



MarineGEO Authorship Guide

Updated March 2026

Summary

- Participants who make substantial contributions to MarineGEO activities are eligible for co-authorship for resulting publications and products.
- Authorship guidelines delineated in this document represent broad-scale authorship structure and criteria. Project-specific authorship policies will be disseminated to partners at the inception of projects.
- Co-authorship requires continued engagement and is attributed based on the CRediT system.

Overview

The Smithsonian-led MarineGEO program values collaboration and open sharing of our collective knowledge and is inclusive of all types of contributions. Acquiring, curating, sharing, and publishing data are central functions of our network's research. Ensuring fair and equitable credit for contributions to the research requires clear guidance. This document summarizes guidelines for authorship by contributors to activities coordinated by MarineGEO. Adherence to these terms is a requirement for any use of MarineGEO data or participation in any MarineGEO activity that involves data collection and publication. MarineGEO reserves the right to modify the terms as needed, with notification to all partners.

[MarineGEO's Data Guide](#) delineates the policies regarding the collection, storage, and fair use of MarineGEO-associated data.

Terms & Definitions

MarineGEO refers to both the Marine Global Earth Observatory research program and the community (network) of partners that conduct its activities.

MarineGEO Central refers to the leadership and support team, based at the Smithsonian Institution, that coordinates MarineGEO activities. MarineGEO Central is responsible for managing network research projects and collating, curating, archiving, and serving MarineGEO data to contributing participants and, where appropriate, to the public.



Data refers to all content generated by activities, including measurements stored in spreadsheets and on original field sheets, images, video, genetic sequences, GIS layers, computer code, and associated metadata.

A *contributing participant* can include principal investigators, technicians, students, and/or volunteers at MarineGEO partner institutions, as well as those contributing to a MarineGEO project by mutual agreement. Specific contributions are outlined below.

Authorship Overview

The opportunity for co-authorship on publications and products resulting from MarineGEO activities will be extended to contributing participants according to typical norms of scientific societies and journals, following the [CRediT classification system](#)¹, with the aim of being inclusive. Co-author guidelines are established below for the following categories:

Lead authors are involved in study development, coordination, data processing, analysis, manuscript writing, and journal communications. They are typically involved from start to finish of the project, and include the first, last, and corresponding authors.

Co-authors are contributing participants whose participation aligns with the CRediT classification system, and are listed alphabetically after the first author. Co-authors who take on a substantive role beyond a standard contribution will be considered for non-alphabetical co-authorship.

It is the joint responsibility of the lead author(s) of a manuscript and the principal investigator of each contributing partner site to ensure that all individuals who meet the criteria are identified early in manuscript preparation and offered the opportunity to meet the full criteria for authorship. Principal investigators should circulate the authorship policy to all participants under their supervision to ensure equal opportunity for all eligible participants.

Every project and manuscript is unique and has its own idiosyncrasies, so the authorship criteria described here should be recognized as a set of general guidelines that will often involve judgement calls by the lead authors in consultation with MarineGEO Central. Where a person's contributions do not meet the criteria, their contribution can be listed in acknowledgements.

Authorship Criteria for Publications

Projects and monitoring syntheses will vary in scope and partner contributions; specific authorship qualifications will be established at the beginning of projects, following the guidelines below.

¹ Brand, A., L. Allen, M. Altman, M. Hlava, and J. Scott. 2015. Beyond authorship: attribution, contribution, collaboration, and credit. *Learned Publishing* 28: 151-155.



Lead authors will include:

- First author: Project development and implementation lead; manuscript preparation lead
- Last author: Intellectual project development and funding lead
- Corresponding author: First author or institutional lead

Co-authors will include participants that contribute to two (2) or more of the following activities, including a leadership role in at least one (1) of the activities.

- Participation in the design, implementation, and/or management of the project
- Participation in the acquisition of field and/or laboratory data
- Participation in project-wide data processing and curation
- Participation in data analysis
- Participation in drafting and/or revising the manuscript
- Provision of technical and/or supervisory support

Participants whose contributions do not meet the authorship criteria will be included in acknowledgements at an individual or research group level.

Authorship Criteria for Presentations and Posters

Oral presentations and posters related to MarineGEO projects will follow the authorship guidelines below.

Preliminary work, or work being presented prior to the submission of a manuscript for publication, should be presented using the following co-author and acknowledgement guidelines:

- Co-authors should include:
 - Presenter and core analysis team
 - Project lead authors (first and last)
- An acknowledgements or project participants slide or section should contain:
 - Names and/or logos of institutions of all contributing participants

Established work, or work being presented following submission of a manuscript for publication, including published work, should be presented using the following co-author and acknowledgement guidelines:

- Co-authors and title slide or section should include:
 - Presenter and core analysis team
 - Project lead authors (first and last)
 - ‘*et al.*’ following the author list
 - Citation of published work, as reference to additional authors (First author *et al.* notation can be used)



- An acknowledgements or project participants slide or section should contain:
 - Names and/or logos of institutions of all contributing participants
 - Name of all publication co-authors
 - A QR code linking the publication is highly encouraged

Presenters may contact MarineGEO Central for guidance if including names of all publication co-authors presents undue challenges, particularly in the case of high-authorship publications.

Data Attribution and Publication for MarineGEO Partner Publications

All products developed using public data collected for and/or provided by MarineGEO must cite the data set's Digital Object Identifier (DOI). Each dataset will provide guidance on the proper citation to use. All products developed using non-public data collected for and/or provided by MarineGEO must provide proper attribution in the form of a written acknowledgment citing MarineGEO and any contributing participant and their organizations as the source of the data. MarineGEO Central will assist users in determining the proper acknowledgement. Please see the [MarineGEO Data Guide](#) for additional guidance.

All products developed using data collected for and/or provided by MarineGEO, which are outside of the original monitoring or project scope must be reviewed by MarineGEO Central and relevant contributing participants prior to inception of data use and publication for the determination of authorship standards.

MarineGEO Contribution Number for Publications

Authors of peer-reviewed publications and other products using MarineGEO data must request and register a MarineGEO contribution number prior to publication and cite it in the acknowledgements of the publication.

- Please use the following language in the acknowledgements: "This is contribution number XXXX from the Smithsonian's MarineGEO and Tennenbaum Marine Observatories Network."
- Prior to manuscript submission: Submit a copy of the manuscript to MarineGEO Central for review of data attribution. MarineGEO Central will assist with identifying appropriate DOIs and citations, as needed.
- After manuscript acceptance, prior to submission of finalized edits: Complete the [publication request form](#) to request a MarineGEO Contribution Number, and update the acknowledgements text with the Contribution Number.
- An active list of MarineGEO publications is maintained on the [MarineGEO website](#).