the Lehigh River, with no building chosen. **Dashed curves:** planned seaport links. No building or parcel is marked, and no port or terminal operator has agreed or been contacted.

How to help

1. **Read the plan** at ocean-discovery.vercel.app.
2. **Share it** with a teacher, a family or a scientist.
3. **Suggest a free program idea** or an existing venue, once contact opens on the website.

No donations, no sign-ups, no money asked.
Contact is not open yet, so there is no address.