



To: Requestors of NASA Letters for ESA Cosmic Vision Proposals

From: SMD/P. Hertz

Date: November 2, 2010

NASA has received your description of a proposed mission including U.S. participation to be submitted to ESA's call for proposals for a Medium-size mission opportunity for a launch in 2022 as part of ESA's Cosmic Vision 2015-2025.

**NASA has determined that the mission you described has science objectives that are aligned with the 2010 NASA Science Plan. A Letter of Acknowledgement from NASA is attached to this email.**

#### **NASA's REVIEW PROCESS**

NASA's process for identifying potential collaborations with ESA Cosmic Vision missions has several steps.

1. Review proposed science objectives against NASA Science Plan and provide Letter of Acknowledgement to the U.S. lead investigator for inclusion in ESA proposal.

The science objectives of proposed mission are reviewed against NASA's science objectives in the 2010 NASA Science Plan. A Letter of Acknowledgement from NASA is provided as a PDF file for all missions whose science objectives are aligned with the NASA Science Plan. The Letter of Acknowledgement may be included in the proposal that is submitted to ESA. NASA will not provide the Letter of Acknowledgement directly to ESA.

**Your Letter of Acknowledgement is attached.**

2. Review ESA proposals including U.S. participation, identify proposals for potential NASA support during ESA's assessment phase, and inform ESA prior to selection.

NASA plans to review proposals that include U.S. participation in order to determine (i) whether NASA is interested in the proposed mission as a potential strategic collaboration between NASA and ESA, and (ii) whether NASA is interested in supporting U.S. participation in the Assessment Phase of the proposed mission, should ESA select the proposal for an Assessment Phase study.

NASA will inform ESA of the results of this review as input to ESA's selection decisions. NASA will not provide the results of the review to the U.S. lead investigator.

**Instructions for participating in this review are provided below.**

3. At the end of the Assessment Phase, work with ESA to identify missions for NASA/ESA collaboration.

NASA will not make any decisions concerning participation in ESA missions beyond the Assessment Phase at this time. NASA may in the future decide to form a strategic collaboration with ESA to participate in a Cosmic Vision mission. In that case, NASA intends to issue an Announcement of Opportunity to solicit U.S. participants to provide the U.S. contribution.

## **INSTRUCTIONS**

Should you wish the mission that you are participating in to be reviewed by NASA as described above in Step 2, please provide the following to NASA.

1. A PDF copy of the proposal submitted to ESA. Note: NSPIRES has a 20MB file size limit. If this causes you a problem and you cannot resolve it, please contact Paul Hertz at the address given below.
2. A PDF version of a cover letter to NASA, signed by the Lead U.S. Investigator(s) for the proposal, containing at least the following information:
  - Identification of the Lead U.S. Investigator on the U.S. participation in the Assessment Phase of the proposed mission;
  - Request for NASA to review the enclosed proposal and discuss our findings with ESA so that NASA's findings may inform ESA's selection decision;
  - Summary of proposed U.S. participation in the mission including an estimate of the NASA funding required to support the proposed collaboration;
  - Summary of proposed work to be conducted by U.S. investigators during the Assessment Phase including (a) a plan to conduct this work during the Assessment Phase in the absence of NASA funding and (b) the estimated resources that would be required from NASA to support this work during the Assessment Phase (both new funding and existing funding, if any); and
  - Statement that, should ESA select the proposal and should NASA indicate a willingness to support this work during the Assessment Phase, an unsolicited proposal will then be submitted to NASA requesting funding to support U.S. investigators during the Assessment Phase.

Note that the cover letter to NASA is not a proposal for NASA funding and it will not be treated as a proposal to NASA for funding. No proposal for funding should be provided to NASA at this time. The present notice does not intend to state or imply any commitment to fund any future activity. This information is provided as a snapshot of present thinking to support advanced planning for U.S. participation in the Cosmic Visions program within the broader context of ESA's Call and acquisition approach.

The electronic files should be submitted through NSPIRES as described below no later than 11:59 p.m. EDT on December 10, 2010. Instructions for upload are provided below.

NASA will use external peer reviewers, as well as internal review, to evaluate the proposal and the cover letter against the following criteria:

- (a) Compelling nature of proposed science objectives and the priority of proposed science objectives within NASA's Science Plan and within the context of Decadal Surveys;
- (b) Technical merit of the proposed mission and the likelihood that the proposed mission would successfully address its proposed science objectives;
- (c) Appropriateness, reasonableness, and merit of proposed U.S. participation in proposed mission;
- (d) Maturity, reasonableness, and merit of proposed Assessment Phase activities, including the appropriateness, reasonableness, and merit of proposed U.S. participation in Assessment Phase activities; and
- (e) Affordability of U.S. participation in Assessment Phase activities.

Based on these evaluations, NASA will inform ESA of its willingness to either support or not support the proposed U.S. participation during the Assessment Phase of proposals that include proposed U.S. participation. NASA has made clear to ESA that any decision on NASA participation in the missions themselves will not be made prior to the end of the Assessment Phase.

## **UPLOADING PROPOSALS AND COVER LETTERS TO NASA**

Note: These instructions to provide the proposal and cover letter through NSPIRES replace and supersede the instructions in the October 6 Notice that proposals and cover letters should be submitted by email. Proposals and cover letters should not be submitted by email.

All responses submitted in response to this letter must be submitted in electronic form via NSPIRES, the NASA online announcement data management system, located at <http://nspires.nasaprs.com/>. For this letter, a response submission will take the form of a Notice of Intent (NOI) within the NSPIRES online announcement data management system. The response itself will be two PDF-formatted documents that are attached (uploaded) to the NSPIRES system.

You must be registered with NSPIRES to submit a RFI response. See registration instructions at <http://nspires.nasaprs.com> (select "Getting an account"). Neither institution registration nor an institution affiliation is required to respond to this RFI.

1. Log in to your account at <http://nspires.nasaprs.com/>.
2. Select "Proposals" from your account page.
3. Select "Create NOI" from your proposals page.
4. Click "Continue" on the next page.
5. Select "NNH11ZDA005J (NASA Coordination with ESA's Cosmic Vision Call for Proposals)" from the bullet list of announcements. Click "Continue".
6. Enter title of the proposal submitted to ESA ("NOI title" field will be shown). Click "Continue".
7. Select "Do Not Link At This Time" for submitting organization page.
8. Click "Save" on next page.

9. It is not necessary to complete any of the “NOI Details”; all requested information must be included in the attached PDF documents. NASA does not intend to look at any information entered into “NOI Details”; NASA will only be reviewing the attached PDF documents. Information which is entered into “NOI Details” but not included in the attached PDF documents will not be considered.
10. Prepare your Cover Letter offline and save as a PDF document (note NSPIRES instructions on .pdf formats). The Cover Letter document must include the Lead U.S. Investigator’s Name, institution, phone number, and E-mail address so the file is self-contained. File name format for the Cover Letter should be “Respondent Last Name – Mission Acronym – Cover Letter”.
11. Rename the PDF copy of the proposal submitted to ESA to be “Respondent Last Name – Mission Acronym – Proposal”.
12. To attach (upload) your PDF copy of the proposal submitted to ESA:
  - a. Click “add” under NOI attachments section;
  - b. Select “Proposal Document” from the drop down list;
  - c. Browse to attach your PDF copy of the proposal submitted to ESA (Note: NSPIRES has a 20MB file size limit; if this causes you a problem and you cannot resolve it, please contact Paul Hertz at the address given below);
  - d. Select “Upload”;
  - e. Click “OK”;
  - f. Your PDF document has been uploaded to NSPIRES.
13. To attach (upload) your PDF copy of the Cover Letter:
  - a. Click “add” under NOI attachments section;
  - b. Select “Non-US Organization / Agency Endorsement” from the drop down list;
  - c. Browse to attach your PDF copy of the Cover Letter;
  - d. Select “Upload”;
  - e. Click “OK”;
  - f. Your PDF document has been uploaded to NSPIRES.
14. Click “Submit NOI” button. NOTE that this does not complete the submission process.
15. Ignore any warnings about incomplete NOI elements. Ensure that your two PDF documents are attached and click “Continue”.
16. Click “Submit”. This will take you to the NOI submission confirmation page, which provides you with the NOI/Submission number for your records.

Please note: You may delete and replace uploaded documents anytime before the submission deadline. Submitted NOIs cannot be deleted.

## **NASA POINT-OF-CONTACT**

Any questions on NASA's policy regarding the ESA Call for Proposals may be addressed to Dr. Paul Hertz, Chief Scientist, Science Mission Directorate, NASA, Washington, DC 20546; Telephone: (202) 358-0986; E-mail: [paul.hertz@nasa.gov](mailto:paul.hertz@nasa.gov).