



## SECOORA 2022 Request for Proposals

### Fill Regional Observational Gaps on the Florida East Coast

#### 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 observational gaps defined in the [Regional Coastal Ocean Observing System Strategic Operational Plan 2020 - 2025](#) (RCOOS Plan). This document presents the SECOORA priorities for contributing to our improved understanding, management, and stewardship of valuable coastal ocean resources. The document 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 proposals that:

- Fill at least two priority gaps in buoy operations on the east coast of Florida, as identified in the SECOORA RCOOS Plan
- Describe the sensor payload proposed for the moorings
- Have well thought out deployment, maintenance, and data management plans
- Provide, at minimum, hourly data and meet or exceed the SECOORA 85% up-time goal (i.e., systems are on-line and reporting data at least 85% of the time)
- 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](#)

#### Award Funding

Initial funds available are \$145,000 in Year 1 and \$163,000 in Year 2. This is a 5 year award. Anticipated funding for Years 3-5 is \$120,000 to \$145,000 annually. Proposals are due by 5:00 PM November 11. The funding start date is anticipated to be December 15, 2022. Funds will be distributed to the lead Principal Investigator's (PI) 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.

#### 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 **December 15, 2022**.

Maximum proposal length is 4-5 pages (not including the title page, budget, budget justification, 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. Total budget request
  - e. Short summary of proposal (1 paragraph)
2. Description of Project (5 pages)
  - a. Statement of how the project will directly benefit specific end users and partners
  - b. SECOORA focus area the observing assets will address
  - c. Description of the project team and teaming strategy for buoy deployments, maintenance, etc.
  - d. Description of the observing assets that will be deployed (including a list of sensors that will be onboard) and a graphical representation/schematic for the buoy are required. Schematic can be included as an Appendix. Identify the following:
    - i. Sensors
    - ii. Telemetry system
    - iii. Mooring/anchor design - address how the moorings will be anchored if they are to be deployed in a high current environment
    - iv. Fabrication and mobilization facility(ies)
  - e. Proposed locations for buoy deployments
    - i. SECOORA will work with the PI and the NOAA Integrated Ocean Observing System (IOOS) office to complete the NEPA environmental assessment for the buoys
    - ii. SECOORA will work with the PI to acquire the appropriate permits/approvals based on the proposed locations for the buoys.
  - f. Maintenance plan, including roles and responsibilities of partners, if applicable
    - i. Describe buoy maintenance, assembly, and storage facilities, including sensor sparing strategy.
    - ii. Identify vessels that can be used for deployments and on-going maintenance activities
  - g. Data management plan that includes real-time data telemetry options, identifies who will be responsible for data Quality Assured / Quality Controlled, and how the data will be provided to SECOORA.
    - i. Note that all projects must adhere to the [SECOORA data sharing policy](#). If funded, no data can be embargoed.
    - ii. All data must be provided to or made accessible to Axiom Data Science so that it can be distributed through the SECOORA website and provided to NOAA's

National Data Buoy Center. Email [DMAC@secoora.org](mailto:DMAC@secoora.org) to discuss data management needs and real-time data distribution to SECOORA.

h. Deliverables and timeline

- i. Note the project team can deploy one buoy annually or they can deploy both buoys in Year 2. Please indicate the approach you will take.

The following proposal appendices do NOT count towards the five-page proposal limit:

3. Literature Cited
4. Schematics, images and maps can be placed in appendices and referenced in the proposal.
5. A two-page CV or resume for the lead PI and co-leads.
6. One signed letter of support from a targeted stakeholder or end users of the buoy data that describes how the data will be used.
7. [Proposal endorsement form](#)
8. A two year [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 services that are available to the project.
  - a. At the end of the budget justification, identify the anticipated on-going maintenance costs for Years 3-5. You do not need to provide a budget sheet or full justification, just the anticipated value and a high level description of the anticipated maintenance costs for the moorings for Years 3-5.
9. Completed [SF424A using this form](#). Complete the SF424A for Years 1 & 2 only. Additional instructions on how to complete the form are provided [here](#).

## 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 or travel.

## Submission

Please submit the entire application package electronically through [egrants.secoora.org](https://egrants.secoora.org). The submission deadline is **5:00 PM ET on November 15**. First time eGrants users must complete the registration process in order to upload a proposal to [egrants.secoora.org](https://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 documents.

## Review Criteria

Evaluation criteria are the same for ALL categories.

- Technical/Scientific Merit – 40%
- Reasonableness of Budget – 30%
- Relevancy/Need/Value to Stakeholders – 20%
- 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 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 December 2022.
4. Progress reports that describe project progress are due every 6 months, in January and July.

## Questions Regarding Application Solicitation

For any questions related to this Request for Proposals, please contact [communications@secoora.org](mailto:communications@secoora.org).