



Kyndra Reed & Tara M. Clemente

The UNOLS Technician Pool – 2025 Update

Supporting Oceanographic Research through Technical Expertise



TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY
Geochemical & Environmental
Research Group



History



- 2012 Small-scale start of pool (2 techs)
- Jan 2015 NSF issues RFP for 5-year Cooperative Agreement
- Jan 2016 Final agreement between NSF and TAMU; pool to run through February 2021.
- March 2016 Pool begins operations with 2 members; 7 by year end
- February 2021 No-cost extension
- June 2022 New 5-year contract with TAMU;
- October 2025 In year 9, 12 techs deployed this year, 50 have participated to date

Goals of Program

1. To retain a pool of experienced technicians and ensure that the necessary technical support is available for oceanographic research cruises when the ship's operator does not have the necessary support in house;
2. To provide opportunities for new/younger marine technicians to sail on multiple ships and learn the latest techniques from senior operatives they would likely not meet otherwise;
3. To ensure that experience built up over many years of marine operations is retained within the marine technician community even as older operatives retire; and
4. To work with UNOLS Technical Support Manager and handle all necessary support functions for technicians, including being a voice.





How it Works



- Technicians employed as independent contractors
- Initial agreement plus individual service supplements for each deployment
- Group insurance covers Maritime Employers' Liability and Marine General Liability insurance (2 claims to date); technicians responsible for own medical coverage
- Paid at standard day rates (depending on experience/abilities) based on 8 hr/day ashore, 12 hr/day at sea; includes travel and mob/demob days. Pay rise of 5% at all levels began Jan 2022. Another 7% increase for all levels began Jan 2025
- Eligible for attending training workshops if complete 100 days at sea/yr
- Work **NOT** guaranteed and techs may opt in and out of assignments and/or pool

Tech Pool Participation



Year	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2024	2025
Techs	7	13	14	15	11	16	16	18	19	19	12
Cruises	21	44	45	48	26	28	42	35	39	39	15

- Since 2016, 50 Techs have participated in 337 Cruises.
- 24 Ships have used the Tech Pool
- 2025: 12 Techs have participated in 15 cruises, so far.



Deployment Variety



Tech #	Deployments	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
2	43	8	7	4	9	6	3	3	1	1	1
3	24	1	4	3	5	2	1	7	1		
4	15	1	2	2	7	3					
6	13	2	6	5							
7	13	1	2	2	2	1	1		1	3	
8	5		3	2							
9	14		8	6							
10	23		5	5	2	1	4	2	2	2	
12	13		1	5		3	1	2		1	
13	12		1		1	2	3			3	2
21	5				1	1	1			1	1
28	8						1	3	2	1	1
31	6							4	1		1
32	10							2	4	4	
39	5								1	3	1
40	9								3	3	3
41	5								1	3	1
42	2								1		1
43	4									3	1
49	1										1
50	1										1
Total	337	21	44	45	48	26	28	42	35	44	15

Work With:

- Different Ships
- Different Technicians
- Gain & Share Knowledge & Experience





Days Worked



Year	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Sea Days	267	971	886	746	455	618	836	761	716	200
Shore Days	82	370	394	198	217	164	346	286	293	78
Total	349	1341	1280	944	672	782	1182	1047	1009	278

Getting Involved with the UNOLS Tech Pool

- Who's heard of the UNOLS Tech Pool?
- Who's *been* in the Tech Pool — or *is* in it right now?
- And who's curious to learn more about how to *join* the Tech Pool?





UNOLS Tech Pool Operations



Why Join the Tech Pool?

Always looking for experienced and aspiring
Marine Technicians

Benefits include:

- **Hands-on experience** – Work aboard state-of-the-art research vessels supporting cutting-edge science.
- **Career Flexibility** – Take on projects as available with no long-term commitment
- **Networking Opportunities** – connect with marine professionals and researchers.
- **Travel & Adventure** – Participate in Research cruises worldwide.





Who can Apply?

We welcome applications from individuals with backgrounds in:

- Marine Science, Oceanography or Engineering
- Shipboard technical support (electronics, IT, instrumentation, ROV's etc.)
- Data collection and field research operations

Areas of Technical Specialization

Electronics: Maintenance of electrical systems and sensors

Networking: Shipboard network infrastructure

Data Acquisition: Integration, calibration and validation of multi-sensor measurements systems

Instrumentation: Operation of CTDs, ADCPs, multibeam, etc.

Rigging & Deployments: Safe handling of gear under sea conditions (moorings, coring, etc.)



UNOLS Tech Pool Operations



Interested in joining?

How to Apply:

- Contact the UNOLS Technical Services Manager, Tara Clemente – Tara@unols.org

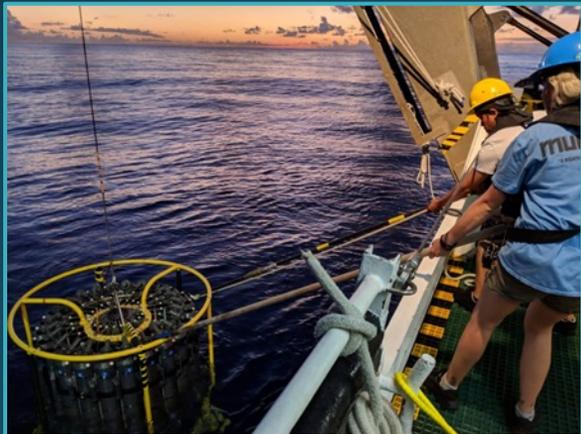
To apply, Send:

- A copy of your resume or CV
 - 2-3 references who can speak to your sea-going and technical experience
 - A short cover letter summarizing your experience and expertise
 - A completed Marine Technician Skills Questionnaire
-
- Available projects are advertised via the UNOLS Tech Pool Listserv.





UNOLS Tech Pool Operations



How it works?

- Available projects are announced via the UNOLS Tech Pool Listserv.
- Projects often arise as urgent, last-minute requests, so technicians should be ready to prepared to respond quickly.
- Once selected, you will be contracted through TAMU and will receive a Services Supplement outlining the project details.
- Technicians coordinate their own travel directly with the project manager.
- Participate in the cruise and complete assigned duties.
- After the cruise, submit invoices to Kyndra Reed (TAMU) and Tara Clemente (UNOLS) for payment and processing.





UNOLS Tech Pool Operations



Technician Assignment

- Assignments are made based on technician **skillset and availability**.
- Institutions may **request specific technicians**, pending coordination and approval.
- Technicians may arrangements directly with institutions but must keep the **UNOLS Tech Services Manager** informed.

Pay Structure

- Technician rates are determined by experience and technical proficiency.
- Experienced technicians with specialized skill receive higher compensation.
- New technician rates are set by the UNOLS Tech Manager upon joining the program.



Requesting a Technician

Plan Ahead for Success

- While last- minute requests can be accommodated, early planning is strongly encouraged.
- Submitting your technician request well in advance ensures:
 - Availability of qualified technicians
 - Better project preparation and support
 - More efficient coordination with TAMU and UNOLS staff



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Requesting a Technician

The UNOLS Technician Pool is coordinated by the UNOLS Office and Texas A&M University's (TAMU) Geochemical and Environmental Research Group (GERG).

1. Identify your project needs
2. Contact the Tech Pool (tara@unols.org)
3. Receive technician recommendations
4. Review and confirm – Complete Service Supplement Form
5. Finalize request – TAMU issues Contract; Travel arranged
6. Deployment and support checks
7. Post-project invoice submission and debrief

Note: The UNOLS Technician Pool provides skilled technical support for research cruises, shore-based projects, and other oceanographic operations.

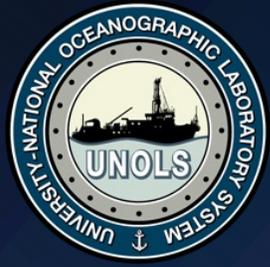
Benefits of the Tech Pool



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- Provides institutions with a flexible, efficient solution for technical support.
- Reduces the administrative burden of direct hiring.
- Enables rapid onboarding of qualified technicians for time-sensitive needs.
- Provides access to experienced techs for mission-critical operations.





Conclusion



- Pool has relieved ship operators from having to keep additional techs in house
- Pool has provided operators with ability to see techs in action before hiring them permanently
- Techs have more freedom to work when they want to although pay not guaranteed
- Pool provides techs with additional opportunities to sail on multiple vessels and meet other techs, as well as get training in new techniques and with new equipment



Thank YOU!

QUESTIONS?

Kyndra Reed

Geochemical and
Environmental Research Group
Texas A&M University

kreed@tamu.edu

Tara M. Clemente

University-National
Oceanographic
Laboratory System

tara@unols.org

<https://www.unols.org/unols-technician-pool>



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