Southeast Coastal Ocean Observing System Regional Association – SECOORA Data Challenge 2018

SECOORA is looking to you – our next generation of coastal and ocean scientists, managers, decision makers, entrepreneurs - to help tell a story with data.

The Southeast Coastal Ocean Observing Regional Association (SECOORA) is seeking proposal submissions for new data visualizations, mobile applications, products or data synthesis tools. These products or tools must use existing publicly available coastal and ocean data on the SECOORA Data Portal or Catalog (portal.secoora.org).

SECOORA's mission is to observe, understand, and increase awareness of our coastal ocean; promoting knowledge, economic and environmental health through strong regional partnerships. Our main goal is to discover, integrate and provide access to coastal ocean data – biological, physical and more. Help us reach our goal!

Figure 1: The SECOORA footprint spans the eastern side of Gulf of Mexico to South Atlantic Bight and is connected by the Loop Current-Florida Current-Gulf Stream continuum.

The proposed project should focus on providing local governments, community organizations, natural resource managers, recreational users (i.e. surfers, boaters, fishers) or other users of ocean information with innovative methods to access, understand, analyze and/or visualize data in the Southeast.

Goals of the data challenge:
- Inspire a broad audience to engage with SECOORA
- Use technologies, tools, videos and creativity to visualize, analyze and use Southeast coastal and ocean data
- Encourage the use of data resources available from SECOORA
- Encourage students and young professionals to develop competitive proposals

Applicants must propose projects that use publicly available data, and at least one dataset must be downloaded through the SECOORA Data Portal or Catalog. Project proposals should support one or more of SECOORA's theme areas:

1. Ecosystems, Living Marine Resources and Water Quality
   - Fish
   - Water quality, including beach advisories and harmful algae blooms

2. Coastal Hazards
   - Inundation
   - Rip currents

3. Marine Operations
   - Safety, including support of Search and Rescue operations
   - Improving marine weather forecasting
   - Offshore energy

4. Climate Variability
   - Long-term data collection and analysis
   - Ocean acidification

There are three eligibility categories and three prizes: 1) Undergraduate students, 2) Graduate students, and 3) Other. A $2500 award will be made in each category, provided there are eligible submissions in each category. All winning projects will be featured on secoora.org.

The winners of the challenge will be expected to present their project at the SECOORA 2019 Annual Meeting, location and date to be determined. Travel funds will be provided for one project representative to attend. SECOORA reserves the right to limit the amount of travel funds available to a reasonable sum as determined by SECOORA. Proposals should be for projects that can be completed by December 31, 2018.

Proposal Guidelines:

Individuals or teams can to this challenge. Projects can only be submitted in one category. Individuals and team members (if applicable) must currently reside in the United States.

Undergraduate Challenge: Applicants must 1) reside in the United States 2) be an undergraduate student (or team of students), 3) have an advisor/ mentor from the institution they attend, and 4) propose a project that incorporates at least one dataset downloaded from the SECOORA Data Catalog and/or Data Portal.

Graduate Challenge: Applicants must 1) reside in the United States, 2) be a graduate student (or team of students), 3) have an advisor/ mentor, and 4) propose a project that incorporates at least one dataset downloaded from the SECOORA Data Catalog.

Other: Applicants must 1) reside in the United States and 2) propose a project that incorporates at least one dataset downloaded from the SECOORA Data Catalog.

Proposal Format:
Proposals must follow the required proposal format. Proposals that do not follow the required format will not be evaluated.

Maximum page length is 5 pages (does not include appendices). Text should be 12-point font, and all margins 1-inch. Proposals must include the following components:

1. Title Page (Proposal Cover Sheet) is limited to 1 page and must include:
    a. Proposal Title
    b. Principal Investigator and complete contact information
    c. Team/Co- Principal Investigators, if any, and complete contact information.
    d. Advisor name and contact information (i.e. professor supervising work) (ONLY FOR UNDERGRADUATE AND GRADUATE CATEGORIES)
    e. Project summary (1 paragraph)
2. Project Description is limited to 4 pages and must include:
    a. Statement of the issue to be addressed
    b. Description of the product or tool that will be developed
    c. Goals, objectives and anticipated results
    d. Identify the SECOORA theme area(s) the proposal meets, how the project will benefit the SECOORA region, and identify specific users (stakeholders) of the results of the project

e. Methodology or approach, including:
   i. Explanation of the technical approach
   ii. Data analysis and/or visualization techniques that will be employed
   iii. Dataset(s) from the SECOORA Data Catalog that will be used
   iv. Additional data that will be collected or used for the project
f. Identify how the product or tool will benefit the target audience.

The following appendices are required; however, they do not count towards the page limit.

- Appendix 1: Gantt Chart or something similar that outlines the objectives you need to meet to complete your project by the December 31, 2018 deadline. (1 page maximum)
- Appendix 2: For student submissions, a letter from your academic advisor or graduate/undergraduate director that you are a student in good standing.
- Appendix 3: One-page resume or curriculum vitae (CV) of Lead Principal Investigator. If working in a team, please provide the one-page resume or CV of all team members/ co-Principal Investigators.
- Appendix 4: For student submissions only, one page resume of advisor or mentor.

How to Enter:
Email your proposal in PDF format to abbey@secoora.org by April 13, 2018 5:00 PM ET.

Evaluation Criteria:
Evaluation criteria are the same for ALL categories.

Creativity and Innovation – 25%

Value to the Southeast Coastal Ocean Observing Regional Association – 25%

Technology/Scientific Merit – 20%

Methodology – 20%

Follows Proposal Guidelines – 10%

Timeline:

January 19, 2018: At 12 PM ET join us for a SECOORA Data Challenge Kick Off Webinar. [Register by clicking here.](#)

March 13, 2018: Register for the Data Challenge by clicking [here](#). This part is optional, but encouraged. If you do sign up, deadline reminders and a FAQ will be shared with the Lead Principal Investigator.

April 13, 2018: All proposals are due via email to Abbey Wakely at abbey@secoora.org by 5:00 PM ET, with the subject title: [Undergraduate or Graduate or Other] SECOORA Data Challenge Proposal.

April 13 – May 4, 2018: Proposal review period. Lead Principal Investigators may be contacted and asked to discuss their project with judges on a webinar.

May 7, 2018: Winners are notified.

May 23, 2018: Winners announced at SECOORA 2018 Annual Meeting.

December 31, 2018: Full projects are completed. Final product deliverables are submitted to SECOORA and include the product/application and all appropriate documentation. The use of open source software is encouraged, and all final products should allow for unrestricted distribution on the SECOORA website by January 31, 2019.

Questions?

Questions regarding proposal submission may be submitted to abbey@secoora.org by March 13, 2018. Good-faith efforts will be made to answer as many questions as possible, but an answer is not guaranteed for every question.

Award Disbursement Information

Winners will receive half of the award amount in May 2018. Upon completion of the project, they will receive the remaining portion of the award. Award winners will be responsible for all tax liabilities associated with the winnings and a 1099 will be disbursed by SECOORA by February 1, 2019. respond