

September 18, 2017

Dear Colleague:

There will be an open competition to choose concurrently a new host institution for the UNOLS Office and a new UNOLS Executive Secretary. With this letter I am soliciting, "Letters of Intent" from any UNOLS Member Institution planning to propose hosting the UNOLS Office. These letters of intent are due in the UNOLS Office by November 28, 2017 and will be the first step in the process of establishing the UNOLS Office in May 2019 at the institution submitting the successful proposal.

Jon Alberts will step down as UNOLS Executive Secretary on April 30, 2019 upon expiration of the current cooperative agreement and grants to the University of Rhode Island for hosting the UNOLS Office. Annette DeSilva, UNOLS Deputy Executive Secretary, will step down from UNOLS at that time as well. An open competition for a new host institution and Executive Secretary is being initiated in accordance with the UNOLS Charter, paragraph 4h. (attached as Enclosure 1). The competition is open to all UNOLS Member institutions. Each proposing institution will also submit its own candidate for Executive Secretary, which will be a key factor in selecting the next host institution.

The UNOLS Office is funded through a cooperative agreement administered by the National Science Foundation (NSF) and grants funded by the Office of Naval Research (ONR) and the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS). The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM), contribute to funding UNOLS through the NSF cooperative agreement. The cooperative agreements and grants have been for five-year periods, and total approximately \$6.5M for that period. The amount covers salaries and expenses for running the office; travel for UNOLS Council, Committee members and office staff to UNOLS meetings and functions; expenses for arranging and supporting UNOLS meetings; costs associated with the UNOLS website, listserves, and database; service contracts for the UNOLS fleet; and costs of special reports, publications, etc. Institutions that submit letters of intent will be provided more detailed information on the UNOLS Office budget.

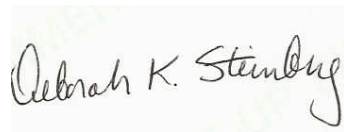
Additional details about position descriptions, office responsibilities, etc. will be posted on the UNOLS website at: <<https://www.unols.org/2019-unols-office-re-competition>>. Questions about the solicitation and UNOLS Office can be submitted via the website. Answers to these questions will be posted and available to all institutions interested in submitting a proposal.

UNOLS will invite proposals from all interested Member Institutions, will evaluate proposals in accordance with the UNOLS Charter and provide a single recommendation, endorsed by UNOLS members to the funding agencies by August 2018. The process schedule is attached as Enclosure 2. In order to simplify the process, proposals submitted to UNOLS for evaluation should conform to the requirements in the current NSF Grant Proposal Guide. The UNOLS evaluation may include site visits, interviews with candidate Executive Secretaries and inspection of facilities.



The choices of host institution for the UNOLS Office and of the Executive Secretary are critical to UNOLS' continued success. I urge each Member Institution to consider carefully the opportunities and responsibilities involved.

Sincerely,



Dr. Deborah Steinberg  
UNOLS Chair

Enclosure 1: UNOLS Charter (paragraph 4h.)

Enclosure 2: Schedule for Selection of UNOLS Office Host Institution and UNOLS Executive Secretary

Distribution: UNOLS Members  
UNOLS Council

Funding Agency representatives:

NSF: Bob Houtman  
ONR: Tim Schnoor  
NOAA: LCDR Stephen Barry  
USGS: Susan Russell-Robinson  
BOEM: Guillermo Auad



## Enclosure 1: UNOLS Charter

**4h.) UNOLS Office and Executive Secretary:** A UNOLS Office shall be established for the purposes of providing staff support and secretariat services to UNOLS, the UNOLS Chair, Council, and Committees as directed. The Office shall serve as a focal point for UNOLS correspondence and for central files on facilities, schedules, user requirements and related information. The Office shall advertise, arrange, support and report on UNOLS, Council and Committee meetings. It shall arrange and manage contracts for blanket services to the UNOLS fleet and UNOLS institutions under guidance from the Chair and Council, and at the behest of sponsoring agencies.

The UNOLS Office shall normally be established at a UNOLS operator institution. It is expected that the UNOLS Office will rotate among UNOLS institutions. The UNOLS Chair, with the UNOLS Council, shall review UNOLS Office performance and activities prior to the completion of the first five-year term (or at intervals controlled by the duration of funding grants or agreements). Based on this review, the Council shall recommend whether or not to renew the host institution for a second term. The Office may, if so suggested by review, be moved after five years. The Office should not remain at a single institution for more than ten years, except under extraordinary circumstances.

The UNOLS Office shall be headed by the Executive Secretary, who will be an employee of the institution hosting the UNOLS Office. The Executive Secretary, while administratively an employee of the host institution, shall act under direction from the UNOLS Chair and Council. If it is necessary to select or replace the Executive Secretary, open competition for a host institution shall be held concurrently. The Executive Secretary is responsible for all UNOLS Office functions and other UNOLS duties as directed by the UNOLS Chair and Council. It is expected that the Executive Secretary will be thoroughly familiar with the operation and scheduling of academic research vessels and with UNOLS and Federal policies related to research vessel and facility operations.

Selection of an institution to host the UNOLS Office and of Executive Secretary shall be by open, competitive process. These selections ordinarily will be made concurrently. The UNOLS Chair shall invite all UNOLS institutions to submit letter proposals identifying their candidate for Executive Secretary and advancing their capabilities for hosting the Office. The Chair, with advice from the UNOLS Council, shall appoint an Evaluation Committee, organized with due regard for UNOLS institutions' interests, for the purpose of recommending the best proposals for host institution and Executive Secretary. The recommendation from the Evaluation Committee, with the review and consent first of the Council and then of the UNOLS membership, shall be transmitted to the agencies administering the UNOLS Office cooperative agreements and grants. It shall then be necessary for the institution recommended as UNOLS Office host to submit a proposal to the administering agencies. Contractual obligations between the UNOLS institution hosting the UNOLS Office and the funding agencies shall be the responsibility of those organizations.



Costs of operating the UNOLS Office will be federally funded and should be prorated among the funding agencies in accordance with their participation in contract and grant programs with the institutions, or by such other arrangements as may be agreed to by the Federal agencies.



**Enclosure 2**

**Schedule for Selection of UNOLS Office Host Institution  
and UNOLS Executive Secretary**

**2017**

September - Announce competition for hosting UNOLS Office and solicit letters of intent.

28 November (or sooner) - Letters of Intent due to UNOLS Chair or UNOLS Office.

8 December - UNOLS Chair invites proposals from interested member institutions; Announce makeup of UNOLS Evaluation Committee (from non-conflicted members of UNOLS)

**2018**

16 March - Proposals\* due (to UNOLS Chair or UNOLS Office)

1 April to 1 July - Evaluation of Proposals; may include site visits, interviews with candidate Executive Secretaries, etc.

15 July - Evaluation Committee recommendations to UNOLS Council.

July - UNOLS Council reviews Evaluation Committee recommendations and forwards recommendation with their consent.

Late July - Notify the Agencies of Evaluation Committee recommendation.

1 August - Evaluation Committee recommendation, with UNOLS Council endorsement circulated to UNOLS membership for concurrence.

15 August - Notify institution selected as the UNOLS recommendation.

**2019**

15 October - Submit proposal to NSF and other funding agencies.

1 May - UNOLS Office established at new host institution.

\* These proposals should be in NSF format. The one getting UNOLS recommendation could be submitted to NSF, with very little modification other than the UNOLS endorsement.

