

No Due Date (NoDD) FAQ

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Prior to reading this FAQ proposers to NoDD programs are encouraged to read Sections 2.4 and 3.2 of C.1 the Planetary Science Division Research Overview for ROSES-2021, <https://science.nasa.gov/researchers/NoDD> and the NoDD informational document which may be downloaded there and from the NSPIRES page for any NoDD program.

General Questions

Q1: Will programs not under NoDD work the same way as they have been? Will they still be going through the previous process of in-person review panels, etc?

A1: Programs not covered by NoDD will continue to have fixed due dates and are subject to any changes outlined in C.1 and the individual program calls. Currently all reviews are being conducted virtually due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Q2: What is the timeline for the NoDD approach to expand to other ROSES programs?

A2: There are no immediate plans for expanding NoDD beyond the seven initial programs, with the exception of Habitable Worlds (HW) in ROSES-2022. Over the coming year, we will be examining how to incorporate HW into NoDD with DAPR (see below).

Q3: How will amendments to these program elements work?

A3: If (non-trivial) changes are made to NoDD programs, then we will specify that that changes will take effect at some point in the future, giving proposers the opportunity to submit sooner under the current rules, or later under the new rules. The bigger the change, the longer the delay before it takes effect. Later, the proposal will be reviewed on the basis of the call at the time of submission. If program changes have been made, reviewers will be informed of which proposals were submitted before those changes took effect. For more information about this see Section 1 of the NoDD explanatory document.

Q4: Will there be efforts in future years to combine NoDD and DAPR? Right now, it appears some calls are moving towards NoDD and others DAPR.

A4: We anticipate most programs will be reviewed under DAPR with a NoDD approach in the future. We are implementing these changes one at a time, per program, to appropriately adjust to these new approaches. HW under ROSES-2022 will most likely be the first program done using both NoDD and DAPR.

Q5: How does PME work both stand alone and one that might be submitted as a ride along with a SSW?

A5: There are no changes for PMEF proposals: an appended proposal may still be submitted with an eligible program proposal, and stand-alone PMEFs are as before (with due dates).

Metrics

Q6: What are the expected metrics of success for NoDD?

A6: The continued selection of high-quality science for funding is a top priority, but in the absence of an objective measure of "quality", our assessment of this will be subjective. The primary objective metric will be how the temporal distribution of proposal submissions changes over time. A secondary metric is proposal pressure. While NoDD is not intended to reduce the number of proposals submitted, evidence from NSF is that it may have that effect; this is viewed as a potential benefit by reducing the overall burden of proposal review for the community. Notably, NoDD will have no impact on the amount of funding available for R&A or on the number of selections made

Q7: Are there potential negative consequences of NoDD for diversity and inclusion?

A7: As NoDD proceeds, we will analyze and monitor demographic data of both proposers and of proposing institutions to look for possible impacts on diversity and inclusion (both positive and negative). Data from NSF no-due-date programs is suggestive that impacts will be small and potentially positive (see backup slides in presentation).

Proposals

Q8: Under the NoDD model, how soon into the ROSES-2021 cycle can proposals be submitted?

A8: We anticipate opening all of the NoDD calls very soon after the release of the ROSES-2021 omnibus solicitation, at which point proposals can be submitted at any time, as long as they have not been submitted in the previous 12 months to any program covered by C.1.

Q9: Will there still be a Step-1 for these programs? If so, what is the time between submitting Step-1 and Step-2?

A9: There will be no Step-1 or NOIs for NoDD programs.

Q10: Under NoDD, what will be the restriction on usage of PDS/publicly accessible data released?

A10: For NoDD programs, the restriction for both data and samples will be 30 days prior to the submission date of the proposal.

Q11: How does the prohibition on resubmission of proposals work?

A11: The 12-month moratorium on proposal resubmission applies from the date that the proposal was most recently submitted to a program covered by ROSES Appendix C.1, regardless of the specific program to which the proposal was submitted. The moratorium does not place any restriction on the submission of different proposals to the same program. For proposals which may overlap already-submitted proposals, please look at the text of C.1 in ROSES-2021 for clarification on what is considered a duplicate proposal.

Q12: Will there be restrictions on resubmitting proposals to a different program than they were originally submitted? (e.g if a proposal is submitted to EW, and is rejected, after the 12-month resubmission moratorium, could it be revised and resubmitted to SSW because if that program is a better fit (assuming both are NoDD)?)

A12: No. After the 12-month resubmission moratorium, the proposal could be resubmitted to any NoDD program. One additional restriction is that a proposal may not be submitted to two different programs covered by C.1 in the same ROSES year (see C.1 in ROSES-2021).

Rolling Evaluation Panels (REPs)

Q13: How will panels be scheduled and conducted under the Rolling Evaluation Panel system? How many times a year will reviewers meet under this new system? How long will it take to schedule a panel?

A13: Panels will be convened as often as necessary to provide timely feedback on proposals. With REPs, we anticipate being able to organize panels on relatively short timescales, and any proposals on that topic received after the panel is scheduled will be reviewed at the next scheduled panel.

When you agree to serve on an REP, you agree to make an effort to participate in reviews/panels. So, at any time, we could ask you to provide some reviews and/or serve on a panel, but we understand that other commitments might make a specific review/panel impossible.

Q14: How will "default" deadlines for people in the know be avoided? This could easily give advantage to people "in the know", which is detrimental for inclusivity.

A14: NoDD has no deadlines: real, implied, or inferred. With reviews spread across the year, and with the individual program budgets spread across the year, there is no significant advantage to be gained by just knowing when a panel might meet.

Q15: Will there be targeted external reviewers for each proposal in addition to the REP reviews?

A15: Yes, we will continue to use external reviewers on an as-needed basis. In addition, we can add additional members to the REP at any time.

Q16: With REPs, how will you ensure that the evaluation criteria will be applied uniformly throughout the year? How will the "best" proposal be determined if the set is submitted at a range of times? Might there be a bias of selection rate either later or earlier in the year (even if the quality of proposals was approximately uniform)?

A16: Following federal guidelines, we do not "compare" proposals. Proposals are graded on their individual merit. We maximize consistency across review panels by providing clear and uniform sets of instructions during each week, and we "level" across panels through panel debriefs at the end of each review. In addition, program officers read panel summaries to validate panel outcomes. This will continue to be true for both NoDD programs and for programs with due dates.

We will manage budget across the year and make use of the "Selectable" status to maintain an (approximately) constant selection rate. This will be most challenging in the

first year of NoDD. While it is true that at the end of the fiscal year, a program might have "extra" money, that money can be used in more ways than just in making new selections. For example, it can be used to forward-fund awards such that we reduce obligated funding for the next year -- thus "converting" year 1 money into year 2 money. Managing the budget for individual programs will make use of all our budgetary tools. And, as stated above, the budget available for R&A programs is unaffected by the introduction of NoDD.

Q17: What is the expected timeline for reviewing proposals and returning a decision for a submitted proposal?

A17: While we believe that submission to review will happen faster in general for NoDD programs, this may not be universally true. We have stated that our goal is to have an average time to notification of 150 days or fewer and a maximum time of 225 days or fewer. Example 1: a small program may have to wait 4-5 months to have enough proposals for a full panel. Example 2: An esoteric proposal might take a little longer so that we can try to group it with more proposals that are similar to it, rather than having it be an outlier in a full panel. It is worth noting that in the first year, there may be some delays in notifications and sending out funding as REPs are established, processes are put in place, etc.

Just as now, proposals that are deemed "Selectable" will be notified at the same time as proposals Selected and Declined. If in the "Selectable" category, a final decision will be made within 6 months, but could be shorter depending on the program.

Q18: How will smaller fields of research, vs. topics that receive more proposals, get reviewed when spread out over the year?

A18: For areas where a small number of proposals are received, we may delay review of those proposals in order to ensure more "similar" proposals get reviewed together. However, more generally, diversity of scientific topics and subject areas is a programmatic factor that is considered when making selections. As with other programs, NoDD programs can also make use of additional external reviews as needed.

Q19: Does this model rely on virtual panels?

A19: The implementation as conceived takes advantage of virtual panels to provide more rapid response.

Q20: How would the Conflicts of Interest be handled?

A20: If you are a PI (or Science PI) on a proposal to Program X, you cannot also serve as an REP member for Program X while your proposal is under consideration. Once a final decision has been made on your proposal, you can serve on the Program X REP. A "conflict avoidance" period will be included after service on an REP in order to ensure that any proposals you reviewed have cleared the system before you submit a proposal to ensure that there are no residual conflicts. Conflicts for Co-Is will be handled as they are now for programs with due dates.

Q21: Could you be a member of an REP for a different call (MDAP vs. SSW) if you have a proposal under consideration elsewhere? Does the moratorium period on submission after REP service only apply to that program or all programs?

A21: Each program will have its own REP; you may serve on the REP for any program to which you do not have a proposal currently under consideration. The "cooling off" period will only apply to the specific program for which one was on the REP.

Selections

Q22: Will NoDD programs be using the "Selectable" category to preserve "waterline" proposals to later in the budget cycle?

A22: We anticipate using the "Selectable" category more liberally under NoDD, primarily to buffer selections to match a smooth budget drawdown. As with current programs, the Selectable status may also be used for proposals that might be fundable should additional budget become available later in the year.

Q23: Will NoDD affect when we can expect notifications on proposals that are currently "Selectable"?

A23: For proposals currently in selectable status, we will try to notify folks at least one month before the one-year anniversary of their submission.

Q24: How frequently will submission/selection statistics be made available?

A24: Any time selections are made, abstracts will be posted to NSPIRES (as is done for all programs). Statistics will reflect the aggregate results of the previous 12-month period.

Q25: How will selections be made, given that programs run with an annual budget? Will a smooth draw-down process mean that proposals with large budgets have lower chance of selection?

A25: Selections will be made following the same rubrik that is used for due-date programs. Panel scores are a major factor in making selections, but other programmatic factors (e.g., available budget, scientific diversity, etc.) are also considerations. The budget for individual programs will be smooth over time; a large proposal might end up in the "Selectable" pool for a short amount of time to ensure that selections match the available budget, but this would be true regardless of when that proposal is submitted.

Q26: How will NoDD work in the event of a long continuing resolution (or shutdown), when funding levels are sometimes not clear until very late in the fiscal year?

A26: By spreading the funding for programs more evenly across the fiscal year, NoDD actually provides better budget control during long Continuing Resolutions. A final budget that is substantially different from expectations could change funding levels for individual programs, but with NoDD, the effects of those changes would be spread out over a full year, reducing the overall impact. This is an advantage of NoDD when compared to programs with due dates, where the timing of program selections relative to the determination of the final budget can have significant effects.

Q27: How will the reconsideration requests be handled with this approach? Any major changes?
A27: No major changes are anticipated to the debrief and reconsideration process.

Q28: With the uncertainty of proposal timelines with NoDD, will NoDD lead to a decrease in funded proposals and overall funding?

A28: Funding for R&A programs is not in any way tied to proposal timelines and will not change due to NoDD.

Q29: How will NoDD affect the proposed start date for a proposal?

A29: Individual programs will make recommendations in their respective Appendix; in general, start dates should fall between 6 and 12 months after the date of submission

SSW-specific questions

Q30: If someone submitted a NOI to SSW-20, can they decide to not submit the proposal until SSW-21?

A30: NOIs for SSW under ROSES-2020 were optional and are not binding; there is no consequence for submitting an NOI to SSW under ROSES-2020 and then not submitting a full Step-2 proposal.

Q31: How will the review process work with SSW this year? Will there be two parallel review processes taking place?

A31: SSW20 and SSW21 will be organized independently.

Q32: Can you confirm that SSW20 proposals will be drawing from a different pot than SSW21?

A32: Yes.

Q33: With SSW, will early ROSES-2021 NoDD proposal PIs receive decisions before decisions are known for SSW under ROSES-2020?

A33: No.

Questions about specific program elements with No Due Date in 2021 (C.2 Emerging Worlds, C.3 Solar System Workings, C.4 Planetary Data Archiving, Restoration, and Tools, C.5 Exobiology, C.6 Solar System Observations, C.12 Planetary Instrument Concepts for the Advancement of Solar System Observations, and C.16 Laboratory Analysis of Returned Samples) please email the point of contact in the summary table of key information at the bottom of the program element and [on the program officer list](#).

For general questions regarding NoDD please write to [Stephen Rinehart](#) and cc sara@nasa.gov.