Updated May 5, 2026

OOIFB Roundtable on Ocean Observing
May 12-14 2026

University of Rhode Island, Graduate School of Oceanography
Narragansett, RI
(virtual options will be available)

Funding for this roundtable is provided by the U.S. National Science Foundation (NSF).

AGENDA OUTLINE

May 12, 2026: Day 1 – Framing and Principles (full day, 8:30am-5:30pm)

8:00 am Coffee and Check- in

8:30am Welcome (Dr. Steve D'Hondt, Interim Dean URI-GSO)

8:45 am Opening remarks, introductions, and review of overarching roundtable goals (Dax Soule)

9:15 am Keynote presentation (Hilary Palevsky)

9:45am Short presentations focused on the current U.S. ocean observing landscape (10- 12 min max, each). Each presentation should provide a brief (high-level) system overview (scope and intent), highlight significant accomplishments, identify potential gaps in ocean observing, and propose key questions that could be asked of the ocean science and observing communities.

- 9:50 am: Ocean Observatories Initiative (OOI) overview and cumulative statistics (Jim Edson, OOI- PMO)
- 10:00 am: Highlights from each NSF-OOI Array (focused on science)
  - Coastal Global Scale Node Arrays (Al Plueddemann)
  - Regional Cabled Array (Deb Kelley)

- Endurance Array (Ed Dever)

10:35 am Questions/Discussion

10:50 am BREAK

11:10 am Cont'd Short presentations focused on the current U.S. ocean observing landscape (10- 12 min max, each).
  - Cascadia Offshore Subduction Zone Observatory (William Wilcock)
  - NSF OBS Facility at WHOI (John Collins)
  - Argo Presentation (David Nicholson/Susan Wijffels)
  - Gliders/AUVs (Catherine Edwards)

12:20 pm Questions/Discussion

12:35 pm LUNCH

1:35 pm Cont'd Short presentations focused on the current U.S. ocean observing landscape (10- 12 min max, each).
  - NOAA- Global Ocean Monitoring & Obs Program (David Legler)
  - NOAA- IOOS (Krisa Arzayus)
  - Coastal Data Information Program- USACE ERDIC (Eric Terrill)
  - Earthscope (Becks Bendick)

2:25 pm Questions/Discussion

2:40 pm High level overview of the Decadal Survey report (Rick Murray)
(10 min overview; 10 min discussion)

3:00 pm BREAK

3:15pm Discussion - How do NSF-funded observations differ in scope and intent from those supported by other federal agencies?

4:00pm Discussion- How can NSF-funded ocean observing facilities be leveraged with facilities funded by other federal agencies to fill gaps in ocean observations?

4:45 pm Discussion - What other components highlighted/reviewed today could

be integrated into a draft community survey (key questions for the oceanographic community)?

5:15 pm Closing remarks: recap discussions, plan for Day 2 (Dax Soule)

5:30 pm Adjourn Day 1

6:00pm Roundtable Reception

May 13, 2026: Day 2 – Capabilities and Tradeoffs (full day, 8:30am-5:45pm)

8:15 am Coffee

8:45 am Opening remarks, recap of Day 1, and review Day 2 objectives/activities (Dax Soule)

9:00 am Moderated Discussion I (full group in person and online)
Moderated by: Dax Soule
What are the key outstanding science questions for ocean sciences that must be addressed over the next decade? [structured, open discussion based on pre-meeting survey responses]

9:20 am Moderated Discussion II (full group in person and online)
Moderated by: Dax Soule
How do you determine which observing technology (cabled observatories, stationary platforms, and mobile assets) is most essential for an observing facility? For example, budget, location, observatory purpose, etc.

9:20 am: Review general themes from survey results, queue up activity
9:30 am: Break into small groups. Each group takes a question

A. How do you prioritize observing technology deployment? What makes something essential?
B. Are there observational gaps better addressed through PI-led projects? What are things better addressed at the facility scale?

C. What gaps remain in our current observing technology ecosystem that we need to be driving toward developing for the future?
D. What is the compounded value of continuous, multi-disciplinary observation?

9:50 am - Each group gets 10min to present the summary of their question and have the broader group comment on that summary.

10:30 am BREAK

10:50 am The rest of Day 2 will center around **four breakout sessions**

- Each topic moderator provides a brief, high-level overview of the topic/question (with the full group)
- The group (as a whole) will form breakout groups around each topic (instead of one group discussion, have 3 groups, each with a set of questions they should work through on that topic; **each group has the same set of questions)**
- 6-10 people in each group (may include virtual participants depending on how many are connected at this time; virtual participants may form their own group)
- Each breakout group has 1 scribe and 1 moderator to keep discussions moving (and keep track of time)
- Shared output session (chaired by original topic moderator)
    - Summary slides to be created with the key take home points each discussion
    - Key takeaways from each breakout group
    - Identify questions for the broader oceanographic community (to gather more input). The group is given a set of questions to respond to, what other details are needed/what other questions could be asked?
    - Have the output session be open to the public/broad virtual audience (but only invited virtual attendees are active in the breakout sessions?)

10:50 am **Breakout Discussion I:** What are the trade-offs between fixed and mobile infrastructure, and between data collection strategies that prioritize persistence versus those that prioritize adaptability?

Moderated by: Ed Dever
10:50 Overview
11:05 begin breakouts
11:45 end breakouts and into group discussion

12:05 pm LUNCH

1:05 pm **Breakout Discussion II:** What operational realities must be addressed for sustained ocean observing infrastructure to function reliably over decades? Topics may include maintenance cycles, servicing logistics, workforce requirements, system resilience, and data continuity.
Moderated by: Meghan Paulson
1:05 pm Overview
1:20 pm begin breakouts
2:00 pm end breakouts and into group discussion

2:20 pm **Breakout Discussion III**: What data products and data delivery approaches are critical for a highly functioning observing system that seeks to reach a wide audience?
Moderated by: James Potemra
2:20 pm Overview
2:35 pm begin breakouts
3:20 pm end breakouts- BREAK
3:35 pm into group discussion

4:05 pm **Breakout Discussion IV:** How do important emerging technologies, innovations in cloud computing, and the rapidly evolving AI landscape shape our forward-looking opportunities?
Moderated by: Katie Bigham
4:05 pm Overview
4:20 begin breakouts
5:05 end breakouts and into group discussion

5:25 End discussions for the day
Outstanding questions/comments?

5:40 Closing remarks: recap discussions, plan for Day 3 (Dax Soule)

5:45 Adjourn Day 2

May 14, 2026: Day 3 – Synthesis and Outputs (half day, 8:30am-12:30pm)

8:15 am Coffee

8:45 am Opening remarks, recap of Day 2, and review Day 3 objectives/activities (Dax Soule)

9:00 am Review key takehome messages from Day 2's breakout sessions (Dax Soule)

9:45 am Cont'd Discussion (from Day 1)- How can NSF-funded ocean observing facilities be leveraged with facilities funded by other federal agencies to fill gaps in ocean observations? (Dax Soule)

10:30 am BREAK

10:50 am Deliverables Discussions

Proposed Deliverables:

- Synthesis of questions for draft community survey (review questions identified at this roundtable)
- Summary report/synthesis (timeline, key topics, participating authors)
- Strawman outline for a future, larger meeting on this topic: the evolution of an ocean observations program that satisfies the needs of the science community and other stakeholders, and supports U.S. national priorities. This outline will need to be integrated into a proposal for future funding of this larger event.

Logistics:

- Who would like to participate in generating the above? Committees?
- Timelines

12:20 pm Closing remarks (Dax Soule)

12:30pm Adjourn Roundtable