

Letter from the JRFB Chair - June 2019

Dear Colleagues,

The sixth meeting of the *JOIDES Resolution* Facility Board (JRFB) immediately followed the NEXT workshop on 8-9 May 2019 in Denver, CO. This meeting covered the usual reports from the other facility boards and review panels, scheduling of proposals forwarded to the JRFB over the last year, replacement of the *JOIDES Resolution*, and looking to the next scientific ocean drilling program post-2023.

The meeting produced 16 consensus statements and 9 action items. A summary of the most pertinent consensus statements is given here:

- The submission of a record number of drilling proposals at the 1 April 2019 deadline demonstrates the importance of scientific ocean drilling to the international science community and represents a statement that the program is strong in terms of community support.
- The National Science Board renewed funding for the *JOIDES Resolution* through 2024, which led the JRFB to commit to scheduling proposals through FY 2024, rather than the end of 2023 when the current science plan ends.
- The ship track continues to create proposal pressure in the areas we anticipate the JR will move beyond FY 2021. We scheduled one proposal, 910-Full2 (Continental Margin Methane Cycling) for October-November, 2021. This proposal was one of two forwarded to the JRFB from SEP over the last year and represents the first scheduled expedition for FY 2022. It is important that the community understand that the JRFB is now looking into the Pacific and Indian oceans for future proposals, and as we approach renewal increased proposal pressure will be critical in securing funding for the next phase of scientific ocean drilling.
- The excitement throughout the ocean drilling partners for renewal of the program beyond 2023 has been gratifying to witness. The energy and passion for the program has been a privilege to experience in the different planning workshops I have attended. Perhaps what is most exciting is the number of early career people involved in these workshops who are not afraid to speak up! They will be implementing the next phase of the program and it is very encouraging to know that the program is in good hands. In particular, the presentation by Anthony Koppers at the JRFB, summarizing the results from the NEXT workshop, was well received, especially the emphasis on interdisciplinary research. The three main topics and the cross-cutting issues resonated well with the JRFB meeting attendees.
- The JRFB also supports the *JOIDES Resolution* Science Operator in its efforts to find a replacement for the aging workhorse of the program, the *JOIDES Resolution*. Through

dialogue with NSF, options are being explored for replacing the JR beyond 2023. However, a new science plan and a new name for both the program and the science plan will be needed soon. Hence the IODP Forum Chair, Dick Kroon, is moving ahead with an aggressive timetable to have at least a near-final draft of the new science plan by June 2020. This is an exciting time for our community!

In closing, I would like to thank you for your continued support of scientific ocean drilling in the United States. We will need to be more proactive than we have in the past, so I will probably be calling on you in the near future to support increasing the recognition of the program we all love and support. Also, please continue to submit proposals to the program—we need proposal pressure to support renewal and our contention that this is an important international scientific collaboration.

All the very best,

Clive R. Neal
Chair, *JOIDES Resolution* Facility Board