



## NERACOOS RFP 2020: NOAA IOOS Five Year Proposal

**Opportunity:** NERACOOS is requesting mini-proposals that will be considered for inclusion into the organization's response to the [NOAA IOOS Notice of Funding Opportunity \(NOFO\)](#).

Mini-proposals are requested for activities that are of strategic interest and relevance to NERACOOS and NERACOOS stakeholders. A summary of the organizational mission, vision and core values are available on the NERACOOS website ([www.neracoos.org/about/mission](http://www.neracoos.org/about/mission)). A number of other supporting documents, including the NERACOOS strategic priorities are available at [www.neracoos.org/grants](http://www.neracoos.org/grants).

Anyone can submit a mini-proposal on behalf of their institution through the submission of [the Google Form here](#), please see the complete form template attached. At this time no formal budgets or documentation are requested. Additional instructions are provided below. The NERACOOS staff will work closely with a small Advisory Committee of unconflicted members to advise on the implementation of the proposal process. Each mini-proposal received will be evaluated by the NERACOOS Board of Directors and ranked according to a [suite of review criteria](#). The scores from these reviews will be used to determine high, moderate, and low priority projects to be included into NERACOOS' submission to the upcoming NOAA-IOOS Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for 2021-2026. Submission of a proposal to this process is an implicit agreement to participate in the NOFO submission. No funding will be directly awarded as part of the present process, but rather the ability to participate in NERACOOS proposals for potential funding opportunities.

### Timeline

- April 2019 - March 2020: Stakeholder Interviews
- August 2019: Board Approval of Proposal Process

- March 2020: Recruitment of Advisory Committee
- May 26, 2020: NOAA IOOS NOFO Released
- June 4, 2020: NERACOOS Request for Mini-Proposal Opens
- July 10, 2020: NERACOOS Mini-Proposals Due
- July - August 2020: NERACOOS Board of Directors to Review Mini-Proposals
- August 2020: Project leads to be invited to a Q&A session with the Board of Directors
- End of August 2020: Advisory committee and staff to propose slate of activities
- September 9, 2020: Proposed slate shared with Board of Directors for approval and comment.
- September 30, 2020: Slate Finalized by NERACOOS Executive Director
- October/November 2020: Proposal writing
- December 16, 2020:NERACOOS Proposal Submitted to NOAA IOOS

*Please note dates may be subject to change.*

## **Instructions**

A [project template](#) should be completed for each proposed activity (see below for definition of activity). Completion of the template is not meant to be an onerous task, but instead strike a balance between allowing the proposer to quickly and effectively describe the activity and the resources required. This process will also allow the NERACOOS Board of Directors to carefully evaluate all potential components of an observing system in terms of how each would benefit NERACOOS and NERACOOS' stakeholders. The following list of guidelines should be adhered to when formulating and completing a project template:

- Do not include a formal budget from your grants and contracts or budgeting office. Only informal estimates are needed with the project template.
- Do not attach additional documentation (CV's, publications, etc.) to the template. They will not be considered.
- All activities should fall into one of four categories, including: sustained operations, augmentation of sustained operation, filling priority gaps, or

new capabilities. Definitions and examples of each category are listed below.

1. *Sustaining Operations*: an individual template is to be completed for each component of the system that is currently being supported by NERACOOS, examples may include: a single buoy (including its hardware, instrumentation and communication systems), a model product, or activities that span the NERACOOS region (i.e. a data management system). Please note that activities currently being supported by NERACOOS, but not through the existing five year award may be considered as sustained operations, examples include operation of a model system or a particular sensor.
2. *Augmenting of Sustained Operation*: a separate template must be completed for augmentation of a sustained effort. An augmentation may be the replacement of an asset, the addition of a new functionality, parameter or sensor into a sustained effort. Please assume that the sustained activity will be funded at the level requested in the separate template submission.
3. *Filling Priority Gaps*: a template may be completed in response to one of the key stakeholder gaps identified below. Please note that these gaps were identified through extensive stakeholder outreach and are of particular importance to the organization.
  - Nearshore monitoring (surface, sub-surface & bottom), key monitoring gaps include: carbonate chemistry, nutrients, dissolved oxygen, temperature, chlorophyll, contaminants, and microplastics
  - Glider deployments
  - Integration of external data sources
  - Product development: real-time data interpretation
  - Water level stations, specifically Wellfleet & Sandwich, MA
  - Real-time HAB monitoring
4. *New Capabilities*: a template is to be completed for any new capabilities that have not been identified in any of the above categories.

*Special note*: Please consider that NERACOOS expects funding levels to remain much the same and sustaining current efforts are of a high priority to the organization. That being said NERACOOS recognizes the importance of

an open and competitive process to ensure that as a region the Northeast is best addressing stakeholder needs and incorporating new activities and partners into the northeast observing system.

### Proposal Process

The overarching goal of this process is to objectively evaluate and prioritize the proposed activities to ensure they meet the priorities of NERACOOS and NERACOOS stakeholders.

- *Highest Priority:* These activities are to be considered most important and are likely to be funded as part of a successful IOOS award.
- *Moderate Priority:* These activities are important and will be included in the proposal submission, but are less likely to be funded, at least initially, given present IOOS funding levels.
- *Low Priority:* These activities are potentially important but deemed either not appropriate for the IOOS submission, incomplete, or not cost-effective for NERACOOS to support at this time.

The following review process will be used to sort proposed activities into high, moderate, and low priorities.

1. Templates will be evaluated based on the [review criteria](#) by at least three Board of Directors by a mail in review process. Reviewers will be chosen by staff from the Board of Directors who have some expertise in the area, but would not benefit financially from or have competing interests with the project. Please note that staff will seek guidance and approval from the Advisory Committee to ensure conflict of interest issues are best addressed.
2. Initial rankings and feedback for the proposed activities will be reviewed by staff and the Advisory Committee and an initial slate of proposed activities will be drafted.
3. The Board of Directors will meet in-person in August to review and discuss the proposed slate. Project leads may be invited to participate in a Q&A session facilitated by the NERACOOS Board of Directors.
4. The NERACOOS Executive Director will then determine the final slate of activities to be included in the NERACOOS proposal based on rankings and guidance from the Board of Directors and Advisory Committee.

Please note that it is unlikely NERACOOS will receive the maximum funding per year, based on the present-day and projected future funding levels of IOOS. It is therefore unlikely that all projects will be funded, and de-scoping will be necessary each year of the award. However, projects will be archived and available to seek alternative funding as opportunities arise.

Questions should be directed to Jackie Motyka ([jackie@neracoos.org](mailto:jackie@neracoos.org)) or Tom Shyka ([tom@neracoos.org](mailto:tom@neracoos.org)).

## COPY OF MINI-PROPOSAL QUESTIONS

- 1) Project Title: \*
- 2) First & Last Name of Project Lead: \*
- 3) Email Address of Project Lead: \*
- 4) Organization of Project Lead: \*
- 5) Partner Organizations (if applicable):
- 6) Please describe the proposed activity (note geographic location): \*  
*Maximum of 1,500 characters*
- 7) Please select the category of the activity you are proposing below. \*
  - a) Sustained Operation- activity currently supported by NERACCOOS
  - b) Augmentation of Sustained Operation- expansion of a sustained activity
  - c) Filling Priority Gaps- proposal in support of a key stakeholder need (see announcement)
  - d) New Capabilities
- 8) **New Capabilities Only**- Please describe the stakeholder need for the proposed activity. \* *Maximum of 1,500 characters*
- 9) What are the goals and objectives of the proposed activity? \* *Maximum of 1,500 characters*
- 10) Team Qualifications: briefly describe your team's qualifications to achieve the proposed effort. \*
- 11) Proposed Budget for each year of the five year award. Please include a short justification that notes data preparation costs, as well as cost-sharing/leverage of the proposed activity. \*