

COSEE Ocean Systems and NEOSEC Collaboration
Mini-grants Funding Opportunity
Request for Proposals
October 2011

Background

NEOSEC is a collaboration of more than forty institutions from across New England, including aquariums, museums, universities, government entities and science and research centers, that share a commitment to making Ocean Literacy a goal for all of New England.

Member institutions work together under the joint mission of leveraging and strengthening the region's extraordinary ocean science and educational assets to advance understanding of the vital connections between people and the ocean. Our combined expertise, resources, and networks in turn strengthen our member institutions and their programs and services in support of their own missions. [Ocean Systems](#) (COSEE-OS) is one of 14 [Centers for Ocean Sciences Education Excellence](#) (COSEE) funded by the National Science Foundation (NSF). The Center's goal is to help the COSEE Network reach rural and inland audiences. COSEE-OS creates and evaluates tools and techniques that broaden understanding of oceans in the context of the earth and solar systems.

NEOSEC is collaborating with COSEE-OS to:

1. Increase involvement of scientists in NEOSEC collaborative programs and within individual NEOSEC institutional programs
2. Support NEOSEC institutions in working with individual ocean scientists on fulfilling their broader impact requirements
3. Leverage COSEE-OS content resources and concept mapping tools in content areas such as climate change
4. Help to document and disseminate NEOSEC's model for collaboration

Mini-grants Program and Goals

A specific activity under this partnership is distribution of mini-grants to fund NEOSEC collaborations with scientists centered on developing museum or aquarium exhibits, formal classroom activities, and informal educational programming.

The goal of the mini-grant program is to support individual institutions in work directly with ocean scientists to advance ocean literacy, achieve broader impacts of ocean research, and expand partnerships between scientists and educators.

Funding and eligibility

A maximum of \$15,000 is available, from which we expect to award several mini-grants of \$3,000 to \$5,000.

Grants will be awarded to an organization or group of organizations that meet the following criteria:

- The project must be a partnership involving one or more educational institutions, and scientist(s) from one or more research institutions.

- At least one partner organization must be an institutional member of NEOSEC that conducts education and outreach programs
- At least one ocean scientist must be involved (anyone doing marine or aquatic research in a scientific discipline at a graduate or post-graduate level). Preference will be given to scientists or organizations that receive NSF research funding.

The program or activity proposed must focus on achieving broader impacts of ocean science research. See the NSF website (<http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/2007/nsf07046/nsf07046.jsp>) for a definition of broader impacts.

Funds may be used to partially defray staffing and other program development and implementation costs at the participating institutions.

Funds are for direct costs only, i.e., no institutional overhead should be included.

Funded projects will also receive support from NEOSEC staff in the form of:

- a collaborative project design and planning workshop with other grantees
- assistance with forming and facilitating partnerships
- support for project evaluation

To apply

To be considered for funding, send a proposal in electronic form (preferably MS Word) by 5:00 ET on December 15, 2011 to Billy Spitzer at bspitzer@neaq.org. Proposals will be reviewed by a panel consisting of representatives from COSEE-OS and NEOSEC staff. Awards will be announced by January 5, 2012.

Proposals must be no more than three pages in total (including budget) and include the following:

- Description of the proposed program including:
 - Purpose—what is the specific goal of the proposed project?
 - Inputs—who will be involved in the project? What resources are required?
 - Outputs—what program or product will the project produce? How might they be useful to future collaborators?
 - Outcomes—what do you hope the project will achieve? Will the program be sustainable or have other longer term impacts?
 - Timeframe—when will the program occur?
- Amount requested, with a simple budget
- How you will evaluate the success of the project
- How you will share the process and results of the project
- Contact information (name, organizational affiliation, email address, phone number) of primary applicant

For more information

If you have questions, please contact Billy Spitzer at bspitzer@neaq.org.