

Dear JOIDES Resolution science party members:

The ocean drilling program in the U.S. stands at a critical junction. Not only does the drilling program need to be renewed in October 2024, but the D/V JOIDES Resolution is reaching the end of its utility, and a new vessel needs to be designed and built. At this moment, NSF is considering (1) whether to continue operating the D/V JOIDES Resolution for four extra years under a new US-led program from October 2024 through 2028, (2) whether to divest this large facility (instead) in October 2024, and (3) whether to start the conceptual design for a new global-ranging riserless drilling vessel. These decisions will have major implications to the Earth, ocean, life, and planetary sciences, and the science communities including—but certainly not limited to—paleoceanography and paleoclimatology and those disciplines involved in researching and understanding geohazards from earthquakes through scientific ocean drilling.

All three above considerations have serious consequences! The bridging program between 2024-2028 will require a new program and close to a doubling of the operating budget for the JOIDES Resolution as funded by NSF. The divest option therefore becomes very realistic and the JOIDES Resolution may go offline when the current IODP program ends in October 2024. And, finally, the leasing or acquiring of a new drilling vessel is long (decadal scale) process!

In short, we need everyone's sustained support and we must battle for the future for scientific ocean drilling in the United States of America.

At this moment, there are three immediate actions where you can provide help and support:

- (1) Sign the petition at <https://us-soda.org/petition/> and get as many of your colleagues/peers to sign as well
- (2) Work with your institution's leadership to consider sending in a letter to NSF expressing strong support for scientific ocean drilling
- (3) Join US-SODA as a supporting institution

US - SCIENTIFIC OCEAN DRILLING ALLIANCE (US-SODA)

Leaders from thirteen U.S. oceanographic institutions have come together in the US - Scientific Ocean Drilling Alliance (US-SODA) to express their strongest support for continuing to fund scientific ocean drilling and for the lease or acquisition of a newly built global-ranging riserless U.S. drilling vessel. Their joined vision is that long-term investment and maintaining leadership in the ocean sciences and scientific ocean drilling will be vital to enhancing our understanding of planetary health and sustainability while strengthening STEM research and inclusive workforce development in the United States. The US-SODA institutions represent a strong combined knowhow garnered over decades of scientific ocean drilling and they stand ready to assist and to provide advice to NSF in the process leading to a new U.S. drilling vessel and future accompanying drilling program(s). Visit the <https://us-soda.org/> website for more details and a listing of the founding members.

On 16 May 2022 the thirteen founding US-SODA institutions sent a six-page letter to the NSF Director and the leadership in the GEO Directorate and its OCE division. You can read this letter at <https://us-soda.org/open-letter-to-the-nsf-director-16-may-2022/>

US-SODA is an open alliance and institutions can request to join as supporting members (see point 3 below).

PETITION (deadline July 1)

We invite you to sign this petition at <https://us-soda.org/petition/> (it takes less than 1 minute) in support of Continued, Future Scientific Ocean Drilling in the United States of America. We need everyone's involvement in this effort. Feel free to forward this message to other Earth, ocean, life, and planetary science communities. We welcome signatures from supporters from all around the world.

We estimate that since 2013 more than two thousand U.S. scientists and students have been part of the IODP program. This number is much higher when including international participants and supporters. Our goal is that by the deadline of July 1 this

petition reflects that large and broad community in support of scientific ocean drilling in the United States of America.

LETTERS TO NSF (deadline July 1)

While the petition will showcase broad community support in scientific ocean drilling, the NSF expects that any drilling program serves a high number of diverse U.S. institutions across the nation. Therefore, you should consider working with your institution's leadership to send in a letter to NSF Director and the GEO Directorate leadership expressing strong support for scientific ocean drilling from your institution. Letters signed by vice presidents for research, provosts, presidents, chancellors, etc. will garner the most weight. Note that we suggest that you send in your letter as soon as possible and before the deadline of July 1 and that I have attached to this email [a letter template](#) that you could use in preparation for your institutional letter. You can also look at the <https://us-soda.org/open-letter-to-the-nsf-director-16-may-2022/> letter for messaging examples.

You will see that the letter template contains a CC to US-SODA so that we are aware of your letters and so that we can post it as an open letter on the <https://us-soda.org/> website.

JOINING US-SODA (deadline July 1)

When your institution has sent in a letter of support to the NSF leadership, you can also request to be listed as a supporting member (no further obligations) on the <https://us-soda.org/> website. Please send me an email with that request. At that stage, we only ask you to complete a short survey that helps us collect information on the diversity in U.S. institutions supporting scientific ocean drilling (e.g. is your institution a 2-year or 4-year college, HBCU, HSI, first-gen, R1, R2, land grant, sea grant, etc.). Our goal is that by the deadline of July 1 we can synthesize that institutional data and have a large number of institutions in US-SODA.

IN CONCLUSION

Please circulate this email, sign the petition, ask other people to sign the petition, and

work with your institution's leadership to consider sending in a letter to NSF and join US-SODA.

All the best, Anthony

Anthony A.P. Koppers | PhD in the Earth Sciences

Senior Advisor to the Vice President for Research

Oregon State University | +1 (541) 737-5425

Chair US-Scientific Ocean Drilling Alliance (US-SODA) <https://us-soda.org>