

National Aeronautics and  
Space Administration



# EXPLORE SOLAR SYSTEM & BEYOND

## **PSD: Internal Scientist Funding Model**

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August 17, 2020

# ISFM: The Beginning

M. New provided context: what did PSD do?

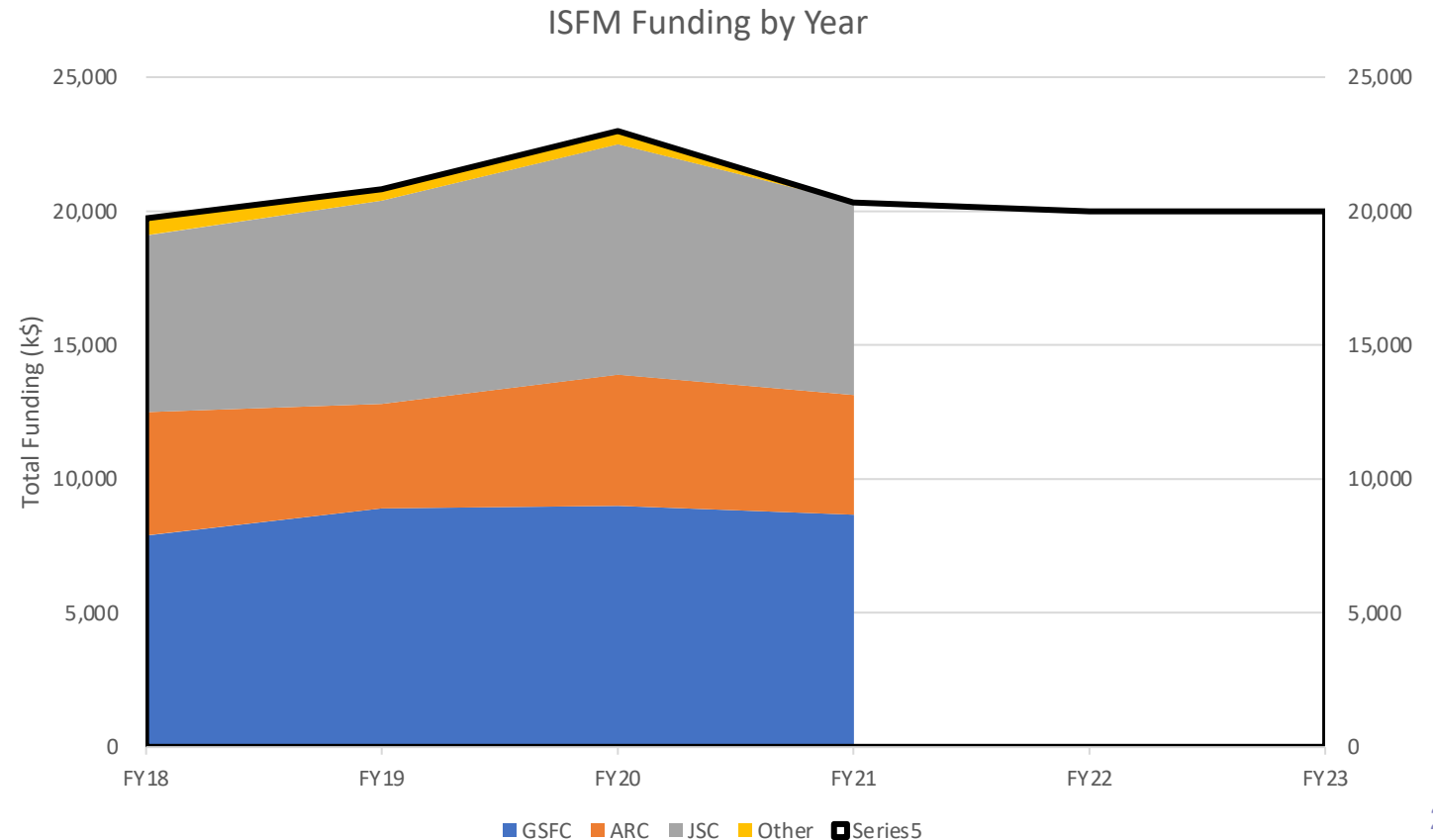
17 ISFM's were funded:

6 at Ames

5 at Goddard

5 at Johnson

1 at Langley/Marshall

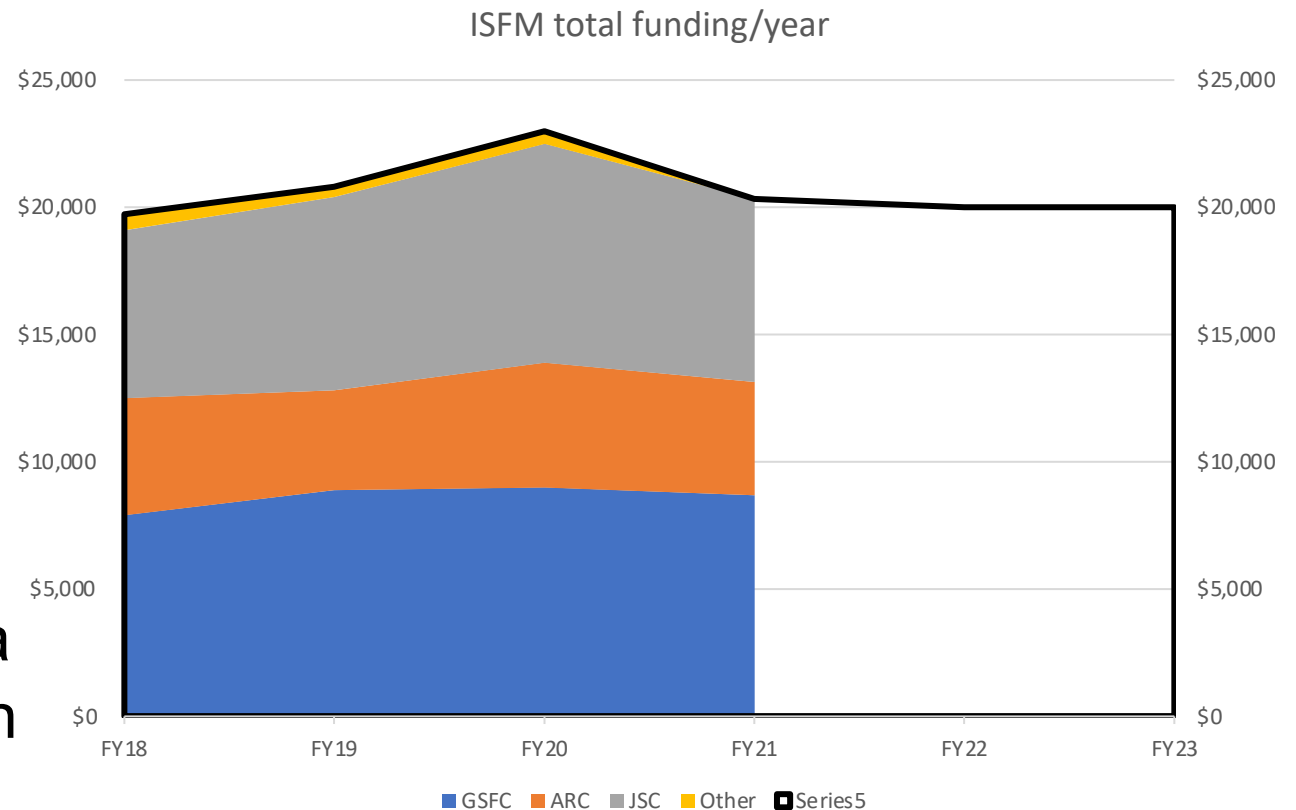




# ISFM: Changes in the plan...

In the past year, changes were made to ISFMs due to budget:

- Some FY19 funding was pulled back early in FY20
- One ISFM was moved out of R&A entirely
- FY20 budgets were cut by ~10%
- ISFMs were extended for a fourth year (FY21), but with another ~10% budget cut





# ISFM: Why the extension?

One of the core principles for ISFM was that they would be reviewed by members of the community, in order to ensure high-quality science activities.

Organization of the ISFM review did not begin until fall 2020: given that execution of such a review would take 6+ months, it would not be possible to review and incorporate lessons-learned into a new ISFM round.



# The ISFM Review I

Organization of the review started in earnest in January 2021

- Mary Voytek and Jeff Grossman co-led the review from HQ, with help from KC Hansen.

Each ISFM required to submit a report detailing progress to date, how their work impacts the community, plans for the remainder of the ISFM period, etc. Reports have two sections:

- Part 1: Science
- Part 2: Programmatics



# The ISFM Review II

Charge to the reviewers: Evaluate the scientific merit of the ISFMs

- Has the ISFM made significant scientific progress?
- What is the broader impact and/or significance of the ISFMs?
- Is their plan forward reasonable?
  - How valuable are suggested augmentations?

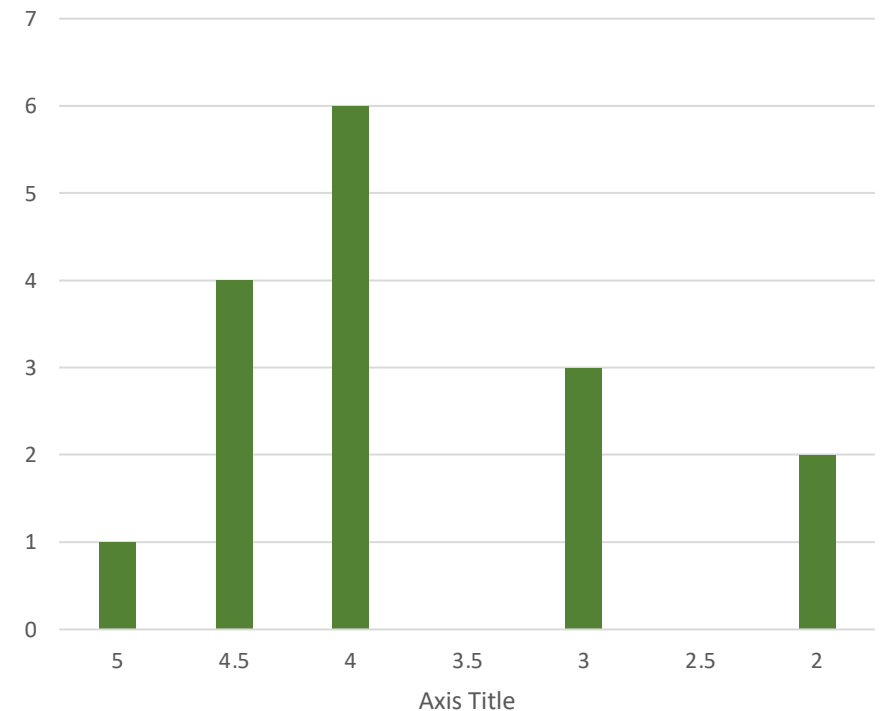
Each proposal was reviewed by at least one external reviewer and discussed in one of three panels

# The ISFM Review Results I

All reviewers were asked to address the following 5 topics and to provide grades from 1 (P) to 5 (E) for each of the first four:

- 1) Degree to which the ISFM is making progress.
- 2) Significance and impact of efforts to date (both to NASA and beyond)
- 3) Workplan and objectives for remainder of ISFM performance period
- 4) Productivity and leadership of team members (for ISFM-related work)
- 5) Notes to NASA HQ

Overall Score Distribution





# The ISFM Review Results II

Overall the reviews were very positive, and the general feeling during the debriefs was that the ISFMs are generally productive and valuable.

Two ISFMs did not score well; based upon feedback from the panel, HQ has asked those teams for plans to address the weaknesses.



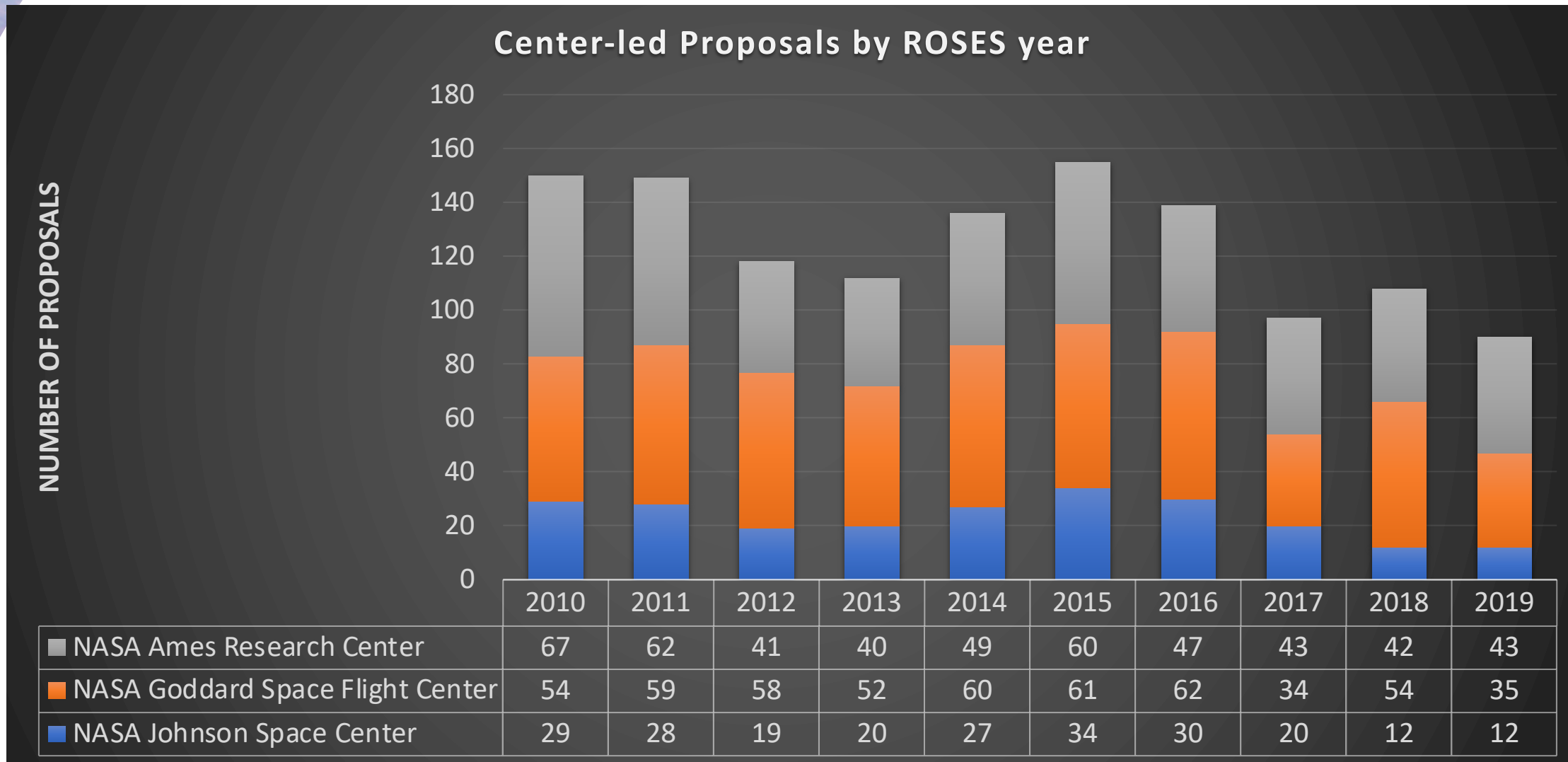


# ISFM Review: Programmatics

HQ personnel examined the programmatic factors, including:

- Funds management
- Reduction in number of proposals from Centers
- Increased participation in panels and other forms of community service

# ISFM Review: Proposals from Centers





# ISFM Review: Proposals from Centers

Quick takeaways:

- The target was a 10% reduction in the number of proposals from Centers. Comparing the average number of proposals from 2010-2016 to that of 2017-2019:
  - ARC: Down 18%
  - GSFC: Down 29%
  - JSC: Down 45%



# ISFM Future Plan I

Overall, the ISFM program is viewed as a success. But there are lessons-learned:

- Good things about ISFMs:
  - Performing high-quality science
  - Encouraging more community service in more diverse forms
  - Reducing the proposal pressure from the Centers
  - Science covering a wide range of the PSD portfolio
- Things to do better:
  - Need to work with ISFMs to actively manage budgets
  - Reviews need to be carried out sooner and would benefit from interaction
    - Site visits as the review method





# ISFM Future Plan II

Next year, we will call for new ISFM ideas from the Centers:

- These will be reviewed by HQ, keeping in mind:
  - Potential scientific value
  - Plans for contributions to the community
  - Possible reductions in submitted proposals
- Total budget for new ISFMs will be capped at \$20M
  - This will change if the R&A budget significantly changes