Southeast Coastal Ocean Observing System Regional Association - SECOORA
Data Challenge

The Southeast Coastal Ocean Observing Regional Association (SECOORA) is seeking proposal submissions for new data visualizations, mobile applications, products or data synthesis tools that utilize existing publicly available Southeast coastal and ocean data and information and support individual and/or community needs for decision support.

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 a variety of

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.

coastal ocean data – biological, physical and more – to meet the needs of our users (see portal.secoora.org). We are looking to you – our next generation of coastal and ocean scientists, managers, decision makers, entrepreneurs - to help us build on this goal by creating a new way to use data to tell a meaningful story or support decision-making.

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

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, analyze and/or visualize data in the

Southeast. Applicants must propose projects that use publically available data, and at least one dataset must be downloaded through the SECOORA Data 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 idea at the SECOORA 2017 Annual Meeting, to be held May 16-18 in Melbourne, FL. 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, 2017.

Proposal Guidelines:

Individuals or teams can respond to this challenge. 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 utilizes at least one dataset downloaded from the SECOORA Data Catalog.

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 utilizes at least one dataset downloaded from the SECOORA Data Catalog.

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

Proposal Format:
All proposals must follow the template outlined below. Teams are encouraged, but are not required.

Maximum page length is 4 pages (does not include appendices). Text should be 12-point font, and all margins 1-inch.

- Title of the Project.
- Lead Principal Investigator. List the primary point of contact for the project.
- Team/Co- Principal Investigators. If you prefer to work in a team, please list your team members and their contact information.
- Advisor Information. Please list your advisor (i.e. professor/or other) contact information (ONLY FOR UNDERGRADUATE AND GRADUATE CATEGORIES).
- Project Description
  - Statement of the issue to be addressed
  - Goals, objectives and anticipated results, including:
    - How does the project align with one or more of SECOORA theme areas?
    - How does the project benefit the SECOORA region?
    - Who will use the product?
  - Methodology or approach, including:
    - What technologies will be employed?
    - What data analysis and/or visualization techniques will be used?
    - What dataset(s) from the SECOORA Data Catalog will be utilized? Will other data be utilized?
- Appendix 1: Gant Chart or something similar that outlines the objectives you need to meet to complete your project by the December 31, 2017 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 March 22, 2017 5 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:
February 28, 2017: 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.

March 22, 2017: All proposals are due via email to Abbey Wakely at abbey@secoora.org, with the subject title: [Undergraduate or Graduate or Other] SECOORA Data Challenge Proposal.

March 22 - April 14, 2017: Judging (Please note that the lead Principal Investigator may be required to pitch their project to the judges during a webinar.)

April 18, 2017: Winners notified

May 17, 2017: Award presentation at SECOORA Annual Meeting

December 31, 2017: 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. Provided products are in a format that can be readily integrated into or made available from the SECOORA website, they will be made available for viewing, use and/or download from the SECOORA website by April 1, 2018.

Questions?

Questions regarding proposal submission may be submitted to abbey@secoora.org. 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 2017. 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, 2018.