

Findings and Recommendations For Feb 15, 2022 PAC meeting

FINDING (1): A number of AGs highlight that, while there is value in sharing software, the current draft of SPD-41 leaves a number of critical issues unclear. Discussed issues include the full scope of work required for compliance and complexities of software that is not fully funded by NASA. There are concerns that the policy could disadvantage new proposers and those without institutional resources to aid in compliance. The PAC commends NASA for putting the draft policy out for public review, and encourages NASA to fully address the concerns raised by the AGs and by the community through the public comment process.

FINDING (2): The PAC commends NASA for supporting inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessibility (IDEA) efforts in planetary science and working towards inclusive NASA-supported conferences and meetings. Examples of key areas of support include the cross-AG IDEA working group and the NASA HQ IDEA group as well as the requirement that all NASA-supported workshops include a code of conduct. However, there still remain community-voiced concerns regarding how to improve inclusivity and safety for under-represented minorities at NASA-supported conferences/meetings.

RECOMMENDATIONS: To continue advancing IDEA principles in the community, the PAC recommends that NASA should leverage existing IDEA efforts, such as the IDEA Inter-AG working group, the NASA HQ IDEA group, or social scientists who focus on IDEA, to ensure that all NASA-supported conferences are as inclusive and safe as possible along multiple axes of representation, and in particular for historically excluded communities.

FINDING (3): The PAC appreciates the initial efforts to identify avenues of community service within the planetary science community and estimated costs and issues associated with potential direct payment for such work. These efforts present an important starting point for a needed discussion and effort.

RECOMMENDATIONS: In response to the request for PAC feedback with respect to prioritization for potential initial PSD efforts, the PAC recommends a first focus on funding surveys/studies of the workforce to assess the state and concerns of the planetary science community, as these seem less complicated to initiate with funding and may help fill important information gaps.

FINDING (4): The PAC notes that the impacts of COVID have been numerous and are likely to be felt for years to come, by both individuals and larger efforts such as mission teams. Impacts may result in lower productivity in professional tasks and/or ability to participate in community service work, and may be unevenly distributed within the community. Identification and measurement of impacts are needed to guide mitigation efforts. Surveys of the workforce can provide critical sources of relevant information, either directly about impact or indirectly by looking at who is participating and in what capacities. The most recent workforce survey for the planetary science community was prompted by the ongoing Decadal Survey and was collected prior to COVID.

RECOMMENDATIONS: The PAC recommends that NASA consider commissioning a new survey, with a primary aim of assessing COVID impacts and institutional support for community service. Input on the construction of the survey should be solicited from social scientists, community groups containing relevant expertise (such as the cross-AG IDEA working group or the AAS/DPS Professional Climate and Culture Subcommittee (PCCS)), and/or those involved in constructing and analyzing the last workforce survey.