

Planetarium Learning & Teaching Opportunity (PLATO)

2006-2007 Grants

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

The Southeast Regional Clearinghouse (SERCH), an initiative with NASA's Science Mission Directorate (SMD), invites southeastern planetariums to promote astronomy/space science education through our Planetarium Learning and Teaching Opportunity (PLATO) grants. **Seven awards of up to one thousand dollars each** will be available to Southeastern Planetarium Association (SEPA) members and persons affiliated with SEPA member institutions for projects that enhance the public's appreciation and understanding of astronomy and space science.

Modeled after our "sister" NASA SMD Broker/Facilitator, the DePaul Space Science Center for Education and Outreach, the PLATO grants are intended to benefit astronomy educators and the planetarium community within the SERCH region. Successful projects will increase the awareness and understanding of Earth-Sun system science, solar system research, universe exploration and will strengthen Earth/space science education throughout SEPA. SERCH is particularly interested in proposals for education and outreach efforts that support NASA's vision and mission, [NASA's Vision for Education](#), [NASA's SMD goals](#) and the [Support Network Forums](#). Furthermore, SERCH is interested in proposals for education and outreach efforts that support the Broker/Facilitator operating principles, which include:

- Establishing strong and lasting partnerships between the Earth/space science and education communities.
- Highly leveraged programs/projects, relying upon a multiplier effect to reach as many communities, educators and students as possible.
- Being inclusive of the broadest possible audience. Activities that foster the meaningful participation of underserved/underrepresented groups are encouraged.

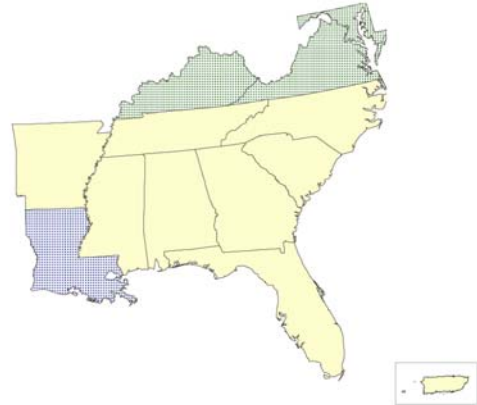
SERCH OVERVIEW

Fourteen Space Grant Consortia have joined together to form SERCH. Our purpose is to promote Earth and space science awareness and enhance interest in science, math, and technology through the use of NASA's SMD mission data, information, and educational products. SERCH serves as a broker and facilitator of services between the region's educational community and researchers involved in SMD missions. The SERCH office is located in Charleston, SC at the College of Charleston – Lowcountry Hall of Science and Math. To learn more about our program please visit our website at <http://serch.cofc.edu/>.

NASA SPACE GRANT CONNECTION/SERCH GEOGRAPHICAL REGION

There are 13 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands, within the SERCH region, which have, or are affiliated with, Space Grant Offices and a statewide network of scientists and educators. The 15 Space Grant/SERCH members are as follows [shaded and italicized states are shared with Broker/Facilitators MARSSB (DC, KY, MD, and VA) <http://www2.cet.edu/ossbroker/main.html> and SCORE (LA) <http://www.lpi.usra.edu/education/score/>]:

Alabama	<i>Maryland</i>
Arkansas	Mississippi
<i>District of Columbia</i>	North Carolina
Florida	Puerto Rico
Georgia	South Carolina / Virgin Islands
<i>Kentucky</i>	Tennessee
<i>Louisiana</i>	<i>Virginia</i>



SPECIFIC PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS AND FORMAT

Each proposal **must** include the following:

- a. Cover Sheet: To be submitted with proposal including the project title, a half-page project summary, contact information for the principle investigator (PI) and co-investigator (Co-I), as well as, signatures from the PI, Co-I and an authorized institution official. The cover sheet will be available at the SERCH website.
- b. Proposal: The main body of the proposal shall be a detailed statement of the work to be undertaken. The body of the proposal should describe the project **procedures and timeline**; the project **objectives and intended outcome**; the **intended audience** and the **key staff/collaborators**; the **project evaluation** plan; and the **intended return to other astronomy educators**. (Maximum of 3 double-spaced pages). The proposal should also include the following sections:
 - Personnel: A short one-page biographical sketch of the principal investigator, an abbreviated list of principal publications and any exceptional qualifications should be included. Give similar biographical information on other senior professional personnel who will be directly associated with the project. (Omit social security number and other personal items, which do not merit consideration in evaluation of the proposal).

- **Proposed Costs: Limited up to \$1K per proposal.** Include a short budget justification and timetable. As applicable, include separate cost estimates for salaries and wages; fringe benefits; expendable materials and supplies; services; domestic travel; publication page charges; consultants; other identifiable costs. List salaries and wages in appropriate categories (e.g., principal investigator, other scientific professionals, graduate students, student assistants, etc.). A suggested budget sheet will be available at the SERCH website.
- **Certifications:** Normal government certification forms such as *Debarment, Suspension and other Responsibility Matters*; *Certification Regarding Lobbying*; and *Compliance with NASA Regulations Pursuant to Non-discrimination in Federally Assisted Programs* must be submitted along with your proposal. Certificates will be available at the SERCH website.

EVALUATION FACTORS

All proposals will be evaluated by an external team of reviewers based on the following factors:

- Quality, Scope, and Realism
- Capability/Commitment
- Underserved/Underrepresented
- Greater Impact Capacity
- Budget
- Evaluation

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

To apply for a PLATO grant, submit one original and four copies of the proposal postmarked by

EXTENDED TO SEPTEMBER 01, 2006 ~~August 01, 2006~~ to:

Southeast Regional Clearinghouse (SERCH)

College of Charleston

ATTN: Kathryn Guimond

81 St. Phillip Street, Bell Bldg. 202 B

Charleston, SC 29403

Notification of grants will be made around the autumnal equinox. A two-page final report of how the money was spent (project/budget summary of one page, evaluation summary of one page) and pictures documenting your effort are expected **NO LATER THAN MAY 1, 2007.**