

To: Astrophysics and Exoplanetary Science Community
From: Astrophysics Division of NASA's Science Mission Directorate, NASA Headquarters
Date: 22 July 2009
Subject: Establishment of the Exoplanet Exploration Program Analysis Group (ExoPAG)

Dear Colleagues:

The Astrophysics Division of NASA's Science Mission Directorate is pleased to announce the establishment of an Exoplanet Exploration Program Analysis Group, or ExoPAG. The ExoPAG will be an open, interdisciplinary forum for gathering community input into NASA's Exoplanet Exploration Program (ExEP), and for conducting analyses in support of ExEP science objectives and their implications for planning and prioritization of Program activities. The ExoPAG will communicate its findings and the results of its analyses to NASA through the Agency's formal advisory structure in the form of reports to the Astrophysics Subcommittee of the NAC (NASA Advisory Council) Science Committee.

To carry out its role, the ExoPAG will:

- Articulate the key scientific drivers for exoplanet research;
- Evaluate the expected capabilities of potential ExEP missions for achieving the science goals of the Program;
- Regularly evaluate ExEP goals, objectives, investigations and required measurements on the basis of the widest possible community outreach;
- Articulate focus areas for needed mission technologies; and
- Identify related activities that enhance the ExEP mission portfolio such as ground-based observing, theory and modeling programs, and community engagement.

Further information about the structure and function of the ExoPAG can be found on the Web at http://exep.jpl.nasa.gov/exep_exoPAG.cfm. The purpose of this open letter to the scientific community is to solicit nominations for membership on the ExoPAG Executive Committee.

The ExoPAG will be led by a Chairperson drawn from the membership of the Astrophysics Subcommittee. The inaugural ExoPAG Chair will be Prof. James F. Kasting of Penn State University. Prof. Kasting will be supported in this role by an Executive Committee representing the broad exoplanetary science community. Together, the ExoPAG Chair and Executive Committee will be responsible for capturing and organizing community input, overseeing ExoPAG analyses, reporting ExoPAG findings and inputs to the Astrophysics Subcommittee, and keeping the scientific community apprised of ongoing activities and opportunities within NASA's ExEP. The ExoPAG Executive Committee will be selected to achieve a functional balance among observers, theoreticians, instrumentation experts, and technologists, as well as a scientific balance across the disciplines of astrophysics, exoplanetary and planetary science, and astrobiology.

Nominations for the ExoPAG Executive Committee should be submitted via email to the address: HQ-ExoPAG@nasa.gov. Nominations must include both a cover letter and a one-page CV summarizing the nominee's relevant background. The cover letter should provide a description of the nominee's area of expertise and qualifications for service on the ExoPAG

Executive Committee. Self-nominations are welcome. The deadline for receipt of nominations is 4 September 2009, with announcement of selections anticipated for early October 2009.

The first ExoPAG meeting is planned to be held in conjunction with the 215th AAS Meeting in Washington, DC, January 2010. Travel and lodging expenses for the ExoPAG Chair and Executive Committee members (only) will be paid by the ExEP, in accordance with NASA regulations. Further details about the inaugural ExoPAG meeting will be posted on the ExoPAG web site as the information becomes available.

We look forward to working with all of our stakeholders to develop a robust and compelling Exoplanet Exploration Program.

Sincerely,

Douglas Hudgins, NASA HQ
Exoplanet Exploration Program Scientist

Lia LaPiana, NASA HQ
ExoPlanet Exploration Program Executive

Jon Morse
Director, Astrophysics Division, NASA HQ