Guide: Imagery Eligibility
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Find out who is eligible for access to commercial satellite imagery and how PGC determines access and use.

Introduction to PGC Imagery

U.S. federally-funded researchers at a U.S. institution and federal employees are eligible to request and use satellite imagery from Vantor for their research projects.

PGC supports projects associated with NSF Office of Polar Programs.

Commercial satellite imagery is available to researchers and support personnel through the EOCL license, an agreement between NRO and Vantor.

The license allows U.S. federally-funded researchers and U.S. federal employees access to imagery from the Vantor constellation of satellites for their research or logistics goals.

Vantor owns five operational satellite imaging systems of the pushbroom sensor type orbiting 500-800km above the Earth.

Unlike aerial campaigns, the satellites are always collecting and can acquire imagery of any location in the world.

> For more information, visit Vantor's website

Can I Access PGC Imagery?

Although all federally-funded researchers from a U.S. institution may use Vantor imagery from NRO under the EOCL license, PGC is funded to support only a subset of those users.

PGC currently serves as a distribution point for polar and cryosphere imagery to projects funded by NSF's Office of Polar Programs. PGC previously served as a distribution point for the NASA Arctic Boreal Vulnerability Experiment (ABoVE) and NASA Cryospheric Sciences. Other agencies, for example the US Geological Survey (USGS), have arranged access to the same imagery through other channels.

If you are not sure if you are eligible to receive PGC imagery, inquire with PGC User Services to see if we can support your project.

Required User Information

We encourage folks seeking imagery with active funding from NSF Office of Polar Programs to sign up for a PGC user account. The account allows restricted access to secured layers in PGC Imagery Viewers and FRIDGE, among other services. Read more in the PGC User Account guide.

After verification of funding source, users will receive email notification of account information and an assigned PGC Point of Contact with whom users can work directly to request data and services.

Common Questions

Answers to some questions .

I have an award from a U.S. federal agency. Am I automatically eligible to receive imagery from PGC?
: It depends on the source of your funding and your affiliation to a U.S. institution. PGC supports NSF Office of Polar Program awards to grantees from a U.S. institution, as well as selected other projects having independent agreements with PGC.

I have an award that PGC supports. Can I also get non-polar, non-cryosphere data?
: PGC has limited access to non-polar imagery. If the award under which you are eligible to receive data from PGC requires such data, contact your PGC point of contact to determine if PGC can support your request.

Why can’t I just download imagery directly from your website, FRIDGE?
: The imagery from Vantor is licensed under the National Reconnaissance Office EOCL license. Therefore, PGC must accurately verify our users and funding source(s) to determine eligibility. Once licensed data requests are vetted and deemed eligible, data ordered via FRIDGE is made available to user’s private FTP folders.

Can I continue to use Vantor imagery I received from PGC once my award expires? Can I use it for other projects?
: No. The EOCL license stipulates that researchers may use these data for the purpose of their federal award only during the time period during which the award is active.

If you have more questions, send us a message.

Summary

In this Guide, we’ve covered:

- U.S. federal funding requirement for access to PGC imagery
- Governance of the NRO EOCL license
- Funding agencies PGC supports
- Required information for verification
- Answers to common questions