

**Development of NASA-DARES 2025:
The 2025 NASA Decadal Astrobiology Research and Exploration Strategy**

Call for NASA-DARES Task Force 1 (TF1) Member Nominations

Number: NNH25ZDA002L

Release Date: March 31, 2024

Response Date: April 11, 2025

Short URL: <https://go.nasa.gov/ABStrategyRFI>

1. Summary

The NASA Astrobiology Program is seeking a panel of 12-14 subject matter experts and 1 early-career executive secretary (early-career being defined as an advanced graduate student who expects to receive a terminal degree in the next 12 months or a person with a terminal degree, PhD, MD, etc., awarded 5 years or earlier from the time of application) for NASA DARES (NASA Decadal Astrobiology Research and Exploration Strategy) Task Force 1 (TF1). TF1 will liaise with leadership from the Science Mission Directorate's (SMD) Astrobiology Program and the internal-to-NASA Astrobiology Federation to perform three tasks over three virtual panel review days in April-May 2025 and a two-day hybrid community workshop in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area in late May 2025:

1. Review and organize NASA-DARES Request for Information (RFI) responses.
2. Summarize key themes and identify notable subject matter relevant to the 9 RFI topics posted at <https://go.nasa.gov/ABStrategyRFI>.
3. Synthesize an RFI Findings Report for presentation and discussion at a 2-day hybrid community workshop notionally planned for late May 2025 in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area. This report will serve as a transitional document to be handed off to a future NASA-DARES task force (to be announced).

Additional ad hoc virtual meetings, e.g., telecons, may be required to complete the report in the anticipated timeline.

TF1 will be headed by a Group Lead who will be responsible for facilitating discussions, resolving conflicts that arise over the course of the TF1, leading briefings to NASA, and coordinating inputs to draft the RFI Findings Report. The executive secretary will support the Group Lead as needed and assist with duties such as scheduling meetings, note-taking, and documentation during TF1 discussions. The Executive Secretary also is encouraged to participate in discussions. NOTE: An exceptionally qualified early career candidate may apply and possibly be selected as a regular panel member.

On behalf of selected eligible participants, a support contract, the NASA Research and Education Support Services (NRESS), will work directly with TF1 regarding available support for travel and honorarium. The level of travel and honorarium will conform to the terms of the NRESS contract with NASA. No funding will be provided directly to participants by NASA.

2. Eligibility

NASA seeks a balance of experiences and expertise relevant to astrobiology research, exploration, and scholarship. Self-nominations (or applications or Notice of Intent -NOIs-response) are open to most U.S.-based and some non-U.S. based individuals. A U.S. visa does not guarantee that a person may participate. For example, some U.S. visa types require permission from the sponsor before an individual may participate in outside activities. Please check with your visa sponsor regarding what is allowed. NASA can't help with questions about visas.

Selection to TF1 does not require knowledge of, or experience in, all NASA-DARES RFI response topics in the file [RFI: Development of NASA-DARES 2025: The NASA Decadal Astrobiology Research and Exploration Strategy amended February 19, 2025 \(.pdf\)](https://go.nasa.gov/ABStrategyRFI) posted at <https://go.nasa.gov/ABStrategyRFI>. Signing up does not commit you to serve, nor is NASA obligated to ask/invite you. You did not need to submit an RFI response to be eligible to serve as a reviewer.

Federal civil servants in the United States are eligible to apply; however, NRESS cannot pay for civil servant travel, etc.

No applicant shall be a citizen of a country on the NASA Office of International and Intergovernmental Relations (OIIR) Export Control Program list of Designated Countries List Category II: Countries determined by the Department of State to support terrorism. The current list of designated countries can be found at <https://www.nasa.gov/oirr/export-control>. Please check the OIIR link for latest updates.

While China is not a Category II designated country, pursuant to Public Law 116-6, Section 530, NASA is prohibited from participating, collaborating, or coordinating bilaterally in any way with China or any Chinese-owned entity.

NRESS will require only eligible, selected applicants to complete one of two Department of the Treasury Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Forms: a) IRS Form W-8BEN Certificate of Foreign Status of Beneficial Owner for United States Tax Withholding and Reporting (Individuals) or b) IRS Form W-9 Request for Taxpayer Identification Number and Certification.

NRESS will require selected applicants only to provide other personal information that is not requested at this time. Using that information, NRESS will access the System for Award Management (SAM) to verify that selected individuals are not ineligible to receive federal funding.

3. Application Information

Applicants may not submit confidential information, Controlled Unclassified Information (CUI), proprietary information, or export-controlled information, including International Traffic in Arms Regulations (ITAR) and the Export Administration Regulations (EAR) restricted information, in response to this RFI.

Note that it is the respondent's responsibility to determine whether any submitted information is subject to the provisions of ITAR or EAR. Information about U.S. export regulations is available at https://www.pmddtc.state.gov/ddtc_public/ddtc_public and at <https://www.bis.gov/>.

NASA also requests and collects a limited set of demographic data from all registered NSPIRES users for the purpose of future analysis of the demographic differences associated with NASA's award and review processes. Demographic items requested include sex, race, ethnicity, and disability status. Submission of these demographic data are voluntary, confidential, and not a precondition for using NSPIRES or submitting an application response. If you do not wish to provide demographic responses, choose the buttons labeled "I Prefer Not to Answer".

The application should contain the following information:

- A 2-page NASA biographical sketch that includes the respondent's relevant professional experiences, positions, and a bibliography of publications. Maximum bio or CV length is 2 pages with a font size 12, not to exceed 15 characters per horizontal inch, including spaces, a sans serif font is recommended. Section page limits are not transferrable.
- A no-longer than 2- page cover letter indicating interest in and qualifications for serving on NASA-DARES Task Force 1, including relevant descriptions of scientific, technical, and management experience on relevant prior efforts. Applicants who are willing to serve as Group Lead should clearly note their desire to serve in that role and include, within descriptions of expertise and skills, rationale for why they are best suited for that role. Maximum document length is 2 pages with a font size 12, not to exceed 15 characters per horizontal inch, including spaces, a sans serif font is recommended. Section page limits are not transferrable.
- Completion of Program Specific Questions outlined in Appendix A.

There is a limit of one response per individual. Applications are invited only from individuals; group or team applications will not be considered.

Qualified applicants may be selected to serve on TF1 even if not selected to serve in a requested role.

4. Application Instructions

All applications must be received by 11:59 p.m. Eastern time on April 11, 2025

All applications to NASA-DARES TF1 must be submitted in an electronic format via the NASA Solicitation and Proposal Integrated Review and Evaluation System (NSPIRES), an online announcement data management system. For this solicitation, a response submission will take the form of a Notice of Intent (NOI) within NSPIRES. The response itself will be a single PDF-formatted document that is attached (uploaded) to the NSPIRES system. All responses must adhere to the following formatting requirements:

- Length: 4 pages maximum (2-page CV and 2-page cover letter).
- Page size: 8.5" x 11.0" paper size

- Paragraph: Single-spaced, single-column text with no more than 5.5 lines per vertical inch of text.
- Margins: One-inch margins on all four sides with no content in the margins except page numbers.
- Font: Font size 12, not to exceed 15 characters per horizontal inch, including spaces, sans serif font recommended.

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

When you have an NSPIRES account, go to the NSPIRES page for “Development of NASA-DARES 2025: The 2025 NASA Decadal Astrobiology Research and Exploration Strategy”, Number NNH25ZDA002L at <https://go.nasa.gov/ABStrategyRFI>.

1. Click “Create”.
2. Log in when requested.
3. Enter the Request for Information: Response title. NOTE: NSPIRES will show this as “NOI title”.
4. Select "do not link at this time" for submitting organization page.
5. Click "Save" on next page.
6. The “Program Specific Data” part of the NOI Details is required. See Appendix A for representative questions. This is the only section that is required to be completed in the “NOI Details”. All other “NOI Details” sections may be left blank.
7. Prepare your application materials offline and save as a PDF document (NSPIRES instructions on PDF formats are described in the NSPIRES PDF Guidelines available at http://nspires.nasaprs.com/tutorials/PDF_Guidelines.pdf). The response document must include the respondent’s Name, institution, and e-mail address so the file is self-contained. File names format should be “PI Last Name - First Name – Number – TF1”. “Number” will be used to distinguish multiple responses from the same PI. The application should not exceed 4 pages in length.
8. To attach (upload) your PDF document:
 - a. Click "add" under NOI attachments section.
 - b. Select "Proposal Document" from the drop-down list.
 - c. Browse to attach your PDF file.
 - d. Select "Upload".
 - e. Click "OK".
 - f. Your application document has been uploaded to NSPIRES.
9. Click Submit NOI button. NOTE: Clicking “Submit NOI” does not complete the submission process.

10. Ignore warnings about incomplete NOI elements. Please check to make sure you completed the “Program Specific Data”.
11. Click "Submit". This will take you to the NOI submission confirmation page, which provides you with the number for your records.

Please note: You may delete and replace the uploaded document any time before the submission deadline; however, once your RFI is submitted, it cannot be deleted. Unsubmitted responses will not be distributed. If you find that you need submit a replacement or correct version for a submission, please add “PI Last Name - First Name – TF1 – Updated”.

Requests for assistance in accessing and/or using the NSPIRES website should be submitted by email to nspires-help@nasaprs.com or by telephone to (202) 479-9376 Monday through Friday, 8:00 AM – 6:00 PM Eastern Time. Frequently asked questions (FAQs) regarding NSPIRES may be accessed through the Proposal Online Help site at <https://nspires.nasaprs.com/external/help.do>.

5. Review and Selection

TF1 members will be selected by NASA Program Scientists in the internal-to-NASA Astrobiology Federation and approved by SMD’s Senior Scientist for Astrobiology Strategy, David Grinspoon. Applicants will be evaluated based on their skills, expertise, and leadership in relevant astrobiology disciplines, as expressed in the application materials. Applicants will be selected from a variety of geographic locations, career stage, scientific research areas, and backgrounds. SMD will notify applicants of their selection to participate. However, for members that will be funded by NRESS, participation is predicated on completing NRESS’s required paperwork and clearance process.

Depending on the number of applications received, initial offers of membership are expected to go out within 1 week of the close of the application process. If an applicant declines selection or is unable to complete the NRESS required paperwork, then SMD will rescind the offer and may chose/select another applicant who was not initially offered a membership. If a member resigns prior to completing all the TF1 events, SMD also may choose a replacement from the non-selected applicants. When all members are confirmed, then SMD will publish the names on the NASA-DARES page on NSPIRES. Please note that non-selected applicants will not receive feedback on why they were not selected.

6. Point(s) of Contact

Please email questions and comments concerning this reviewer opportunity to the email address below, no later than April 09, 2025, at 11:59 PM Eastern, with the subject line: “NASA-DARES Task Force 1 Question/Clarification”. Depending on the nature of received questions, NASA may respond on an individual basis by email or may post responses to inquiries on NSPIRES. Any NSPIRES posted questions and answers will be edited to preserve the anonymity of persons who submit questions and are intended to address inquiries of broader interest and general clarification. NASA does not expect Q&As for this application to be necessary. NOTE: The current Q&As on NSPIRES posted at <https://go.nasa.gov/ABStrategyRFI> only relate to the

DARES RFI that closed March 17, 2025 and do not need to be consulted in order to volunteer to review.

The below shared email address is not to be used for response submissions; any submissions made via this email address will not be considered.

Dr. Rachel L. Harris
Science Mission Directorate
National Aeronautics and Space Administration
Washington, D.C. 20546

Dr. David Grinspoon
Science Mission Directorate
National Aeronautics and Space Administration
Washington, D.C. 20546

Email HQ-RFIastrobio@mail.nasa.gov to reach both POCs.

Appendix A: Program Specific Questions:

The mandatory “Program Specific Data” representative questions that are part of the volunteer-to-review submission on NSPIRES are listed below. All items with an asterisk* require a response before submission.

1. Have you ever served on a NASA review panel or close equivalent (e.g., NSF panel)? *
2. Please provide your first name. *
3. Please provide your last name. *
4. Please provide the name of your employer or indicate self-employed. *
5. Please provide your email address. *
6. Are you a U.S. citizen or U.S. person? The definition for U.S. person is located in Section §120.62 of Title 22 (Foreign Relations) of the Code of Federal Regulations. U.S. person (as defined in §120.62) means a person who is a lawful permanent resident as defined by 8 U.S.C. 1101(a)(20) or who is a protected individual as defined by 8 U.S.C. 1324b(a)(3).*
7. Are you a citizen of 1) China or 2) a country on the NASA Export Control Program list of Designated Countries List Category II: Countries determined by the Department of State to support terrorism? The current list of designated countries can be found at <https://www.nasa.gov/oiir/export-control>. Please check the link for the latest updates. *
8. Are you currently residing in 1) China or 2) a country on the NASA Export Control Program list of Designated Countries List Category II: Countries determined by the Department of State to support terrorism? The current list of designated countries can be

found at <https://www.nasa.gov/oiiir/export-control>. Please check the link for the latest updates. *

9. Are you affiliated with or employed by a Chinese-owned entity? *
10. Do you participate, collaborate, or coordinate bilaterally with China or any Chinese-owned entity, regardless of whether the bilateral involvement is funded or performed under a no-exchange-of-funds basis? *
11. How would you best describe your current professional status? *
 - Graduate Student
 - Postdoctoral Scholar
 - Research Scientist
 - Industry Scientist
 - Assistant Professor
 - Associate Professor
 - Tenured Professor
 - Government
 - Other (please describe) _____
12. Are you volunteering to serve as a group lead, panelist, or as an executive secretary? Senior graduate students or early postdocs who have not previously served on a panel typically fill the executive secretary role. Please check all that apply. *
 - Group Lead
 - Panelist
 - Executive secretary
13. Are you currently affiliated with any of the following Research Coordination Networks (RCNs)? Select all that apply.
 - LIFE: Early Cells to Multicellularity
 - Prebiotic Chemistry of Early Earth Environments (PCE3)
 - Network for Ocean Worlds (NOW)
 - Network for Life Detection (NFoLD)
 - Nexus for Exoplanet System Science (NExSS)
14. Are you currently affiliated with any of the following Assessment/Analysis Groups (AGs)? Select all that apply.
 - Mercury Exploration Assessment Group (ME_xAG)
 - Venus Exploration Analysis Group (VEXAG)
 - Lunar Exploration Analysis Group (LEAG)
 - Mars Exploration Planning and Analysis Group (MEPAG)
 - Small Bodies Assessment Group
 - Outer Planets Assessment Group (OPAG)
 - Exoplanet Exploration Program Analysis Group (ExoPAG)

- Extraterrestrial Materials Analysis Group (ExMAG)
- Mapping and Planetary Spatial Infrastructure Team (MAPSIT)

15. Please specify one or more NASA Mission Directorates, Divisions, and/or Offices most relevant to your area(s) of expertise. Choose “other” to add something not listed or to further describe your expertise in one of the listed areas, providing details in the comment box below. *

Science Mission Directorate

- Planetary Science Division
- Earth Science Division
- Astrophysics Division
- Heliophysics Division
- Biological and Physical Sciences Division
- Joint Agency Satellite Division
- Exploration Science Strategy Integration Office
- Science Activation Program

Exploration Systems Development Mission Directorate

- Artemis Campaign Development Division
- Common Exploration Systems Development Division
- Mars Campaign Development Division

Space Technology Mission Directorate

- Technology Demonstration Missions
- Lunar Surface Innovation Initiative
- Flight Opportunities
- Small Spacecraft Technology
- Game Changing Development

Space Operations Mission Directorate

- Space Sustainability Division
- Space Communications and Navigation Division
- Commercial Space Division
- International Space Station Division
- Human Spaceflight Capabilities Division
- Mission Support Directorate
- Office of STEM Engagement
- Other (please describe)_____

16. Please provide up to five key words describing your specific area(s) of expertise.

17. Are you able to travel to participate in Task Force 1 activities planned for May 2025? *

- Yes
- No
- Unsure