

SECOORA Seeks Strategic Planning Services Contractor

The Southeast Coastal Ocean Observing Regional Association (SECOORA), a regional 501(c)3 non-profit organization based in Charleston, South Carolina, seeks a professional contractor to provide strategic planning services. SECOORA's mission is to support decision-makers by collecting and synthesizing coastal and ocean data. SECOORA is one of 11 regional associations working in partnership with the NOAA National Ocean Service Integrated Ocean Observing System (IOOS) Program Office, other federal agencies, and interested stakeholders including scientists, public agencies and private industry to build and operate our Nation's coastal and ocean observing capabilities. SECOORA supports the operation of a regional coastal ocean observing network in the southeastern United States.

SECOORA is governed by a seventeen member Board and has 48 members from academic, private, government and nongovernmental organizations. SECOORA developed a Business Plan in 2007 (<http://dev.secoora.org/sites/default/files/webfm/members/documents/business-plan.pdf>) and a Strategic Priorities Plan in 2010 (http://dev.secoora.org/sites/default/files/webfm/members/documents/SECOORA_Strategic_Priorities.pdf). Our objective for this contract is development of a concise and realistic Strategic Plan that clearly articulates SECOORA's vision, mission, goals and priorities for 2016-2021.

Services Required: We seek the services of a professional facilitator and planner to design and implement a process that engages our members, Board and staff in development of a strategic plan. The Strategic Planning Services Contractor will work with the Executive Director, SECOORA staff, Board of Directors and members to develop a 5-year strategic plan for SECOORA that is informed by our members' expectations for the growth and development of the organization. The following tasks, deliverables, and schedule outline a process that could be utilized to meet our requirements. However, we will look to the selected contractor to amend the process based on their skills and experience. The SECOORA Board only meets in person twice a year. The December Board meeting dates and location have been set, and that meeting opportunity needs to be utilized to help develop the plan.

Tasks	Deliverables	Schedule (from Contract Initiation)
1. Develop workplan	Draft Work plan	7 days
a. Hold scoping meetings with SECOORA staff and five-member Executive Committee via phone, webinar, and/or email to discuss contract deliverables and develop a work plan.	Meetings with SECOORA staff and Executive Committee	14 days
b. The workplan should include mechanisms to notify and engage SECOORA's Board and membership in the Strategic Planning process	Final Work plan and schedule	21 days
2. Produce pre-December meeting assignments to be completed by SECOORA Board, members and staff in advance of the in-person Board meeting. Compile the information and utilize the results to inform and plan the strategic planning portion of the December 2015 SECOORA Board meeting.	Conduct information gathering. Receive back and compile information to be presented at the Board meeting.	60 days
3. Attend and facilitate the December 2015 SECOORA Board strategic planning session in Charleston, SC December 3-4, 2015.	Facilitate and compile outcomes of the meeting.	Dec 3 & 4, 2015
4. Plan and participate in Board and Executive Committee	Summaries of calls	Throughout contract as

conference calls as necessary.	and action items.	needed.
5. Develop a draft of the strategic plan and circulate to staff and Board members. Compile edits from all.	Produce a draft strategic plan	90 days
6. Produce the final strategic plan document.	Final document	120 days
7. Attend a Board conference call to present the final plan.	Present final draft	150 days

Required Expertise and Skills: The successful contractor must:

- Be able to work within the framework of a diverse, region-wide organization.
- Be able to work effectively with SECOORA's Executive Director, staff, and Board members to develop a strategic plan.
- Demonstrate knowledge of the US IOOS Program and the 11 Regional Associations.
- Have successful experience working with technical audiences, and basic understanding of ocean observing system elements.
- Demonstrate excellent facilitation skills, the ability to work across diverse sectors, and experience working with Boards and membership organizations to create strategic planning documents.
- Possess excellent speaking, writing, editing, computer, and presentation skills.
- Have a willingness and ability to travel to the SECOORA 2015 December Board meeting to be held in Charleston, SC December 3-4 where the in-person strategic planning session will take place. Have willingness to attend conference calls as needed throughout the contract period.
- Have a flexible facilitation style that can accommodate and respond effectively to evolving group priorities.

Qualifications: The successful candidate must have:

- At least a Bachelors degree in a relevant discipline (e.g., communications, marketing, business management), and/or equivalent professional experience.
- (Preferably) A strong understanding of ocean or coastal issues, science, and policy as well as familiarity with the US IOOS Program office and the 11 Regional Associations.
- Ability to work closely with a small regional staff and Board members.

Compensation: \$10,000. The initial contract will be for 6 months with an option to renew with the concurrence of both parties.

Application Date: By September 25, 2015 or until contractor is identified.

To Apply: Please submit cover letter addressing skills and qualifications, a formal resume (not exceeding two pages), examples of generated planning documents, a summary list of facilitating experience in the last 5 years, and a list of three professional references (name, title, address, and phone number). Emailed applications must be in PDF file format.

Please send information to Megan Lee, SECOORA Business Manager (mlee@secoora.org).

All questions should be emailed to, Debra Hernandez, SECOORA Executive Director, at debra@secoora.org.