



STScI | SPACE TELESCOPE
SCIENCE INSTITUTE

EXPANDING THE FRONTIERS OF SPACE ASTRONOMY

Augmenting community input to user committees

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JSTUC, December 10 2020



The role of user committees

- User committees are the formal interface between STScI/HST Project and the community, providing advice on all aspects of observatory operations.
- NASA has asked STScI to explore means of using modern tools and methodologies to collect “wider community input on its missions’ policy and procedural matters to augment, improve on its current user committee model.”
 - Formal request is presented as a task order under the JWST contract but extends beyond JWST to include HST & MAST and looks forward to Roman
- Two particular use cases:
 - An avenue for suggestions from the community on general policy/procedural topics
 - Community → JSTUC
 - Collecting broad community feedback with regard to specific policy/procedural issues
 - JSTUC → community → JSTUC
- Recommendations will focus on expanding input to the user committee, not on establishing independent communication channels to STScI/Project



Charge from NASA HQ

We request AURA/STScI to conduct a study on how to use modern tools and methodologies for collecting wide community input on its missions' policy and procedural matters to augment, improve on its current user committee model. Additionally, the study should adhere to NASA's goals for diversity, equity and inclusion in the community using its funded missions when they consider ways or tools to collect community input. The current, largely in person methods for obtaining community input and feedback (e.g., user committees, meeting town halls) should be assessed for their effectiveness via metrics that could be tracked through any proposed changes to measure improvements. Metrics should include cost deltas at STScI for implementing any changes. Community input practices for the Hubble, Webb, and Roman telescopes should be considered as well those for the MAST. Where appropriate, STScI should use relevant social science expertise and engage members of the community currently not represented in providing advice to AURA/STScI to assist this study. If warranted by the study findings, also recommend alternatives for the existing user committees. This study is not intended to examine how STScI itself is evaluated by AURA (i.e., the STIC and its processes).

Schedule:

- Draft report by April 1 2021
- Final report by June 30 2021



Questions for the MUG

- How are existing avenues of communication being used?
 - Informal member contacts – number, frequency
 - Formal letters, emails – number, frequency
 - Which method(s) do you find most effective?
- Are there additional communication avenues that could be explored?
 - Passive – additional communication channels
 - Active – direct solicitation of input
- Are there segments of the community that are poorly represented in the present system?
 - How would we change that situation?

We would appreciate your feedback on these questions by the end of January 2021



Next steps

- Internal STScI coordination group
 - Neill Reid (AD Sci), Alessandra Aloisi (SMO), Antonella Nota (ESA), Josh Peek (DSMO), Lou Strolger (SMO/INS)
- We are soliciting input from current user committees
 - STUC
 - JSTUC
 - MUG
- We are soliciting input from comparable organisations
 - Chandra, NOIRlab, NRAO, SOFIA, NASA Keck, ESO, ESA, Gemini
- We are soliciting input from AAS Committees
 - CSWA, CSMA, SGMA
- We are considering mechanisms to solicit direct input from the community
 - Passive mechanisms – establish email to collect responses
 - Active mechanisms – target specific community members



JSTUC membership

We have established a rotation for JSTUC membership:

We will bring on new members from the ERS and GO/AR Cycle 1 teams

We will maintain an appropriate range of scientific expertise and look to diversify membership;

We value your suggestions for new members;

We thank all JSTUC members for their service over this challenging period.

We look forward to exciting new developments in the coming year.

Name	Institution	Last meeting
Heather Knutson	California Institute of Technology	
Kelsey Johnson	University of Virginia	1-Dec-2020
Laura Pentericci	INAF, Osservatorio Astronomica di Roma	1-Dec-2020
Mario Mateo	University of Michigan	1-Dec-2020
Duncan Farrah	Hawaii	1-May-2021
Natalie Batalha	UC Santa Cruz	1-May-2021
Tomasso Treu	University of California, Los Angeles	1-May-2021
James Bullock, chair	University of California, Irvine	1-Oct-2021
Johan Richard	Université de Lyon	1-Oct-2021
Els Peeters	University of Western Ontario	1-Oct-2021
Amanda Hendrix	Planetary Science Institute	1-Oct-2021
Kat Barger	Texas Christian University	1-May-2022
Saida Caballero-Nieves	Florida Institute of Technology	1-May-2022
<u>Instrument team reps below</u>		
Stephane Charlot NIRSpec	Istitute d'Astrophysique	1-Oct-2022
Tom Greene NIRCам	NASA-Ames	1-Oct-2022
David Lafrenière NIRISS	Université de Montréal	1-Oct-2022
Alastair Glasse/Mike Ressler MIRI	Royal Observatory, Edinburgh	1-Oct-2022