

September 19, 2019

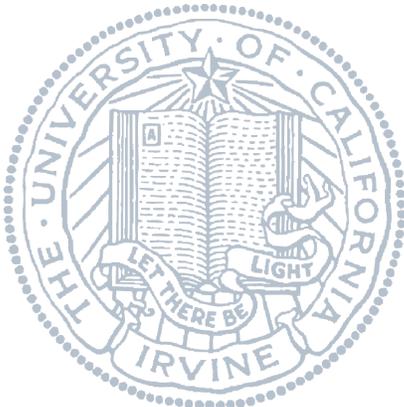
To: Ken Sembach; STScI, Director
John Mather; GSFC, JWST Senior Project Scientist
Neill Reid; STScI, Science Mission Office

From: James Bullock on behalf of the JWST Users Committee (JSTUC)

After a productive all-hands meeting last week, I am pleased to provide a formal set of recommendations and updates on behalf of the committee.

Cycle 1 GO call. The user community was taken aback by the abrupt cancellation of the Cycle 1 call for GO proposals in 2018 at a time when most were actively preparing to submit. With the new Cycle 1 call scheduled for in January 2020, we strongly recommend that the call not be cancelled once it is opened. Although there is no indication that any further delay in launch is expected, the potential science impact of such a slip could be mitigated by advising proposers for Cycle 1 GO time to discuss how their science would be impacted by a delay in observations. Impact could be further mitigated by allowing a mechanism for PIs to change targets in the event of a delayed observing window.

Analysis Tools. The JSTUC endorses the push to create full analysis tools in Python and is impressed with the effort to support both local and remote workflows with a uniform underlying technology (including apps that require no Python background for basic functions). We emphasize that there must be functional replacements for all basic/key tools by the time of launch, and recommend that resources be allocated to keep the pace of development such that the tools can be delivered on time. Effort in this direction should be prioritized



over work to modernize SDSDAS. The JSTUC proposes to create a Data Analysis Sub-Committee that includes ERS and instrument team members to advise STScI staff and interact with the long-term planning team to ensure that appropriate tools are available to enable core science delivery.

JSTUC Membership. The JSTUC charter initialized this committee membership with a commitment to two-year terms. This happened prior to the most recent launch delay. We recommend that nominal terms should be three years going forward, with a one-year staggered roll off of current membership replaced by appointments in order to ensure a proper knowledge base for this broad project. Ideally, instrument team representatives would follow the same cadence but we realize that they may need to serve different term lengths given the smaller pool of people who can serve in this capacity. Instrument team representation will likely roll off the committee entirely after the science performance of the observatory is well established, which will also affect their term lengths.

Commissioning Team Science. We have been asked to advise on a policy for commissioning team members to publish science results soon after commissioning data are made public in the archive. This is motivated by the realization that commissioning team members could have a head start on seeing data with potentially transformative science results several weeks before the community. The majority of this committee is against imposing time restrictions on when team members can publish, as long as results are submitted after the data become public. We believe that any restriction, or “cooling-off” period enforced on team members could put them at a disadvantage compared to highly-resourced teams in the community and also be somewhat difficult to enforce. Moreover, given the nature of the job, commissioning team members will be focused on commissioning-related efforts rather their own science, so we do not anticipate a significant problem and have some hesitation to impose rules to mitigate unlikely events. We



can imagine circumstances where a result is obvious and exciting enough to warrant early publication. We recommend that a mechanism be created for appeal to an ad-hoc committee that could enable early publication of exciting science prior to the end of commissioning.

Sincerely Yours,



James Bullock
Chair, James Webb Space Telescope Users Committee
University of California, Irvine

