



IOOC Response to IOOS Advisory Committee Phase 1 Recommendations

DEIA:

Recommendation 1: The IOOS Program Office, working with the IOOS Association, the RAs, the IOOC and others (e.g. NOS) should develop common DEIA vision and mission statements for the IOOS enterprise.

- The vision statement should identify the key outcomes of the DEIA work to be undertaken by the IOOS enterprise.
- The mission statement should identify key audiences with whom the IOOS enterprise will work, how the work will be conducted (e.g., principles of engagement) and the benefits they will receive as a result of this DEIA work.

➤ **IOOC Response:** The IOOC recognizes and appreciates the progress made in developing the DEIA vision and mission statements for the IOOS enterprise. We fully support this important process. It is worth noting that certain agencies within the IOOC may encounter challenges in implementing DEIA practices due to certain administrative restrictions and sensitivities. We remain committed to working collaboratively to overcome these limitations and promote inclusivity and diversity within our community.

Recommendations 3: NOAA and the IOOC should develop and execute strategies in DEIA activities that will strengthen the IOOS Program, IOOC observing community, and the new blue economy. This could include:

- Conduct, assess, and publish publicly a baseline data assessment of DEIA workforce across IOOC agencies. Update the baseline assessment every two to three years to monitor areas of need and progress for follow up action as appropriate.
- Conduct an assessment of barriers to and opportunities for DEIA, including workforce development and access to funding. Assessment should include how data sources, metrics and analytical methods can be used in decision making for investments in DEIA programs.
- Develop and implement an investment strategy that could have the greatest impacts for DEIA elements with a focus on underserved communities, operational observation systems, information access, research and development and technological innovation.
- Where appropriate develop, expand, and implement partnerships with stakeholders and minority serving communities to foster technological innovation and inclusivity, including the IOOC agencies, academia, NGOs and the private sector.
- In coordination with the U.S. IOOS community, develop a plan for incorporating the new [White House Council on Environmental Quality \(CEQ\) Indigenous Knowledge Guidance for Federal Agencies](#) into IOOS operations.
- Explore the creation of an internship/fellowship program designed to increase agency connections with underserved communities. Such internships might be well served by including

a position guarantee (e.g., service agreement equal to, or greater than time spent as an intern) within that agency or the intern's home state equivalent.

- **IOOC Response:** The IOOC strongly acknowledges and supports the DEIA strategies listed above and is committed to actively promoting these important issues as appropriate. As mentioned above, it is important to recognize that while the IOOC strives for comprehensive implementation of DEIA practices, it has to be consistent with individual agency's internal protocols.

Other recommendations that mention IOOC:

IOOC Response: The IOOC agencies have taken note of the recommendations regarding Climate, New Blue Economy, and DEIA, which highlight the importance of coordination with federal agencies. While a specific response is not deemed necessary, the committee would like to underscore the significance of IOOS collaborating with other line offices at NOAA and the broader IOOC agencies to develop and establish fully systematic networks. This collaborative effort will ensure a comprehensive and integrated approach to effectively address the recommendations and achieve our shared goals.

Climate:

Recommendation 1: NOAA should develop a national integrated coastal climate capability with IOOS as the national leader to collect-collate-synthesize continental shelf data. NOAA should designate and provide the resources to support IOOS as that leader, including appointing a full-time coastal climate program manager to manage and guide aspects of collecting, integrating, and disseminating data working with NOAA's climate programs and the IOOC agencies.

NBE:

Recommendation 1: NOAA should invest in technology advancement by leveraging the IOOS network of government agencies, academia, and industry.

- Technology is rapidly evolving in the ocean domain, with the creation of new sensor technology, dramatic increases in remotely-sensed data, new modeling techniques, and the use of AI/ML.
- Active engagement with the growing number of technology startups in the blue economy, and coordination of joint projects across sectors would be impactful.
- IOOS should continue to use the Ocean Technology Transition (OTT) program and explore collaboration with IOOC and NOPP on Notice of Funding Opportunity's (NOFO) related to research-to-operations.
- NOAA should evaluate options for a new funding model, including Other Transaction Agreements (OTAs), that allows for rapid funding and evaluation of new technologies that are agile and can move quickly to start and stop projects.

DEIA:

Recommendation 5: NOAA should ensure coordination of DEIA activities across NOAA and the broader IOOC community. The U.S. IOOS Office could:

- Work with other NOAA Line Offices and the IOOC to ensure coordination of DEIA initiatives, to avoid duplication, provide an agency focus, and maximize investments and best practices.
- Continue to ensure that resources are available for IOOS staff to participate in NOAA diversity initiatives and to work to transfer knowledge and experience gained to Regional Association partners.
- In coordination with other entities, convene a workshop on DEIA with representation from diverse groups, including scientists and technologists from diverse fields (including social scientists and students) from academia, government, industry.