

SECOORA 2020 Request for Proposals to Fill Regional Product and Observational Gaps

Overview

The [Southeast Coastal Ocean Observing Regional Association \(SECOORA\)](#) is the coastal and ocean observing network for North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida. Our mission is to observe, understand, and increase awareness of our coastal ocean; promoting knowledge, and economic and environmental health through strong regional partnerships.

SECOORA is soliciting proposals focused on filling product and/or observational gaps defined in the [Regional Coastal Ocean Observing System Strategic Operational Plan 2020 - 2025](#). This document presents the SECOORA priorities for contributing to our improved understanding, management, and stewardship of valuable coastal ocean resources. It serves as a guide for future investments in SECOORA's regional coastal ocean observing system (RCOOS) and is based on the needs of the region and the ability to make significant progress in priority areas.

SECOORA is seeking projects that:

- Fill priority gaps in the RCOOS Plan
- Address at least one of the SECOORA focus areas: Coastal Hazards and Climate Variability; Ecosystems, including Water Quality and Living Marine Resources; and, Marine Operations
- Can be completed in a one year timeframe

Total funds available are \$170,000. SECOORA intends to award between 2 and 4 proposals. Proposals are due **November 30, 2020 at 5 PM ET**.

Funding Opportunity Areas

1. *Products* - Transform raw and/or processed data into useful and meaningful decision-making information and tools that are regional in scope or contribute to a regional scale enterprise. Examples of previously supported projects: K-12 Education products, [Marine Weather Portal](#), [How's the Beach](#). Anyone submitting under this focus area should contact SECOORA's data management team, Axiom Data Science (dmac@secoora.org), to identify how the product will be made available through SECOORA data services and/or via SECOORA's website.
2. *Observing* - Funds can be requested to support the collection of data to better study episodic or event-driven issues within the region. Funding can be used for fixed stations, mobile platforms (e.g., AUVs), and ships. Please coordinate with Axiom Data Science (dmac@secoora.org) to discuss the types of data that you will collect, data sharing requirements, and your data management plan.

Request for Proposals

Proposals must follow the required proposal format. Proposals that do not follow the required format will not be evaluated. The anticipated start date is **January 2021**, and will be funded for one year.

Maximum length is four (4) pages (not including budget or appendices). Text should be 12-point font, all margins 1-inch, and must include the following components:

1. Title Page (1 page)
 - a. Proposal title
 - b. Primary PI name, affiliation, email, and phone number
 - c. Co-Investigators (Co-PIs) Name, affiliation, email, and phone number
 - d. Funding Opportunity Area to which you are applying (Products or Observing)
 - e. Total budget request
 - f. Short summary of proposal (1 paragraph)
2. Description of Project (3 pages)
 - a. Description of the observing asset being deployed or product being developed and SECOORA focus area the observing asset or product will address
 - b. Statement of how the project will directly benefit specific end users and the roles and responsibilities of the end user in the development of the product or use of the observing data
 - c. Goals and specific, measurable objectives
 - d. Methodology
 - e. Deliverables and timeline
 - f. Describe how data / product will be distributed to end users

The following proposal appendices are required but do NOT count towards the four-page proposal limit:

3. Literature Cited.
4. A two-page CV or resume for the lead PI and co-leads.
5. Two signed letters of support from targeted stakeholders and end users of the data or products that clearly describes their role in the project.
6. [Proposal endorsement form](#).
7. A [budget template](#) and [budget justification](#). Funds may be used for any purpose related to the project. SECOORA does not require matching funds or in-kind support, but please list any match or in-kind that are available to the project.
8. One page data management plan. Note that all projects must adhere to the [SECOORA data sharing policy](#).

Eligibility

Principal Investigators (PIs) must be affiliated with an academic institution, state agency, NGO, research laboratory, or private industry in North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, or Florida. Federal employees are not eligible to apply as lead PIs but they can be co-PIs, project participants, and end-users. Co-PIs

and/or collaborators can be outside of the SECOORA region. Note: SECOORA cannot fund federal employee salary.

Submission

Please submit the entire application package electronically in PDF format through egrants.secoora.org. The submission deadline is **5:00 PM ET on November 30, 2020**. PIs must complete the registration process in order to upload a proposal to egrants.secoora.org. This is a two part verification system (phone and email confirmations are required). Once you have registered, please select the RFP to which you are applying, complete the required fields, and upload your proposal as a PDF.

Review Criteria

Evaluation criteria are the same for ALL categories.

- Relevancy/Need – 25%
- Demonstrated Value to Stakeholders – 25%
- Technical/Scientific Merit – 30%
- Reasonableness of Budget - 10%
- Follows Proposal Guidelines – 10%

Proposal Review Process and Terms

All proposals will be reviewed based on the adherence to the instructions provided in this request for proposals and outlined in detail in the Request for Proposal section.

1. SECOORA will convene a review panel of 3-5 reviewers. The panel may include SECOORA staff and other subject matter experts.
2. The review panel will rank all submitted proposals based on the proposal review criteria.
3. Anticipated project start date is January 2021. All projects must be completed within one year.
4. A project progress report is due in June 2021 and a final report is due no later than January 30, 2022.
5. Products developed through this opportunity must be shared on the SECOORA website by January 2022.

Award Funding

The successful applicant will be notified in late December 2020. Funding will be distributed by SECOORA no later than January 2021. Funds will be distributed to the lead PI's home institution. This is an open and competitive process. SECOORA reserves the right to reject any and all proposals received as a result of this process. SECOORA reserves the right to request that respondents make modifications to their proposal at any time before a contract is awarded.

Questions Regarding Application Solicitation

For any questions related to this Request for Proposals, please contact communications@secoora.org.