

National Aeronautics and Space Administration

PI LAUNCHPAD

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NASA SCIENCE

AN INTEGRATED PROGRAM









Earth Science







Balanced Mission Portfolio



Solicitations Across NASA Science

	Low-Cost AO's	Medium-Cost AO's	High-Cost AO's
Astrophysics	Small Explorers, Missions of Opportunity	Medium-Size Explorers	
Earth Science	Earth Venture Instruments, Earth Venture Missions, Earth Venture Continuity	Earth System Explorer	
Heliophysics	Small Explorers, Missions of Opportunity	Medium-Size Explorers, Solar-Terrestrial Probes	
Planetary Science	Small, Innovative Missions in Planetary Exploration	Discovery	New Frontiers

How Many Proposals Submitted?

More proposers in low and medium cost classes and fewer in high cost class, resulting in higher competition for each solicitation

	Number of Calls	Total Number of Proposals Submitted	Average Number of Proposals Submitted	Selection Rate from Submitted Proposals
Low	8	176	21	17%
Medium	9	193	20	16%
High	3	25	8	28%
Overall	20	394	20	17%

NASA Science Planned Announcements of Opportunity FY 2019

- Discovery (PSD)
- Earth Venture Continuity-1
- Astrophysics Small Explorers (SMEX) and Missions of Opportunity
- Heliophysics Medium Explorers (MIDEX)

FY 2020 Planned

- Earth Venture Mission-3, Q1
- Earth Venture Instrument-6, Q3
- Small Innovative Missions for Planetary Exploration (SIMPLEx) Missions of Opportunity, Q4

FY 2021 Planned

- Earth Venture Suborbital-4, Q4
- Astrophysics Medium Explorers (MIDEX) and Missions of Opportunity, Q4
- Heliophysics Small Explorers (SMEX) and Missions of Opportunity, Q4

FY 2022 Planned

- Earth Venture Continuity-2, Q1
- New Frontiers-5, Q3

For most current target release dates of future solicitations, go to Science Office for Missions Assessments website, https://soma.larc.nasa.gov/



Transformative Science



What is Transformative Science?

- Anchored in Decadal priorities
- Achieves a significant leap in capability or understanding (i.e., 10x, clear threshold, new location, etc.)

When is a Mission Appropriate?

- Science can only be acquired in space and must be achievable
- When there is a strong answer for, "why now?"
- Science impact and appeal is consistent with mission cost

Baseline and Threshold Science Mission Proposals

Baseline Science Mission: If fully implemented, would achieve full science objectives

Threshold Science Mission: Reduced version that would achieve minimum acceptable science

- NASA evaluates the Baseline Science Mission and the adequacy of the Threshold Science Mission
- The difference between the two missions provides resiliency in the face of cost and schedule pressures
- Reducing mission scope (descoping) by eliminating instruments or degrading their performance requirements may save time and money
- For some mission architectures, the Baseline Science Mission may be the same as the Threshold Science Mission

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Nomenclature

Announcement of Opportunity (AO)	Call for science investigations requiring a spaceflight mission
Mission of Opportunity (MOO)	Focused proposals to leverage specific flight opportunities
Technical, Management, and Cost (TMC)	Engineering, cost, schedule, etc. review of a mission proposal
Preliminary Major Weakness (PMW)	Potential major weakness sent to proposers for clarification
Clarification	When a proposing team points to the places in their proposal that explain away a preliminary major weakness
Plenary	Meeting of all evaluators in the same place, at the same time
Categorization	Process by which proposals are assigned selection priorities based on their evaluations
Steering	Process through which fairness of an evaluation process is judged
Debriefing	Formalized discussion between NASA and proposers regarding the strengths and weaknesses in their proposal
Step 1	First phase of a mission competition where proposals are submitted, evaluated, and selected to conduct a Concept Study
Concept Study	Period of time when a team fleshes out their mission concept; results are described in a Concept Study Report (CSR)

Nomenclature

Step 2	Second stage of a mission competition where Concept Study Reports are evaluated; not all AO's have a second step; <i>e.g.,</i> Earth Venture Instruments
Down-selection	When NASA chooses which Step 2 Concept Studies to continue towards flight
Form A	Evaluation form where strengths and weaknesses of a proposed spaceflight investigation's Science Merit are recorded
Form B	Evaluation form where strengths and weaknesses of a proposed spaceflight investigation's Science Implementation Merit are recorded
Form C	Evaluation form where strengths and weaknesses of a proposed spaceflight investigation's TMC Feasibility are recorded

Peer Review Panels

- NASA Science makes decisions based on competition and peer review
- Volunteering on a review panel is highly encouraged
 - Opportunity to learn how to write successful proposals
 - NASA provides honorarium for participants
- More information on how to volunteer here: https://science.nasa.gov/researchers/volunteer-reviewpanels

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