



LONG TERM ECOLOGICAL RESEARCH NETWORK OFFICE (LNO)

Synthesis Working Group Proposals *Informational Webinar*

Proposal deadline: October 12, 2022
<https://lternet.edu/synthesis/rfp-2022/>

LNO BACKGROUND

- Goals of the LTER Network Office are to foster enhanced **communication, collaboration, synthesis, training, and engagement** across the LTER network.
- Hosted at the National Center for Ecological Analysis and Synthesis at University of CA Santa Barbara
- The Center provides:
 - excellent in-house and virtual meeting facilities,
 - local and remote access to analytical servers
 - comprehensive computing capabilities, and
 - consultation and training for visiting scientists on computation, informatics, and in-person and virtual collaboration skills.



PROPOSAL TOPICS

Most interested in proposals anticipated to return high impact results in the five core LTER thematic areas:

- **Primary production**
- **Population studies**
- **Movement of Organic Matter**
- **Movement of Inorganic Matter**
- **Disturbance patterns and processes**

or two social-ecological thematic areas:

- **Land use and land cover changes**
- **Human-environment interactions**

Proposals in other areas will also be considered

NEW THIS YEAR - Scientific Peers Advancing Research Collaborations (SPARC) proposals

- SPARC proposals for a **single**, small-group workshop (up to 12 people x 4 days) to **plan new research** or **complete a nearly finished effort**
- expected outcomes may take the form of **papers, planning** or **research coordination efforts**.
- Virtual preparatory and followup meetings for SPARC workshops are encouraged and the LNO can provide logistical support for those.
- Proposals have slightly different requirements- read the RFP carefully for components that may not be required for SPARC proposals

Full Working groups vs. SPARC groups

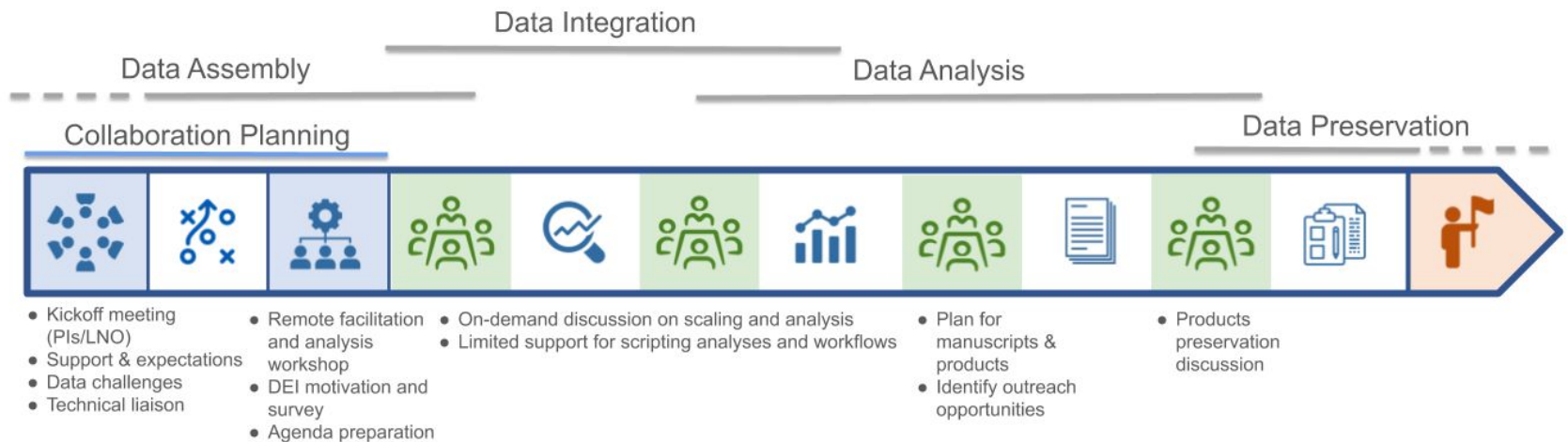
FULL PROPOSALS

- Typically 4, 4-day WG meetings of ~12 people
- Typically 2 years duration
- Some meetings might be held off-site
- Prep and followup virtual meetings with LNO support
- Budget not to exceed ~ \$110,000

SPARC PROPOSALS

- Single 4 day meeting of ~12 people
- Meeting must be on-site at NCEAS
- Prep and followup virtual meetings with LNO support
- Budget not to exceed ~ \$20,000

What is a working group and how does synthesis work proceed?



<https://lternet.edu/synthesis/synthesis-resources/>

WHO CAN APPLY?

Proposals may be submitted by individuals (any nationality) holding a position in:

- academic institution,
 - free-standing research institution,
 - scientific society,
 - governmental or policy agency,
 - non-governmental organization,
 - consortium of such institutions.
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- Should include **one or more LTER researchers** who are familiar with the LTER sites and data that will be used in the analysis.

Diversity

Expectations

Working groups that include a diverse array of participants who are committed to the project will be favored.

Considerations:

- gender balance,
- career stage, and
- opportunities to include individuals from underrepresented institutions and groups

The LNO is interested in increasing opportunities for early-career scientists and graduate students through participation in LTER synthesis activities.

DATA

- Emphasize use of existing LTER data from more than one site – **required.**
- In addition to multi-site LTER data, we welcome inclusion of data from other sources:
 - datasets from individual researchers
 - data from other networks (e.g. CZO, NEON, OBFS, ILTER, LTREB)
- Groups must agree to:
 - comply with the [LTER Network Data Access Policy](https://lternet.edu/data-access-policy/) (<https://lternet.edu/data-access-policy/>)
 - Document and make derived data (data resulting from analyses from which the original data cannot be reconstituted) publicly available.

Data Science

Liaison

Each **FULL** WG is required to designate a *data science liaison* to work with NCEAS' scientific computing team on:

- computing needs,
- collaboration capabilities (e.g. project management, mailing list and collaborative workspace),
- data management and processing (e.g. metadata development and distribution)
- analytical needs (e.g. modeling).

The data science liaison could be one of the PIs, an LTER site Information Manager (IM), an ECR or any another working group member who has agreed to fulfill this role.

Support and training will be provided.

*not required for SPARC

FUNDING

What can be funded?

- Meeting travel
- Lodging
- Per diem
- Publication costs
- LNO reimburses actual expenses

What cannot be funded?

- Collection of new data or field research
- Overhead or funds to be spent by the investigator at the investigator's home institution
- Activities that primarily address the goals of another organization

How many groups may be funded?

- 2-4 FULL groups for up to a 2-year duration
- 3 SPARC groups for 1 year/1 meeting

COVID-RELATED CONSIDERATIONS

- We are open to Full working groups running some virtual meetings or smaller group meetings in other venues
- SPARC meeting should take place at NCEAS
- **Proposers should budget as if in-person meetings will proceed in California and/or other locations close to the participant's institutions.**
- The LNO will provide increased technical and logistical support and training for the use of virtual meetings and virtual collaboration

BUDGETS, MEETINGS AND GROUP SIZE

- Budget requests should not exceed US\$55,000 per year (FULL proposals) and US\$20,000 (SPARC)
- Full working groups of ~12 scientists (18 maximum) work at the Center for ~4 days. Each Working Group typically meets 2-3 times a year.
- SPARC working groups of ~12 participants work at Center for single ~4 day meeting.
- Partial support from other institutions or agencies, and co-funding is welcomed but not required.

Key differences from prior (2016-2018) solicitations

- Data sources table required (not included in word count)
- Greater role and more support/training for technical liaison and data workflows
- New resources on synthesis process:
<https://lternet.edu/synthesis/synthesis-resources/>

Data Sources Table		
Project Name:		
General description of data requirements ((e.g. ecosystem type, taxonomic group, key metrics or processes, time series length, location, number of sites or studies):		
Identified datasets:		
Source (URL/doi or name of individual)	Status (see RFP for details)	Legal or practical constraints on acquisition/sharing

Review

Proposals are evaluated for **Process**

- scientific merit and novel approaches,
- contribution to LTER Network science,
- participant diversity,
- participant expertise (both scientific and technical).

Review panel includes:

- LTER scientists
- non-LTER scientists

The final decision on funding is made by the **LNO Executive Director** in consultation with the **Chair of the LTER Executive Board**.

Based upon panel discussions as well as COVID-related constraints at the time of award, the LNO may request modifications to the proposal (e.g., adjustments to working group size or composition, inclusion of additional data resources) before funding is awarded.

KEY DATES

Key Proposal Dates and Deadlines

Informational Webinar

Wed. August 3 at 9 am PST

Proposal Due Date

Wed, October 12, 5pm PDT

Awards announced

early January, 2023

Projects begin

February, 2023