

Florida Institute of Oceanography

Originally established in 1967, the reorganized Florida Institute of Oceanography (FIO) will provide affordable vessel platforms and lab support to FIO member organizations, state government organizations, and non-governmental entities. These goals will be accomplished by operating and providing the *R/V Weatherbird II* and the *R/V Bellows* on both a fee basis and a no-cost grant basis to applicants from the FIO member institutions. The FIO consists of the eleven (11) state universities and nine (9) other entities, which include faculty, staff, and scientists conducting research and teaching and who may wish to utilize ships, facilities, and other services provided by FIO.

The Florida Oceans and Coastal Council reports that more than \$25 billion of Florida's Gross State Product (GSP) is generated from its ocean, and more than \$560 billion of the state's GSP, when all direct and value-added expenditures are captured, is generated in the coastal counties. The FIO mission is to (1) provide a diverse and collaborative statewide forum addressing problems of concern in coastal oceanographic research and education; (2) leverage and integrate existing physical and intellectual resources within the State University System (SUS) and throughout Florida; (3) anticipate and plan for future infrastructure needs; (4) facilitate, promote, and support collaborative ocean-related research and education statewide; and (5) develop and strengthen networks that enable timely identification of oceanographic research opportunities and distribution of research results and other information to the general public, natural resource management agencies, and local, state, and national policymakers.

FIO Councils and Committees (Advisory Board)

The FIO Council will consist of one representative from each member organization and two from the host institution appointed for a two-year term by its president or CEO or his/her designee. Representatives must be active members of the Florida coastal ocean research and education community. The FIO Executive Committee will consist of five FIO Council members, including the FIO Council Chair and four elected members. The FIO Ship Scheduling and Coordination Committee will consist of at least three members (with at least one from the host institution) elected by the FIO Council and will assure that the research vessels can work efficiently in all of Florida's coastal ocean and surrounding waters (Straits of Florida, coastal Atlantic, Bahamas, Caribbean, and northern Gulf of Mexico).

Budget

The 2009-2010 operating budget for FIO is \$2,167,572, of which approximately half is expected to be earned from auxiliary operations associated with the research vessels. FIO will be supported by funds flowing from the State Legislature, fees charged for use of vessels and facilities, appropriate charges to administer contracts and grants awarded to or passed through FIO, and overhead returned.