



**NATIONAL AERONAUTICS AND SPACE ADMINISTRATION (NASA)**

**GUIDEBOOK FOR PROPOSERS  
FOR THE PREPARATION AND SUBMISSION OF  
UNSOLICITED PROPOSALS**

**Revised: March 25, 2022**

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## **PREFACE**

The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA or Agency) encourages the submission of unique and innovative proposals that will further the Agency's mission. While the vast majority of proposals are solicited via a publicly-available NASA Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO), a small number of unsolicited proposals that are not appropriate for submission in response to those NOFOs, and yet are still relevant to NASA, are reviewed and funded each year. NASA's NOFOs are published on the [NASA Solicitation and Proposal Integrated Review and Evaluation System](#) (NSPIRES).

This document provides guidelines for the preparation of unsolicited proposals for those submitters that wish to convey their creative methods or approaches to NASA. These guidelines apply to all unsolicited proposals for financial assistance that will result in grants and cooperative agreements, regardless of the NASA Center or Agency program for which they are intended.

This Guidebook may be reproduced in part or total without restriction. The Guidebook is maintained by the NASA Office of the Chief Financial Officer, Grants Policy and Compliance Branch (GPC), and the Guidebook can be found on GPC's [regulations and guidance website](#).

### **Important Caveat to Potential Proposers**

Before any effort is expended in preparing a proposal, potential proposers shall review:

- The current version of the [NASA Strategic Plan](#) and documents from the specific Mission Directorate, office, or program/project for which the proposal is intended (e.g., the [Science Plan](#), the [Strategic Space Technology Investment Plan](#), and the [Voyages: Charting the Course for Sustainable Human Space Exploration](#)) to determine if the work planned is sufficiently relevant to current goals to warrant a formal submission. NASA will return, without review, any proposal that it determines is not relevant to the office to which it was sent.
- Current opportunities on NSPIRES to determine if a NOFO already exists to which the potential project can be proposed. NASA will return, without review, any proposal that may have been responsive to a recent or current NOFO or one that is planned. Missing a deadline for a recently-issued NOFO does not allow a late proposal subsequently to be submitted as an unsolicited proposal.
- Current awards (e.g., by doing key word searches at [USAspending.gov](#), [Research.gov](#), [the NSSC grant status page](#), [Techport](#), and [the NASA Life and Physical Sciences Task Book](#)) to learn what, if any, related work is already funded by NASA. Such preparation reduces the risk of redundancy, improves implementation of the proposed effort, and may result in better collaboration between the potential proposer and the Agency.

## **1. ELIGIBILITY**

### **1.1 Eligibility Requirements and Restrictions**

Any category of organization or institution may submit an unsolicited proposal. There is no restriction on teaming arrangements involving U.S. organizations, including teaming with Government personnel. However, each proposal shall be a separate, stand-alone, complete document for evaluation purposes. Any proposal that involves more than one organization shall describe the distinct contributions expected from any participating investigator or organization, including facilities or equipment that will be required. When multiple organizations are involved in a single proposal, Government labs generally are funded directly. Otherwise, a single award is made to the submitting organization (see [Section 6, Award](#)). Simultaneous submission of related proposals from cooperating organizations is permitted if each proposal indicates the nature of the relationship among the proposals. Such simultaneous submissions may result in parallel awards.

NASA's policy is to conduct research with foreign entities on a cooperative, no-exchange-of-funds basis. Generally, NASA does not fund foreign research proposals from foreign organizations or research efforts by individuals at foreign organizations as part of U.S. research proposals. This includes subawards from U.S. organizations to investigators at foreign organizations and travel by individuals at foreign organizations to conduct research, fieldwork, and present at conferences. Rather, each country agrees to bear its own costs of carrying out their respective responsibilities (i.e., the work to be done by team members affiliated with organizations in their country). The direct purchase of supplies and/or services, which do not constitute research, from non-U.S. sources by U.S. award recipients is permitted. Proposals from foreign entities shall be submitted in the same format as U.S. proposals and in U.S. dollars. All information shall be typed and in the English language. Proposals shall emphasize the unique nature of the project and/or the unique expertise of the proposer. Foreign proposals will undergo the same evaluation and selection process as U.S. proposals.

There are special restrictions on NASA regarding the People's Republic of China. In accordance with Public Law (PL) 112-10, section 1340, and PL 112-55, section 539, NASA is prohibited from funding any work that involves the bilateral participation, collaboration, or coordination with China or any Chinese-owned company or entity, at the prime recipient level or at any subrecipient level, whether funded or performed under a no-exchange-of-funds basis. Accordingly, proposals shall not include bilateral participation, collaboration, or coordination with China or any Chinese-owned company or entity, whether funded or performed under a no-exchange-of-funds basis. Proposals involving bilateral participation, collaboration, or coordination in any way with China or any Chinese-owned company, whether funded or performed under a no-exchange-of-funds basis, will be ineligible for award.

### **1.2 Defining an Unsolicited Proposal**

An unsolicited proposal is a written submission to an agency on the submitter's initiative for the purpose of obtaining an award from the Government, and it is not in response to a formal or informal agency request. For more information see Section 5.8 (Non-competitive Awards) of the [NASA Grant and Cooperative Agreement Manual \(GCAM\)](#).

To be eligible as an unsolicited proposal, a submission shall:

- Be of high scientific and/or technical merit, including but not limited to methods, approaches, concepts, or advanced technologies; demonstrate adequate qualifications, capabilities, and experience of the proposed team, facilities, or other capabilities of the proposer;
- Be relevant to NASA generally and specifically to the NASA office to which the proposal is directed.
- Have reasonable and realistic proposed costs; and
- Not be a recent, current, or pending proposal submitted in response to a NASA NOFO (refer to the important caveat to potential proposers in the preface of this document).

Moreover, the proposal shall contain adequate detail and be clear and organized so that reviewers can easily assess the proposal's responsiveness to the eligibility factors above.

### **1.3 What Is Not an Unsolicited Proposal**

A proposal that fails to meet the definition of an unsolicited proposal or that falls under any of the following categories is not a valid unsolicited proposal:

- Technical correspondence that consists of a written inquiry from an individual, academic researcher, or others that should be addressed to NASA program/project offices, including:
  - Inquiries regarding NASA's interest in research areas,
  - Pre-proposal exploration,
  - General technical inquiries,
  - Concepts or ideas with little or no detail,
  - Unofficial submissions not sent according to the submission instructions in this document, and
  - Research descriptions or suggestions that do not request NASA resources, typically funding.
- Proposals addressing known NASA requirements that should be acquired by a competitive method, such as an offer to perform ordinary tasks (e.g., provide computer facilities or services) or that resemble a response to a current, recent, or pending NASA NOFO.
- Proposals for commercial items that are generally sold to the public.
- Advertising material designed to acquaint the Government with a prospective award recipient's products or potential capabilities.
- Contributions that are concepts, suggestions, or ideas presented to the Government, but the proposer does not plan to provide further effort on the Government's behalf.
- An invention or discovery that has officially received a patent or is otherwise protected under title 35 of the U.S. Code. If the proposer is an owner of an issued U.S. patent, they may offer NASA a license in the patented invention by writing to the NASA Office of the

General Counsel, ATTN: Commercial and Intellectual Property Practice Group, NASA Headquarters, 300 E Street, SW, Washington, DC 20546. Please identify the U.S. patent number in your correspondence. An investigation will then be made to determine the extent of NASA's interest. Note that only U.S. patents will be considered.

- A proposal for a new award or the renewal of an existing award that falls within the scope of an open NASA NOFO. Such proposals shall be submitted in response to that NOFO.
- An unsolicited proposal is not an appropriate mechanism to request start-up funds to establish a laboratory.

## **2. SUBMISSION**

### **2.1 How to Submit**

NASA accepts all unsolicited proposals submitted electronically or by hard copy. All proposals submitted electronically shall be submitted via NSPIRES in response to the unsolicited proposal response structure. After logging into NSPIRES, a prospective proposer will follow the link from "Proposals/NOIs," and then "Create Proposal," choose source "NOFO," click continue, and then click the radio button for "Unsolicited" and proceed from there. As part of the submission process, proposers will answer the program-specific questions on the NSPIRES web pages that will identify the appropriate Proposal Coordinating Office at NASA. Refer to the example questions in Appendix A at the end of this document. Only one version of a proposal shall be submitted to NASA. Proposals that duplicate (or that have significant overlap with) a proposal currently under review with NASA shall not be submitted.

Electronic proposals shall be submitted by one of the officials at the Principal Investigator's (PI's) organization who is authorized to make such a submission; an electronic submission by the authorized organization representative (AOR) serves as the required original signature on the proposal by an authorized official of the proposing organization. Every organization that intends to submit an unsolicited proposal to NASA shall be registered in NSPIRES. This registration shall be performed by an organization's electronic business point-of-contact in the [System for Award Management \(SAM\)](#).

Every identified individual expected to have a role in the execution of the proposed effort shall be identified on the proposal cover page, using the most appropriate personnel role as described in Appendix B, Definitions of Organization and Personnel, of the [NASA Guidebook for Proposers Responding to a NASA Notice of Funding Opportunity \(NOFO\)](#). Prior to proposal submission via NSPIRES, every individual named on the proposal's electronic cover page form as a team member (even Collaborators) shall be registered in NSPIRES and confirm their commitment to that role. Team members will receive an email from NSPIRES indicating that they have been added to the proposal and shall log into NSPIRES to corroborate. Through this electronic confirmation process, the organization through which they are participating in the investigation is also identified to enable organizational conflict of interest checks that are required as part of the evaluation process.

Although any individual may create a proposal and release it to their organization, only a responsible person authorized to represent and obligate the proposer (i.e., the AOR) may officially

submit a proposal via NSPIRES. For more information about registering an organization in NSPIRES and/or affiliating as an individual with an existing organization, please see the [NSPIRES online help webpage](#).

## **2.2 When to Submit**

There are no specific deadlines for the submission of unsolicited proposals. However, it is strongly recommended that proposals be submitted at least six (6) months in advance of the desired starting date. Near the start of every new Government fiscal year (i.e., October 1 to September 30), a new response structure will be created in NSPIRES, which will begin on October 1 and end on September 30. Proposals shall be submitted in the same fiscal year in which they were created. If a proposal is not submitted by the end of the current fiscal year then it may be lost; if this happens, it will have to be resubmitted to the following fiscal year's response structure.

## **2.3 Revision or Withdrawal**

A proposing organization may withdraw its proposal from consideration at any time. If a proposer wishes to submit additional material or a proposal revision, an AOR shall withdraw the proposal in NSPIRES and, after revision, resubmit the revised proposal via NSPIRES. The resubmitted proposal will be assigned a new proposal number in NSPIRES. It is important for proposers to note that major proposal revisions will likely delay the evaluation process.

## **2.4 Interagency Coordination**

NASA does not transfer formal submissions to or accept similar submissions from other agencies, except as they may be related to an interagency funding arrangement. Unsolicited proposals submitted to the Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL) are not considered as submissions to NASA since JPL is not a NASA Center but is the Agency's only Federally Funded Research and Development Center.

# **3. PROPOSAL FORM AND CONTENT**

## **3.1 Format**

Proposers shall adhere to the standard format described in section 2, Proposal Preparation and Submission, of the [NASA Guidebook for Proposers](#). If a proposal is so disorganized or poorly written that evaluators are unable to evaluate it, the proposal may be returned without review. The proposer has the option to resubmit the proposal after making modifications.

## **3.2 Length**

Proposals shall be brief and concentrate on substantive material essential for a complete understanding of the project. Experience has demonstrated that few proposals require a technical section exceeding 15 pages to adequately explain the proposed work, and many are under 15 pages. Please see the [NASA Guidebook for Proposers](#) for information regarding what information is required in each section of a proposal and which sections are page limited. All necessary detailed

information, such as figures, tables, charts, engineering diagrams, CVs, current and pending support, and budgets shall be included in the single proposal PDF file uploaded into NSPIRES.

Rather than investing considerable effort into writing a lengthy and detailed unsolicited proposal, proposers are strongly encouraged to first submit a brief (1-3 page) summary focused on what is proposed, why, and the unique qualifications of the proposer(s) to allow NASA to ascertain if the proposed work is relevant and eligible.

### **3.3 Cover Page Information**

As is the case for all proposals submitted via NSPIRES, the web interface will prompt the proposer for basic information at the time of proposal creation, such as proposal title and organizational affiliation of the PI, and it will permit the PI to choose team members, assign their roles and access, and enter budget information. Proposers shall familiarize themselves with NSPIRES and the system's [tutorials and user guides](#). The proposer or AOR will be required to answer other questions prior to proposal submission to help NASA assign unsolicited proposals to the appropriate office for evaluation. Please see Appendix A at the end of this document for additional information.

### **3.4 Proposal Content**

Unsolicited proposals shall include the fundamental sections set forth in section 2.7, Overview of Proposal, (including the table in that section) of the [NASA Guidebook for Proposers](#) to facilitate an objective and timely evaluation. If a proposal is missing content that evaluators deem required for evaluation, it may be returned without review. The proposer has the option to resubmit the proposal after making modifications.

#### **3.4.1. Project Summary**

The NSPIRES system will require proposers to provide a Project Summary of up to 4,000 characters (including spaces and invisible control characters if cutting and pasting from Microsoft Word) that provides an overview of the proposed effort. This Project Summary or abstract will be publicly accessible if the proposal is selected, so it shall not contain any proprietary data or information that should not be publicly-released (e.g., International Traffic in Arms Regulations (ITAR)-controlled data).

#### **3.4.2. Data Management Plan**

The NSPIRES system requires proposers to provide a data management plan (DMP) of up to 4,000 characters (including spaces and invisible control characters if cutting and pasting from Microsoft Word) as part of the proposal cover page. The type of proposal that requires a DMP is described in the [NASA Plan for Increasing Access to Results of Federally Funded Research](#); those proposing to the Science Mission Directorate may also refer to the [SARA FAQs on this Subject](#).. If the proposer decides that it would be useful to provide more information on data management or archiving, they may do so in the body of the technical proposal.



### **3.4.3 Scientific/Technical/Management Plan**

Proposers are encouraged to refer to the descriptions of the expected content and constituent parts of a proposal that appear in the [NASA Guidebook for Proposers](#). The main body of the proposal shall be a detailed statement of the work effort to be performed. The proposal shall clearly describe the complete project, precisely what work is being done, when it will be performed, and why this work is proposed. The duration of the project shall be adequately justified and include objectives and expected significance (particularly in the context of the national aerospace effort), relation to the present state of knowledge in the field, relation to any previous work done on the project, and to related work in progress elsewhere. This section shall fully describe the implementation, including the design of any experiments, observations, instrument development or modeling to be performed, and methods and procedures at a level of detail adequate to demonstrate the likelihood of success. The best proposals disclose any uncertainties in measurements, address potential pitfalls, and consider alternatives.

### **3.4.4 Management Approach**

Proposals for large or complex efforts involving interactions among numerous individuals or other organizations shall describe plans for distribution of responsibilities and necessary arrangements for ensuring a coordinated work effort. Aspects of any important working relations with organizations other than the offeror, including Government agencies, especially NASA, that were not already defined elsewhere in the proposal, shall be described in this section.

### **3.4.5. Personnel**

- Every team member identified as a participant on the proposal's cover page and/or in the proposal's Scientific/Technical/Management Plan shall acknowledge their intended participation in the proposed effort. The NSPIRES proposal management system allows for participants named on the Proposal Cover Page to acknowledge a statement of commitment electronically. If any team member is unable to confirm their participation in NSPIRES, then the proposer may include a statement of participation from this individual in the body of the proposal.
- Outline the relevant experience and/or expertise of all key personnel in a way that will demonstrate these capabilities in relation to the proposed effort; a short biographical sketch, a list of principal publications, and any exceptional qualifications shall be included. Provide the names and titles of any other individuals associated substantially with the project in an advisory capacity. Any substantial collaboration with individuals who are not referred to in the budget and/or the use of consultants shall be described.
- The proposer or PI shall directly supervise the work effort and participate in the conduct of the effort.
- Educational institutions shall list the approximate number of students/assistants involved in the proposed effort and include information about their level of academic attainments.

- Omit social security numbers and any other personally-identifiable information (e.g., birth dates, home addresses) that are not necessary for NASA to evaluate the proposal.

### **3.4.6. Facilities and Equipment**

Identify any unique facilities, Government-owned facilities, industrial plant equipment, or special tooling that will be required. A letter is required from the owner of any facility or resource that is not under the direct control of a team member, acknowledging that the facility or resource is available for the proposed use during the proposed period. For Government facilities, the availability of the facility to users is often stated in the facilities documentation or web page. Where the availability of a facility or resource is not publicly stated, or where the proposed use goes beyond the publicly-stated availability, a statement signed by the appropriate Government official at the facility verifying that it will be available for the required effort is sufficient.

### **3.4.7. Proposed Costs**

- Proposals shall state the funding level being requested accompanied by a budget with sufficient detail to permit an understanding of the basis of the funding request. As applicable, separate cost estimates for the following items shall be included:
  - salaries, wages, and fringe benefits for each employee;
  - equipment;
  - expendable materials and supplies;
  - services;
  - domestic and foreign travel;
  - IT expenses;
  - publication or page charges;
  - consultants;
  - contracts with budget breakdowns;
  - sub-awards with budget breakdowns;
  - other miscellaneous identifiable direct costs; and
  - indirect costs.
- List estimated expenses as yearly requirements by major work phases. If the proposal is multi-year in scope, submit separate cost estimates for each year.
- List salaries and wages in appropriate organizational categories. For example, the PI, other scientific and engineering professionals, graduate research assistants and technicians, and other non-professional personnel. Estimate personnel data in terms of full months or fractions of full time. Do not use separate salary pages marked as "confidential" or "proprietary."
- Proposers shall not acquire and charge general purpose equipment in excess of \$5,000 as a direct cost without the advance, written approval of a NASA Grant Officer. Such requests shall explain why indirect costs cannot be charged for the requested item/items and what controls will be put in place to ensure that the property will be used exclusively for the

proposed work effort (i.e., explain why the proposed general purpose equipment cannot also be used for other purposes).

- Explanatory notes shall accompany the budget to provide identification and estimated costs of major capital equipment items to be acquired, purpose and estimated number and lengths of trips planned, basis for indirect costs, and clarification of other items that are not self-evident.
- Allowable costs are governed by Federal grant regulations at [Title 2 of the Code of Federal Regulations \(CFR\) Part 200 \(2 CFR 200\)](#).

#### **3.4.8. Other Matters**

- Include any required statements of environmental impact of the effort, human subject or animal care provisions, conflict of interest, or such other topics as may be required by the nature of the proposed work effort and current statutes, Executive Orders, or other Government-wide policies/guidance.
- As indicated in the [NASA Guidebook for Proposers](#), proposers shall include a brief description of relevant facilities and previous work experience in the field of their proposals, current and pending support, and a Table of Work Effort for Proposal Team Members.

#### **3.4.9. Limited Distribution of Proprietary Information**

- It is NASA policy to subject proposals to peer review. Thus, the information contained in proposals, including budgets, may be made available to subject matter experts both inside and outside of the Agency for evaluation purposes only. Peer reviewers are required to sign non-disclosure agreements prior to viewing the contents of a proposal. Any information that the proposer believes is covered by [ITAR](#) shall be clearly identified in the proposal.
- However, proposers should be aware that the proposal summary, which provides an overview of the proposed project, shall be suitable for public release because if the proposal is selected for funding, then the title, proposal summary, and the name of the PI and their affiliation will be posted in publicly-accessible archives such as USAspending.gov.

#### **3.4.10. Security**

If the proposed effort requires access to or may generate national security classified information, the submitter, if it receives an award, will be required to comply with applicable Government security regulations. *Proposals shall not contain national security classified material.*

### **4. EVALUATION**

All unsolicited proposals will receive equitable handling and, if appropriate, peer review. The principal elements considered in evaluating a proposal are: 1) its technical, scientific and/or engineering merit, 2) relevance to the NASA office to which the proposal was submitted, and 3)

the cost reasonableness. Proposers not already familiar with merit, relevance, and cost criteria and NASA's evaluation methods should refer to Appendix D of the [NASA Guidebook for Proposers](#).

Several evaluation techniques are regularly used within NASA. Some proposals are reviewed entirely by NASA personnel, others are evaluated by a combination of NASA personnel and selected external reviewers, while still others are subject to a full external peer review or through assembled panels. Careful regard for conflicts of interest and the protection of proposal information is always an important part of the evaluation process.

## **5. SELECTION OR DECLINATION OF UNSOLICITED PROPOSALS**

The decision to fund or not fund an unsolicited proposal is made by the Selecting Official based on the recommendation of NASA technical personnel and programmatic factors. Even if a proposal is meritorious and relevant, and the costs are reasonable, the Selecting Official may decide not to support the proposed effort for other reasons, such as programmatic priorities, budget considerations, or because the proposed work is redundant with an existing award.

NASA may support an award as outlined in the proposal budget, may offer to fund only selected tasks or all tasks for a shorter duration (e.g., a one-year pilot study), or a combination of these. Awards may be made contingent on receipt of acceptable [revised versions of budgets, statements of work, data management plans, or other elements set forth in the NASA Guidebook for Proposers](#).

Whether an unsolicited proposal is selected or declined, NASA will notify the proposer in writing of the decision in a timely manner. Whenever practicable, the evaluations that formed the basis of the decision, or a summary of those evaluations, will be provided to the proposer in writing. Notifications will be made, and evaluations will be provided via NSPIRES but may also be communicated by other methods (e.g., e-mail).

The vast majority of unsolicited proposals to NASA are declined. These rejections are largely due to the proposal's lack of relevance to a NASA program/project or due to cost constraints. A notification letter, citing the reason(s) for rejection, will be sent to the individual who submitted the proposal. If a proposer has questions about a rejection, they shall make inquiries with the NASA official who signed the notification letter.

## **6. AWARD AND POST-AWARD MANAGEMENT**

If a proposal is accepted, any budget negotiations and issuance of the award will be handled by a NASA Grant Officer. The unsolicited proposal will be used as the basis for negotiation with the submitter. Additional information specific to the award process (e.g., certifications, cost and pricing data, facilities information) will be requested as the negotiations progress.

Unless otherwise noted in negotiations, NASA will send funds directly to any Co-Is at NASA Centers and other Government laboratories, including JPL. Thus, if a proposal submitted by an entity has a Government Co-I, then funds for the Government Co-I will not pass through the applicant entity, and the entity shall not include overhead or any other pass-through charges on those funds. However, proposers shall assume that funds for Co-Is who are not Government

employees will pass through the grant recipient and those charges may be applied. Regardless of whether a Co-I will be funded through a subaward via the proposing institution or funded directly by NASA, the proposed budget shall include all funding requested from NASA for the proposed work effort in order to facilitate the review of the budget by the Grant Officer upon which the award is contingent.

After proposals are selected for funding, NASA will issue award notices to the proposers as soon as practicable. However, delays may be caused by:

- The need for additional materials from the proposer (e.g., revised budgets and/or budget details) before NASA may legally obligate Federal funding; and
- A delay in Congressional approval of NASA's yearly appropriation/funding.

For the management of grant or cooperative agreement awards, recipients primarily manage their own research or work efforts with minimal oversight by the Agency. Throughout the entire process—starting with the identification of program objectives, the preparation and peer review of submitted proposals, the conduct of the research or work itself, and, finally, the exposition of new knowledge through publications, public outreach, and education—NASA views itself as a partner with the scientific, engineering, and educational communities in making its programs relevant and productive. Post-award activities are addressed in the NASA [\*Grant and Cooperative Agreement Manual\*](#), [2 CFR 200](#), and [2 CFR 1800](#).

## Appendix A

### NASA Research Areas and Other NSPIRES Cover Page Questions

As part of the submission process, proposers will be asked to answer program-specific questions on the NSPIRES web pages that will help NASA identify the appropriate Proposal Coordinating Office at NASA where their proposal should be directed. The example questions appear below. **Note that the questions provided below are samples only. Actual questions may differ, and proposers shall answer the questions that they are presented with in NSPIRES.**

1. **Please select a NASA component that most closely represents the subject of your proposal.** (You must choose one.)
  - Aeronautics Research
  - Earth and Space Science Research
  - Education/Public Outreach
  - Space Exploration and Operations
  - Space Technology Development or Demonstration
  - Unknown
  
2. **Please select a NASA Center where there might be a particular interest in your proposal.** (You must choose one.)
  - Ames Research Center
  - Armstrong Flight Research Center
  - Glenn Research Center
  - Goddard Space Flight Center
  - NASA Headquarters, Washington, DC
  - Johnson Space Center
  - Kennedy Space Center
  - Langley Research Center
  - Marshall Space Flight Center
  - Stennis Space Center
  - Wallops Flight Facility
  - Not applicable or unknown
  
3. **Please select a research, technology development, or outreach category that most closely aligns with the main topic of your proposal.** (You must choose one.)
  - Advanced Air Vehicles
  - Airspace Operations and Safety
  - Astronomy and/or Astrophysics
  - Earth Science
  - Exoplanet Research
  - Game-Changing Technology Development
  - Heliophysics
  - Human Research
  - Integrated Aviation Systems

- Planetary Science
- Public Awareness
- Small Spacecraft Technology Development
- Space Biology
- Space Flight Operations
- Space Launch Systems
- Space Physical Sciences
- Space Technology Research
- Technology-Based Innovative Advanced Concepts
- Transformative Aeronautics Concepts
- Other

4. **Describe the objectives of your proposal and their relevance to NASA. You are strongly encouraged to link your objectives to NASA's most recent Strategic Plan.** (Enter up to 4,000 characters.)

5. **Briefly explain why you are submitting an unsolicited proposal instead of responding to a NASA NOFO.** (Enter up to 4,000 characters.)

Please note: Before submitting an unsolicited proposal, determine whether your proposal is within the scope of a current NASA opportunity. NASA will return, without review, any unsolicited proposal that is within scope of a current NASA opportunity, as explained in the *Guidebook for Proposers for the Preparation and Submission of Unsolicited Proposals*. Also explain whether or not this proposal was previously submitted to NASA, either as an unsolicited proposal or in response to an issued NOFO or funding opportunity.

6. **Provide a Data Management Plan (DMP) or explain why one is not required given the nature of the work proposed. Refer to the NASA Plan for Increasing Access to the Results of Federally Funded Research for additional instructions.** (Enter up to 4,000 characters. Enter more information, if required, in the technical section of your proposal.)

7. **Does this proposal contain information and data that are subject to U.S. export control laws and regulations including Export Administration Regulations (EAR) and International Traffic in Arms Regulations (ITAR)?** (Select Yes or No)

Please note: If the answer is "yes," the cover of the proposal shall have a notice clearly indicating which parts of the proposal (e.g., page number, section, figure) contain export control information. Indicate all information and data that are subject to provisions of U.S. export control laws and regulations as described above. Be sure to describe clearly or highlight information and data that contain export-controlled material so they can be redacted, if necessary, prior to proposal review.

8. **Does the proposed work include any involvement with collaborators in China or with Chinese organizations or does the proposed work include activities in China?** (Select Yes or No)

NASA's appropriation from Congress includes this restriction: "None of the funds made available by this [law] may be used for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration or the Office of Science and Technology Policy to develop, design, plan, promulgate, implement, or execute a bilateral policy, program, order, or contract of any kind to participate, collaborate, or coordinate bilaterally in any way with China or any Chinese-owned company unless such activities are specifically authorized by a law enacted after the date of enactment of this division."

9. **Please provide the name and contact information, if you have it, of a NASA technical, education, or outreach specialist(s) who might have a particular interest in your proposal. Provide name, phone, e-mail, and NASA Center where the interested individual(s) works.** (Select Yes or No)



## Appendix B

### Statement of General Policy

#### Awards to Non-NASA Organizations

NASA determines the most appropriate funding vehicle for unsolicited proposals, which can be a grant or cooperative agreement based upon the nature of the work proposed.

- Grant – A legal instrument of financial assistance between a Federal awarding agency or pass-through entity and a non-Federal entity (31 U.S.C. 6302, 6304). It is distinguished from a cooperative agreement in that it does not provide for substantial involvement between the Federal awarding agency or pass-through entity and the non-Federal entity in carrying out the activity contemplated by the Federal award (2 CFR 200.1, Definitions).
- Cooperative Agreement – A legal instrument of financial assistance between a Federal awarding agency or pass-through entity and a non-Federal entity (31 U.S.C. 6302, 6305). A cooperative agreement is distinguished from a grant in that it provides for substantial involvement between the Federal awarding agency or pass-through entity and the non-Federal entity in carrying out the activity contemplated by the Federal award (2 CFR 200.1, Definitions).

A NASA grant or cooperative agreement award may be signed only by a NASA Grant Officer and is addressed to the proposing organization. Only an appointed NASA Grant Officer is authorized to make commitments, obligations, or awards on behalf of the Agency and approve the expenditure of funds. It is important to note that no commitment on the part of NASA or the Federal Government is legally binding unless a NASA Grant Officer has signed off on the request.

#### Awards to NASA Centers

A selected proposal submitted from a NASA Center is funded directly by NASA Headquarters (HQ) through the Agency's funding mechanism called a Research and Technology Operating Plan (RTOP). Awards made to JPL are funded through the contract between NASA and the California Institute of Technology, which operates and managers JPL.

#### Award Governance:

Grant and cooperative agreement awards are governed by the following:

- The Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (2 CFR 200) at: [https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title02/2cfr200\\_main\\_02.tpl](https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title02/2cfr200_main_02.tpl)
- The NASA supplement to 2 CFR 200, 2 CFR 1800, at: <https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=a742969f637a69b85ae9174705ae9d4a&mc=true&tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title02/2cha>

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- NASA *Grant and Cooperative Agreement Manual* at: [NASA Grants Policy and Compliance Branch](#)

### **Restriction on the Use of Classified Material**

It is NASA policy that proposals are not to contain security-classified material. However, if the project's proposed approach requires access to classified information, or if the project will result in the generation of such material, the proposer shall comply with all Government security laws, regulations, and policies.

### **Limited Release of Proposers' Confidential Business Information**

For proposal evaluation and other administrative processing, NASA may find it necessary to release information submitted by the proposer to individuals not employed by NASA. Business information that is entitled to confidential treatment may be included in the information released to these individuals subject to protective measures including non-disclosure forms and firewalls as appropriate. Accordingly, by submission of this proposal the proposer hereby consents to such limited release of its confidential business information (CBI).

### **Proposals Involving Non-U.S. Organizations**

Except as outlined in the certification regarding restriction on doing business with certain countries, NASA welcomes proposals from non-U.S. organizations and proposals that include the participation of non-U.S. organizations. Proposals that propose research to be performed by a non-U.S. organization or with a non-U.S. organization as part of a proposal submitted by a U.S. organization typically are supported on a no-exchange-of-funds basis. The policy pertains to the nature of the proposing organization and does not relate to the nationality or citizenship of the individuals listed in the proposal. If a proposal with a non-U.S. partner is selected, NASA will determine whether such participation should be covered by and implemented through an international agreement between NASA and the sponsoring foreign agency or funding/sponsoring institution under which the parties agree to each bear their own costs to carry out their respective responsibilities.

**Export Control:** Information regarding U.S. export regulations is available at [https://www.pmddtc.state.gov/ddtc\\_public](https://www.pmddtc.state.gov/ddtc_public) and at <https://www.bis.doc.gov>.

The following important provision may apply to proposals that involve the participation of non-U.S. organizations, as well as proposals that include personnel who are not U.S. citizens and do not have status as legal permanent U.S. residents.

## **Export-Control Guidelines Applicable to Foreign Proposals and Proposals Including Foreign Participation**

Foreign proposals and proposals including foreign participation shall include a section discussing compliance with U.S. export laws and regulations, e.g., 22 CFR Parts 120-130 and 15 CFR Parts 730-774, as applicable to the circumstances surrounding the particular foreign participation. The discussion shall describe in detail the proposed foreign involvement and is to include, but not be limited to, whether or not the foreign participation may require the prospective proposer to obtain the prior approval of the Department of State or the Department of Commerce via a technical assistance agreement or an export license, or whether a license exemption/exception may apply. If prior approvals are necessary via licenses, discuss whether the license is applied for, and if not, discuss the projected timing of the application and any implications for the schedule. Information regarding U.S. export regulations is available at the U.S. Department of State Web site at [https://www.pmddtc.state.gov/ddtc\\_public](https://www.pmddtc.state.gov/ddtc_public) and through the U.S. Department of Commerce's Bureau of Industry and Security Web site at <https://www.bis.doc.gov>. Under U.S. law and regulations, spacecraft and the specifically designed, modified, or configured systems, components, and parts are generally considered "Defense Articles" on the United States Munitions List and subject to the provisions of the International Traffic in Arms Regulations (ITAR), 22 CFR Parts 120-130.

Because of these legal provisions and requirements, proposers and institutions whose proposals involve non-U.S. participants or personnel should be aware that such participation can add to management complexity and risk, and, therefore, proposers are encouraged to limit such cooperative arrangements to those offering significant benefits while maintaining the most transparent and simplest possible technical and management interfaces.

## **Export-Controlled Material in Proposals**

Explicit inclusion of export-controlled material in proposals is not prohibited. However, under U.S. law and regulations, spacecraft and their specifically designed, modified, or configured systems, components, and parts may be considered "Defense Articles" on the United States Munitions List and subject to the provisions of the International Traffic in Arms Regulations (ITAR), 22 CFR Parts 120-130. Other items or information may be subject to the Export Administration Regulations (EAR), 15 CFR Parts 730 – 774. This may, in some circumstances, complicate NASA's ability to evaluate the proposal, since occasionally NASA may use the services of foreign nationals who are neither U.S. citizens nor lawful permanent residents of the U.S. to review proposals submitted in response to the unsolicited proposal response structure.

Entities submitting unsolicited proposals are strongly encouraged not to include export-controlled material in their proposals, although the effort proposed may itself be export controlled. If it is essential to include any export-controlled information in a proposal, a notice to that effect shall be prominently displayed on the first pages of the proposal and shall state:

“The information (data) contained in [insert page numbers or other identification] this proposal is (are) subject to U.S. export control laws and regulations. It is furnished to the Government with the understanding that it will not be exported without the prior approval

of the Proposer under the terms of an applicable export license or technical assistance agreement.”

Reference the following URL for guidance on NASA’s Export Control Program and NASA Center Points of Contact: <https://www.hq.nasa.gov/office/oer/nasaecp/contacts.html>

The first pages listing export-controlled information should precede the table of contents, do not count against the page limits, and may also be used to provide the proprietary notification, if applicable. It is the proposer’s responsibility to determine whether any proposal information is subject to export-control regulations.