

2026 IOOS 5-year Proposal

September 19, 2025

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Agenda:

- IOOS
- GCOOS
- 2026 Award
- Next steps
- Q&A

Our Mission

To provide on-demand information about the Gulf's coastal and open ocean waters that is accurate, reliable and benefits people, ecosystems and the economy



TEXAS A&M
UNIVERSITY.

Strategic & Build-out Plans

Strategic Plan 2020 – 2025:

Key Focus Areas

No. 1: Marine Operations

No. 2: Coastal Hazards

No. 3: Healthy Ecosystems & Living Resources

The Marine Biodiversity Observation Network

No. 4: Human Health & Safety

Red Tide Respiratory Forecast

Cross-Cutting Themes

Outreach & Education

Data Management & Communication

Numerical Modeling & Forecasting

Monitoring Long-Term Environmental Change

Strategic & Build-out Plans

Strategic Plan 2020 – 2025:

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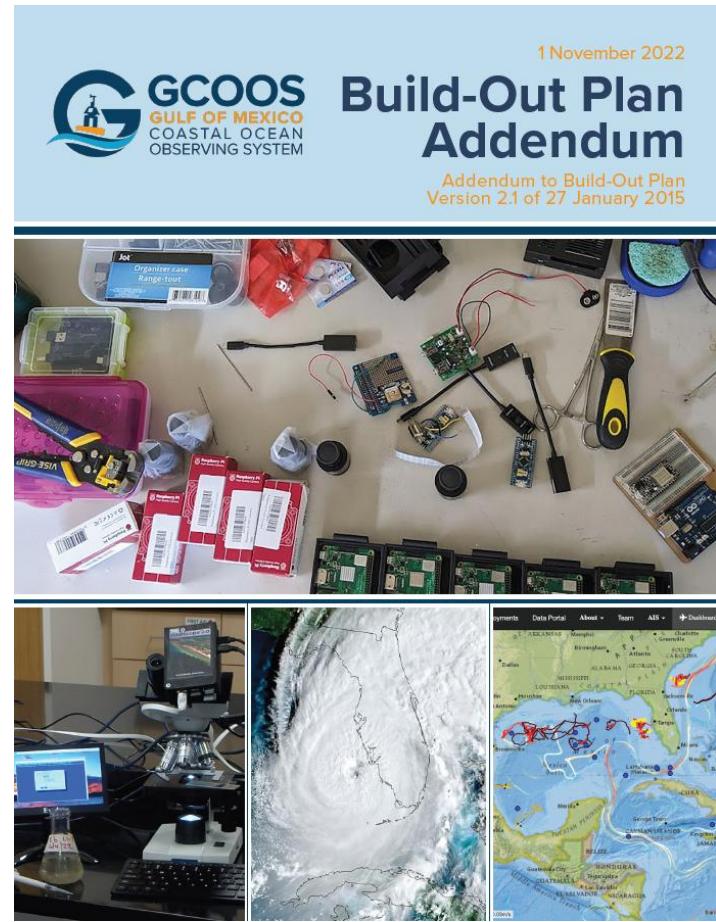
Cross-Cutting Themes

Outreach & Education

Data Management & Communication

Numerical Modeling & Forecasting

Monitoring Long-Term Environmental Change



November 2022

Key Observing Focus

HFR



Gliders



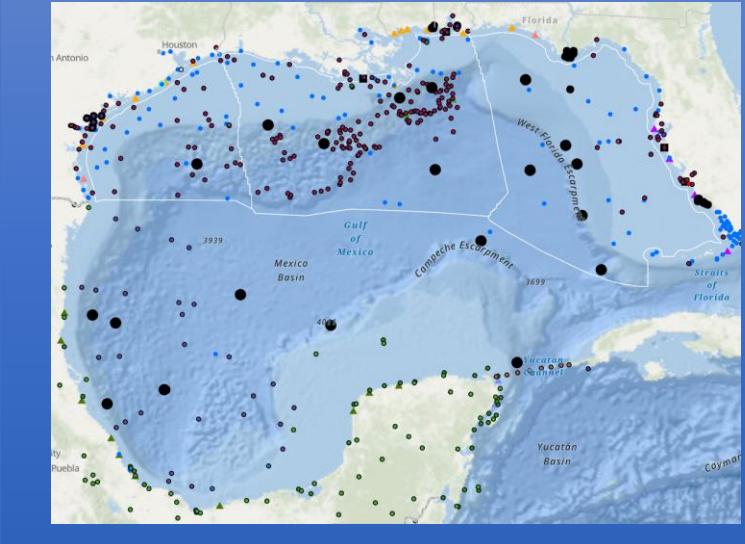
Moorings



NTL



Sector & Ecosystem Management Needs



HABs

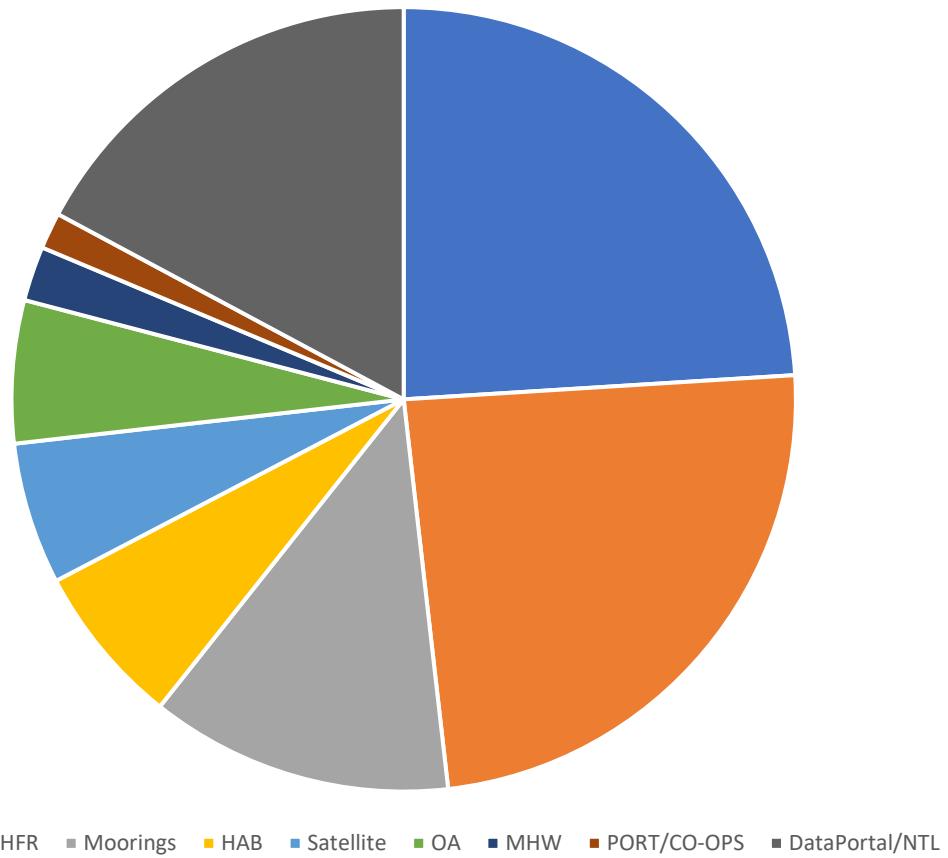


Main IOOS Award: Year 5 by Asset/Program

\$4,200,000

Includes:

- Core: \$2,499,000
- Add-ons: \$1,701,000
 - Internal operation, IDC
 - Subawards (52%)



Other GCOOS projects: Disaster Supplements, IRA, IIJA, other programs

Additional Observations

Additional projects:

- Nutrient sensors
- Marine Mammals
- Sea Turtles
- Sargassum obs
- Marine heatwaves
- Tide gauge data & AI

New projects:

- Water level sensors
- Wave buoys
- Web cameras
- Coastal acidification obs
- Acoustic telemetry
- Passive acoustic data

New 2026 Award: NOFO not available

Goal:

- Renew core RCOS funding - Appropriated by U.S. Congress
- Identify projects for next 5-year award to provide continuation to Regional Association

Funding target: ?

Announcement: Tuesday September 9, 2025

Solicitation: <https://gcoos.org/loi-request-2026/>

Contact: 2026mainaward@gcoos.org

Proposal Development Timeline

(subject to change)

- LOI Announcement: September 9, 2025
- Informational Webinar & Q&A: September 19, 2025
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- **LOI Submission Deadline: Oct. 17, 2025 (by 5 p.m. Central Time)**
- LOI Review Period: Oct. 20–31, 2025
- Notification of Inclusion in GCOOS Full Proposal: Nov. 1, 2025
- Deadline for Completion of PI proposal and Subaward Package: Nov. 30, 2025
- Anticipated GCOOS Full Proposal Submission to NOAA: Dec. 31, 2025
- Anticipated Project Start Date: July 1, 2026

We are seeking Letters of Intent for projects that focus on:

- Observing platforms and sensors
- Modeling
- Education and outreach

Projects must align with the GCOOS Strategic Plan and demonstrate:

- Relevance to at least one GCOOS key focus area;
- Regional scope or contribution to a regional-scale enterprise (sub-regional efforts will be considered if complementary);
- Commitment to implementing IOOS-NOAA data standards and QARTOD manuals;
- Clear stakeholder engagement strategy with measurable outcomes;
- A sustainability plan for continued operation beyond the funding period.

Submission Instructions

Submit your LOI via email to 2026mainaward@gcoos.org by **Oct. 17, 2025, by 5 p.m. CT.**

All documents must use 12-point font and 1-inch margins. Graphics count toward page limits.

Required Components:

- **Title page** (1 page). Includes proposal title, PI information, and total budget. Indicate if the proposed work is a continuation of a current or past award.
- **Scope of work** (4 pages): Identify how the proposed work aligns with GCOOS strategic focus areas, goal, objectives, methodology, specific environmental, economic and social benefits to stakeholders, and what products and services that will be delivered with timeline.

Budget estimate and sustainability plan (1 page): Budget estimate using the federal categories and specifying the institutional Indirect Cost Rate will provide reviewers with an understanding of the cost for the proposed effort. The estimate also includes how the investment will be sustained with opportunities to maintain their observing, modeling, or related activities models beyond the conclusion of the funding provided by GCOOS. However, this is not the official budget for your project. After the LOI review, PIs will be notified if they are included in the overall GCOOS proposal. Once notified of inclusion in the GCOOS proposal, official documents, including an official budget and budget justification that has been approved by your sponsored research or administrative team will be requested. A plan to mitigate losses of equipment should be included and insurance will be requested for funded proposals including the maintenance or purchase of observation assets valued in more than \$150,000. Budget table:

| | Year 1 | Year 2 | Year 3 | Year 4 | Year 5 | Totals |
|------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Salary | | | | | | |
| Fringe Benefits | | | | | | |
| Travel | | | | | | |
| Equipment | | | | | | |
| Supplies | | | | | | |
| Contractual | | | | | | |
| Construction | | | | | | |
| Other | | | | | | |
| Total Direct Charges | | | | | | |
| Indirect Charges | | | | | | |
| TOTAL REQUESTED | | | | | | |

No funding targets yet

- **Stakeholder engagement plan** (2 pages): Describe the end-user engagement strategy. Describe coordination and communications between project team and end-user groups and how you will promote continuous engagement in project activities.
- **Data management plan** (2 pages): Plan should address the creation of metadata, data format standardization, data QA/QC, data access, data storage and processing requirements, and data archival. All real-time data shared to GCOOS must have Quality Control flags submitted with the data. Real-time data providers must meet, at minimum, Quality Control/Quality-Assurance of Real-Time Oceanographic Data (QARTOD) standard standards outlined in the [QARTOD manuals](#) provided by IOOS.
- **Resumes** of PI and listed co-PIs (2 pages each).
- **Literature cited** (no limit).

Review Criteria

LOIs will be evaluated by the GCOOS Board of Directors and Senior Leadership using the following weighted criteria:

| Criteria | Weight |
|------------------------------|---------------|
| Scientific & Technical Merit | 30% |
| Innovation & Efficiency | 15% |
| Stakeholder Engagement | 30% |
| Budget Feasibility | 15% |
| Sustainability Plan | 10% |

1.) Scientific and Technical Merit: 30%

To receive a top score of 5 for these criteria, the Letter of Intent must clearly and comprehensively address the following five key elements:

- The project will be beneficial to a broad spatial coverage of the GCOOS region (i.e., two or more states);
- The project demonstrates a credible scientific and technical approach to meet the objectives;
- Objectives are clearly written, methods are sound, and there is a clear work plan and realistic timeline;
- The project team must be comprised of competent members with relevant education, scientific, and technical experience to complete the work described within the LOI;
- The project must have clear data management strategy that explains how the data or model will be shared with GCOOS.

Projects that fail to address all these required bullet points should not receive full credit under the Scientific and Technical criteria.

2.) Innovation and Efficiency: 15%

Project should improve, develop, or support observations, models, and/or data services. Institutional expertise and capacity deliver cost-effective projects in an efficient way.

3.) Stakeholder Engagement: 30%

Letters of Intent must clearly demonstrate the extent to which end-users have been involved in the proposal's development, as well as how they will be actively engaged throughout the project's execution.

Project teams are expected to include partners who can ensure that data delivery, services, and activities are aligned with the needs of a substantial user base.

Evaluation of LOI will focus on the depth and continuity of end-user involvement—from initial proposal design to meaningful participation during the project lifecycle, including potential roles as co-investigators.

4.) Budget Feasibility: 15%

The budget must provide a clear breakdown of annual expenses by category, including both direct and indirect costs, and specify the institution's indirect cost (IDC) rate.

All proposed costs should be appropriate and proportional to the scope and scale of the work to be performed.

5.) Sustainability Plan: 10%

The project team has outlined a clear strategy for sustaining observations or models beyond the conclusion of the funding provided by GCOOS.

This sustainability may be achieved through alternative support from state or federal agencies, Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) programs, or by leveraging funding from other complementary sources.

Questions?

Next Steps

(subject to change)

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- Deadline for Completion of PI proposal and Subaward Package: Nov. 30, 2025
 - Official full 5-year budget
 - Letters of support
- Anticipated GCOOS Full Proposal Submission to NOAA: Dec. 31, 2025
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