

Request for Information

A Final Call for Expressions of Interest from IRIS and UNAVCO Member Institutions for Hosting Future Geophysical Facilities

January 20, 2020

In the summer of 2020, IRIS and UNAVCO posted a [request for information \(RFI\)](#) to identify Member Institutions that may be willing to host one or more functions of a future (post-2023) merged IRIS-UNAVCO organization and to learn more about what hosting capabilities may exist. Much has transpired since the original RFI, and we have thus decided to publish this follow-up RFI. We explain more below.

First, we note that the Boards of Directors of IRIS and UNAVCO have voted unanimously for pursuing a merger of the two organizations. Second, the membership of each organization has voted overwhelmingly in favor of the merger and has approved the formal agreement and plan of merger, as well as the bylaws for the new organization. Finally, a name has been selected for the future merged organization: EarthScope Consortium, Incorporated. Visit this [website](#) for additional information.

During the past months, the IRIS and UNAVCO organizations have shifted to an emergency teleworking model for most employees as a result of the pandemic. While we don't expect this situation to be permanent, it has certainly altered our thoughts about the degree to which a future EarthScope Consortium might use teleworking to reduce its costs.

Given all of these developments, we have decided to reissue and, to some degree, rescope the RFI. Responses to this RFI will be more streamlined than for the previous call. Our goal is to make sure that any interested Member Institution has an opportunity to respond. We do not plan to conduct a follow-on request for proposals. Instead, we will review the expressions of interest, combined with our own research and analysis, to determine which organizations we will follow-up with for more information and/or negotiation.

Organizations that responded to the first RFI need not respond again. However, if your interest changes as a result of the information presented here, please let us know.

Context

Please refer to the [original RFI](#) for further context for this follow-up RFI.

Scope

As noted above, we now envision that EarthScope Consortium may make greater use of teleworking than we previously thought possible. Respondents should review the previous RFI to familiarize themselves with the scale of facilities required if EarthScope Consortium makes only modest use of teleworking. On the other hand, if EarthScope Consortium makes substantial use of teleworking for office-based work, then we will require a significantly reduced facility footprint, as described below.

1. **Headquarters and business operations.** Requires a standard office environment, as described in the original RFI. However, this facility may routinely house as few as 5-10 people. Additionally, teleworking staff would work at the headquarters office for short periods of time, so would utilize a small number of visitor offices for this purpose.

2. **Instrumentation Services.** The description of this facility is largely unchanged from the original RFI, with the primary difference being the number of offices required. We believe that it may be possible for some of the staff to telework, so we could operate in a facility with fewer offices.
3. **Data Services.** Requires a standard office environment, as described in the original RFI. However, this facility may routinely house only 5-10 people. Additionally, teleworking staff would work at the data services office for short periods of time, so would utilize a small number of visitor offices for this purpose. We expect that the modest computer facilities could be supplied by a university- or commercial-based colocation facility.
4. **Education and public outreach.** Requires a standard office environment, as described in the original RFI or space that could be readily combined with the headquarters space. The space might house only 1 or 2 people on a regular basis.

Responses

All IRIS or UNAVCO Member Institutions based in the USA are eligible to respond. We recommend responses be short and address at least these key areas:

- Identify any and all functional areas (from the list above) that your institution may be interested in hosting.
- Briefly describe any broader institutional capabilities and possible synergies between the host institution and the new organization. Particularly desirable are those synergies that further the mission of the new organization and thus enhance its growth and ability to make vital contributions to an engaged and diverse society, which is resilient to geohazards and is informed by geophysical discovery and global collaboration.
- Provide a discussion of cost and financial considerations relevant to your expression of interest – cost will be an important factor to the EarthScope Consortium. A discussion of overhead rates, potential institutional, state, or other contributions, incentives, cost matches or other cost reduction strategies is welcome.

As noted above, responses can express interest in hosting any one or more, or parts thereof, of the functional areas described above.

Response Specifications and Instructions

Responses should be no longer than 5 pages and shorter is preferred.

Responses should identify an institutional point-of-contact who can respond to questions.

Responses should be emailed by 5:00 PM MT February 26, 2021 in PDF format to: rfi@iris.edu.

Questions can also be addressed to: rfi@iris.edu. General questions will be anonymized, and the questions and answers will be added to an FAQ at:

https://www.iris.edu/hq/news/story/geophysical_facility_rfi

Review Process and Next Steps

This is a final call for expressions of interest. ***Interested parties must reply to be considered further.*** A committee, jointly appointed by the IRIS and UNAVCO Boards of Directors, will review the responses to this and the previous RFI. We will use these responses to inform how we will structure the facilities

needed to host the new organization. The IRIS and UNAVCO committee will then pursue further dialog and/or negotiation with selected parties, at its sole discretion.

RFI Terms and Conditions

IRIS and UNAVCO will not make any binding agreements as a result of this RFI. Any alleged oral agreements made by respondents with IRIS or UNAVCO employees will be disregarded in any evaluation of an institution's response.

Responses to this RFI will become the exclusive property of IRIS and UNAVCO upon receipt and will not be returned. Responses will be treated as the respondents' confidential and proprietary information.