

# Discussion Items

## Proposal Process - (HST, Swift)

Reminder of topics from “Implementing Portals of the Universe” charter:

- Schedules and coordination with other observatories (ground and space).
- Submission tools and proposal format
- Evaluation processes
- Grant administration and budget processes

The various mission have a diverse set of proposal processes, as appropriate for the different types of observing opportunities.

Because of this, we tried to capture the range in a [matrix](#), and then use it to identify [potential discussion topics](#).

# Proposal Process Matrix

Mission	Question # 1 - Fractions of time	Question # 2 - Onsite/off-site	Question # 3 - Coordination with other observatories	Question # 4 - Allocation of funds – grants or contracts	Question # 5 - Financial Review Committee, formula, hybrid
Chandra	DD: 3.5% GTO: 12% GO: 84.5%  ~ 5.5-to-1 oversubscription	Face-to-face meetings at single location off-site.  Telcons for last-minute travel problems.  Occasionally external reviews are requested.	Yes  With XMM-Newton, HST, NOAO, NRAO, Suzaku	Grants  Issue separate grants to separate institutions within a single Chandra science proposal to avoid double-overhead.	By formula  In past, an external review was held for those proposals requesting more than the formula-allocated amount.
Herschel	DD: 5 % GTO: 32 % GO: 63 %  Fractions held at the ESA level.	Time allocated by ESA using "standard" peer review with panels/TAC.  ESA invites US-based astronomers to participate on Herschel TAC.	Yes, with XMM.  International missions require attention to relations between US Science Center and international partners.	RSAs, invented for Spitzer and used by Herschel and NeXScI.  JPL cannot issue "grants" with no strings attached. Regular contracts ill- suited for research,.	Formula for "open time" proposals.  Financial review committee for Key (Legacy) Projects
Hubble	Means for cycles 18 – 19  DD: 1.8 % GTO: 3.0 % GO: 65.0% MCT 23.0 % ToO: 7.3 %  ~ 9-to-1 oversubscription	Face-to-face meetings at single location off-site. Was on-site past few years.  Mirror panels to avoid conflicts of interest.  Detailed scheduling info comes in phase 2.  Use triage on ~30 % based on preliminary grades.	Yes  With Chandra, Spitzer (past) , NOAO, XMM- Newton  ESA fraction ~ 15 % (also for STScI staff, users committee, ...).	Grants  Separate from TAC process.	Financial Review Committee reviews budgets developed in Phase 2 by proposers.  Archival proposals declare small (\$60 k), med (\$60 – 120 k), large (> \$120 k) in phase 1.
Kepler	DD: 0.06 %, GO: 4.24 % Survey: 95.7 %  Single field. Allocate targets. 165,000 potential. Allocate 5,000 per quarter to GOs, 2000 to asteroseismology legacy.  NOTE: Share of survey, GO and legacy programs is arbitrary/historical. How balance	Face-to-face meetings onsite.  2 days for panels + 1 day for super-TAC.  Logistics by NRESS.  Science and budget included in same proposal (i.e., no Phase 2)	No  GO arranges coordinated observations themselves in some cases.	Typically \$50 K. Fund ~20 projects. Support another 20 unfunded. Senior review reduced 50 %. Grants preferred over contracts.	Based on budget requests within proposals. A funding recommendation is provided to the Kepler Program Scientist at NASA HQ. HQ mostly takes the recommendation but are proactive and creative around the funding threshold.

# Proposal Process Matrix – cont.

Mission	Question # 1 – Fractions of time	Question # 2 – Onsite/off-site	Question # 3 – Coordination with other observatories	Question # 4 – Allocation of funds – grants or contracts	Question # 5 – Financial Review Committee, formula, hybrid
NexSci	<p>Allocate the &gt;2/3 of 45 nights/semester on Keck via the standard peer review process. No DD.</p> <p>Allocate support to NASA missions without peer review based on agreements with NASA HQ (e.g., New Horizons).</p> <p>Currently selecting observers for Key Project using peer review panel.</p>	<p>On-site peer review. 4 panels meeting on Day 1. Day 2 an über-panel composed of panel chairs integrate sub-panel results</p> <p>Use automated web-based system to receive, distribute and rank proposals.</p>	<p>When appropriate we exclude duplicate proposals for Keck time submitted to other Federally funded Keck opportunities i.e. NSF/TSIP.</p>	<p>We use RSAs (similar to grants) instead of contracts to minimize reporting requirements and contract overheads.</p>	<p>The RSAs require a simple formula which we base exclusively on number of nights allocated.</p>
Sofia	<p>For Cycle 1: GTO: 56 hours Commissioning: 93 hours GO: 240 hours</p> <p>At full operations, commissioning and GTO portion drop to below 10% ~960 hours per year.</p> <p>Fixed number of GTO hours for each instrument team. For the Facility Class = 50 hours.</p>	<p>Peer reviewed by external TAC at offsite meeting.</p> <p>Lasts two days for the full TAC and 1/2 day additional for the Chairs + Director.</p>	<p>No</p> <p>Try to avoid deadline conflicts. Currently planning on a late April due date.</p>	<p>Grants</p> <p>I think this is generally preferable for supporting observations since specific deliverables are generally hard to quantify for scientific research.</p>	<p>Formula.</p> <p>Minimal funds to prepare the Phase II, then roughly proportional to hours awarded. Have not considered Legacy level funding yet.</p>
Spitzer	<p>DD: &lt; 5 % (10 % next cycle to support deep field initiative)</p> <p>first 2.5 years: 20% GTO 80% GO</p> <p>next 3 years: 15% GTO 85% GO</p> <p>warm mission: 100% GO</p>	<p>Cryogenic mission: week-long on-site panel/TAC review, ~90 reviewers, ~800 proposals, 30% triage.</p> <p>Warm mission: 200 prop, 3 hour telecon, 30 proposals, 30 % triaged.</p> <p>Study on prelim. grades vs telecon. 30 % change. Wrote SPIE papers, Brissenden et al., and Storrie-Lombardi et al.</p>	<p>Yes.</p> <p>Joint with HST/Chandra.</p> <p>During the cryo mission also included NOAO/NRAO.</p>	<p>Research Support Agreements (RSA) – “contracts that look like grants”</p> <p>Only deliverable is final report.</p> <p>20 – 25 million \$ per year during cryo mission and publications roughly matched HST after 5 years.</p>	<p>Formula - no budget required of GOs.</p> <p>Pro - Saves a fair amount of effort.</p> <p>Con - No difference in overheads at different sites.</p>
Swift	<p>DD/ToO: ~30 % GO: ~ 35 % Other: 35 % (GRB, calibration, SAA)</p>	<p>Peer reviews are done off-site.</p> <p>Evaluations are submitted prior to the meeting.</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Time is given out for Chandra and XMM proposals.</p>	<p>Grants</p>	<p>Budgets are proposed in Phase II.</p> <p>Final budget is decided by Swift Program Scientist.</p>

# Potential Discussion Topics for Proposal Process

1. How to simplify process for users and missions? (e.g., standard software, user info retained, standard simulation software, ...)
2. In what cases is it better to use 1- or 2-stage process.
3. How best to deal with conflicts of interest ?
  1. Best way to allocate funding – grants, contracts, hybrid, ... ?
  2. How useful is coordination with other observatories during the TAC process ?
  3. How important is funding to the scientific output (e.g., papers) of a mission.
  4. Is it important to have face-to-face meetings or are other methods (telecons, e-mail reviews, ...) sufficient in some cases?
  5. What are the primary parameters that might affect the recommendations (e.g., GTO/GO fraction, oversubscription rate, length of mission, ... )?