



Our Eyes on the Ocean, Coasts, and Great Lakes

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FY 2021 Caribbean Regional Association for Coastal Ocean Observing Award Information  
May 11, 2021

Dear Mr. Morell,

The U.S. Integrated Ocean Observing System (IOOS) Office has recommended funding in the amount of \$2,587,784 in Fiscal Year 2021 (FY21) for your NOAA award #NA21NOS0120089, entitled, *“The Caribbean Coastal Ocean Observing System: A Responsive Stakeholder-Driven Observing System Addressing Regional and National Needs in the US Caribbean.”* NOAA’s Grants Management Division will notify you of the availability of these funds.

The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021 provided \$40.5M in funding for IOOS Regional Observations with associated guidance in the Omnibus Report directing “NOS to expand the regional underwater profiling gliders program consistent with House direction as well as for disaster response and the forecasting of freshwater and marine water quality.” The House direction “supports IOOS’ efforts to expand its use of underwater gliders.”

The Omnibus also states, “Within funding provided for Coastal Zone Management and Services, \$2,500,000 is for the regional ocean partnerships, or their equivalent, to enhance their capacity for sharing and integration of Federal and non-Federal data to support regional coastal, ocean, and Great Lakes management priorities.” (Refer to Table 2 - Regional Ocean Data Sharing Initiative)

The NOAA Ocean Acidification Program (OAP) has provided \$54,340 in FY21 resources in support of projects carried out by CARICOOS partners in support of NOAA’s mission requirements under the Federal Ocean Acidification Research and Monitoring Act (FOARAM Act). This represents the first installment of three years approved support for the NOAA Ocean Acidification Observing Network long-term time-series station (NOA-ON) at Cheeca Rocks (PI Morelles, UPRM, \$54,340). The OAP provides support specific to the servicing and maintenance of the La Pargurea NOA-ON time-series which contributes to the nation-wide NOA-ON and serves as important node within the broader network of sustained OA observing assets supported by the NOAA Ocean Acidification Program and implemented by NOAA Pacific Marine Environmental Laboratory’s Carbon Group in partnership with extramural collaborators and

IOOS. This extensive network allows for comparisons of the dynamic range and controlling factors of acidification across diverse ocean regions. (Refer to Table 2 - Ocean Acidification)

I want to highlight table 1 below and provide an explanation as to why it is different compared to previous years. In the past, table 1 provided a break out of core funding. Core funding was defined as the total of Regional Coastal Ocean Observing System (RCOOS)<sup>1</sup>, High Frequency Radar Operations and Management (HRF O&M)<sup>2</sup>, and Fill the Gaps – Adjustment to Base (FTG-ATB)<sup>3</sup> funds and the starting point for determining next year’s funding for the RA, if appropriations were level. The table was broken out into these three sectors to allow the Office to better coordinate with the Regional Association (RA) on prioritization and funding for a sustained system, and track Fill the Gaps investments. In an effort to continue meeting Congressional directives, yet providing for more flexibility on how funds are distributed, the IOOS Office has determined that beginning in FY21 CARICOOS will receive a single core funding amount, which is the sum of past year’s RCOOS, HF Radar Operations O&M, and Fill the Gaps-Adjustment to Base. For FY21 this amount is \$2,254,000. Moving forward the Office will identify only one amount as the core amount. You will no longer be receiving funds broken down by RCOOS, HF Radar Operations O&M, and FTG-ATB. It is up to the discretion of the RA to determine amounts and prioritize these amounts. The intent is that this core amount be considered the sustained amount of funding for a regional observing system, if appropriations remain level. RAs can use this amount to plan from one year to another.

The United States Government, through the Consolidated Appropriations Act, directs the IOOS Office to support a number of thematic priorities as noted above. One of these priorities is the existing High Frequency Radar stations. While you may allocate funds to support any priorities within the region, the allocation should not be one that negatively affects the performance of HF radars. HF radar performance is measured by a metric approved by the IOOS Office Surface Currents Program Manager that was developed with input from a IOOS National HF Radar Technical Steering Team and the IOOS HF radar community. Providing you with the flexibility to determine how to operate and maintain these stations will still require CARICOOS to report to the IOOS Office Surface Currents Program Manager on activities specific to its HF Radar stations through the cooperative agreement reporting requirements.

As with HF Radars, we understand the need to continue to build and expand the underwater glider network. This is another thematic area which is a priority to IOOS and where appropriated funds must be directed towards. Our goal is to allow you the flexibility to determine regional needs for glider operations and how much funding will be directed to meet those needs. We expect each RA to coordinate with the IOOS Office and report on CARICOOS’ actions through the cooperative agreement reporting cycle.

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<sup>1</sup> Regional Coastal Ocean Observing System (RCOOS) funding is the amount that has been referred to as RCOOS Base in past years. Identifying this amount allows the IOOS Office to track baseline funding levels to previous years.

<sup>2</sup> HF Radar – Operations and Management is the HFR O&M funding level from past years and does not include O&M for radars added with “Fill the Gaps” funds.

<sup>3</sup> Fill the Gaps - Adjustment to Base is funding that will be included in the RA’s next year’s Core funding level if appropriations are level. This does not include one-time procurements or add-ons.

As noted in our letter dated April 26, 2021, the IOOS Office is committed to make the work of environmental justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion core to what we do and how we operate. As a first step, the IOOS Office has set aside Fiscal Year 2021 funding from our national line to match funding from the regions to build an approach for tackling this issue and promoting diversity, equity, and justice. Together, we can deliver IOOS information to enrich lives and livelihoods while also making inclusion, racial equity, and support for underserved communities a central part of our work. The IOOS Association, directly working with the RAs and the IOOS Office, will coordinate the work to be done with these funds.

The recommended funding amount for FY21 is different than requested in the proposal. A special award condition (SAC) is placed on your cooperative agreement requiring you submit a revised work plan for FY21 based on this new funding level. Please begin working with your constituents now. Refer to your official award documents, when you receive them later this year, for the due date applicable to this task. As you consider which products or services will be affected by the change in funding, please consult with the IOOS Office prior to removing any type of assets from deployment, including any proposed reduction in your Data Management and Cyberinfrastructure (DMAC) capabilities.

The Integrated Coastal and Ocean Observation System (ICOOS) Act of 2009 (Pub. L. 111-11, codified at 33 U.S.C. 3601-3610) and the Coordinated Ocean Observation and Research Act of 2020 (Public Law 116-271, Title I) directs the U.S. IOOS Office to develop national system capacity; please make the following allotments with FY 2021 funding:

Table 1. CORE Regional IOOS funding

Core IOOS Funding - (\$2,254,000)				
Amount	Funding Area	Task	ASAP TAS BETC Codes	Accounting Codes
\$2,254,000	Core	Sustained operational funding and service delivery.		FY21REG021 - V8KNNRG-P00-01-10-30-000

- Core funding is based on RCOOS (\$1,581,136) + HF Radar - O&M (\$50,000) + FTG ATB (\$589,864) + FY 2021 increase (\$33,000).

Table 2. Non CORE funding.

IOOS, NOAA, and Other Agency Funding				
Amount	Funding Area	Task	ASAP TAS BETC Code	Accounting Code
\$244,444	Regional Ocean Partnership	Regional Ocean Data Sharing Initiative		FY21OCM021-V8K MCDP-P00/01-30-10-001

\$54,340	Ocean Acidification	OAP allotment of FY21 project resources in support of the NOAA Ocean Acidification-Observation Network (NOA-ON) CARICOOS La Parguera Station (PI Morelles, University Puerto Rico Mayaguez)		FY21OAP021-V8R3 CEB-P00/03-03-11-033
\$25,000	Marine Biodiversity Observation Network	Support for biology-focused contributions to Caribbean regional engagement with IOCaribe and MBON		FY21REG021 - V8KNNRG-P00/01-10-30-000
\$10,000	University of the Virgin Islands	Vembu Subramanian Scholarship (PI – Watlington)		

Please note, with the exception of the Core IOOS Funds, the above allotments may not be cut as part of your revised work plan.

Feel free to contact me regarding your FY21 funding at [Oriana.Villar@noaa.gov](mailto:Oriana.Villar@noaa.gov). If you have technical questions about how to initiate an award action request in Grants Online, contact the Grants Online Help Desk at 1-877-662-2478.

Regards,

Oriana Villar  
U.S. Integrated Ocean Observing System