



NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION  
2415 EISENHOWER AVENUE  
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NSF 19-083

## Dear Colleague Letter: An Update to the Approach for the Provision of Marine Seismic Capabilities for the U.S. Research Community

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September 4, 2019

Dear Colleagues:

This Dear Colleague Letter provides updated information regarding the National Science Foundation's (NSF) Division of Ocean Sciences (OCE) support of the marine seismic community need for long-term sustainable access to seismic data collection capability. This Dear Colleague Letter supersedes [NSF 18-061](#).

NSF/OCE is implementing the following actions to ensure continued access to capabilities comparable with those available via the *R/V Marcus G. Langseth*:

1. Operations of *R/V Marcus G. Langseth* will be extended through the end of fiscal year 2021 (September 30, 2021) when dry-docking of the vessel is scheduled. The dry-docking activity which would be necessary for continued operations will not be conducted and instead the vessel will be retired.
2. NSF is accepting proposals to [PD 17-1620](#) for use of the *R/V Langseth* during the period October 1, 2020 to September 30, 2021 for operations in the eastern Pacific. The focus of the additional period of *Langseth* operations is on providing opportunities for early career researchers to develop their skills, particularly as Principal Investigators (PIs).
3. NSF seeks to avoid a hiatus in seismic research opportunities after retirement of *R/V Langseth* by facilitating access to the active source seismic capabilities available in the commercial and international sectors through two mechanisms, that are not mutually exclusive.
  - a. NSF will solicit proposals in Fall 2019 for an award to establish a seismic vessel facilitator whose role will be to work with PIs in identifying potential commercial sector vessels with the needed seismic capabilities and developing contract documentation needed to support the submission of research proposals. It is

expected that the facilitator will be in place before the retirement of the R/V *Langseth*.

- b. NSF will accept research proposals that utilize international vessels in parallel with proposals utilizing commercial sector vessels.

Sincerely,

William E. Easterling  
Assistant Director for Geosciences