



NEWS
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SEA Receives Funding to Continue Development of the NEON Satellite Site (NSS) Toolbox Program

Through funding from the National Science Foundation (NSF), the Science and Engineering Alliance, Inc. (SEA) has been awarded a \$342,785 subcontract by the NEON, Inc. to continue its development of the NEON Satellite Site (NSS) Toolbox for broadening participation in the NEON initiative.

Washington, DC July 1, 2010 – A subcontract from NEON, Inc. will support SEA's continued development of the technical and procedural documents required to enable the NEON Satellite Site (NSS) program. As such, this activity will include development of NSS documentation that will facilitate the design and engineering for a prototype NSS to be initiated at a selected domain site during 2011. The web-based NSS Toolbox will serve as a roadmap for the MSI community, small majority schools and other organizations to have free and open equal access to NEON's data and data products, access NEON's physical and information infrastructures, address science questions that impact their communities, and that in turn, address the Seven Grand challenges. SEA will utilize the Toolbox and other relevant documentation to develop the overall system engineering and life cycle processes that include the design, science and engineering requirements, workflows, verification and validation procedures and management solutions for a NSS prototype infrastructure.

“The NSF and NEON, Inc. recognize the value-added benefit of the NSS Toolbox as a model for full, integrated engagement of the MSIs, as well as small majority institutions and other organizations desiring to participate in NEON,” noted Dr. Robert Shepard, SEA Founding Executive Director and Principal Investigator (PI) for the subcontract. Dr. George Wright, President of Prairie View A&M University and SEA Board Chair said, “With this additional funding, the NSF and NEON, Inc. agrees with the strategy SEA is taking to broadening participation in the very important NEON research initiative. Implementing the NSS Toolbox will have far greater impact beyond just the SEA member institutions and will be of tremendous value to other institutions serving many minority students.”

NEON, Inc. is an independent 501(c)(3) corporation created to manage large-scale ecological observing systems and experiments on behalf of the scientific community. NEON is a large facility project managed by NEON, Inc. and funded by the NSF. The goal of NEON is to contribute to global understanding and decisions in a changing environment using scientific information about continental-scale ecology obtained through integrated observations and experiments.

SEA is a Washington, D.C. based non-profit 501(c)(3) organization established in 1990 “to address the challenge of establishing an ethnically diverse technical workforce prepared to compete in today’s global marketplace.” Its unique program is dedicated to ensuring that historically underrepresented talent plays a vital role in the nation’s scientific and engineering future. It is believed that by working together, SEA will accelerate the production of globally competitive American scientists and engineers among people of color. Public and private sector organizations seeking to enhance their intellectual talent pool can look to SEA member institutions to provide quality scientists and first-rate scientific research.

SEA members include: Alabama A&M University (Huntsville, AL); Jackson State University (Jackson, MS); Prairie View A&M University (Prairie View, TX) and Southern University and A&M College (Baton Rouge, LA), and two national laboratories -- Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory (LLNL) in Livermore, CA and the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) in Gaithersburg, MD.

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