Explanatory Document for No Due Date (NoDD) programs (Appendix C)

This document is intended to provide additional clarity on certain aspects of No Due Date (NoDD) programs. There is also a FAQ linked from this page: https://science.nasa.gov/researchers/NoDD which will be updated as new questions arise.

1. Changes to the Program Elements

As with all ROSES programs, in the course of the year it may be necessary to amend a program Appendix. Because NoDD proposals can be submitted at any time, this can create uncertainty about which rules are to be followed at the time of submission. To mitigate this, amendments to NoDD programs will include an effective date and may have a delay in this date, particularly if the amendment might reduce the program's scope. The intent is to ensure that proposals in development are still able to be submitted under the "old rules" if necessary.

Example 1: Program element C.XX is modified in a way that does not necessarily change proposals in progress, e.g., the POC changes and the text is updated to allow a previously unavailable data set. Proposers may modify their proposals to include this new data if they like but, as changes to proposals in development are not necessitated, the change takes effect immediately.

Example 2: The new program officer named in Example #1 is a former kindergarten teacher and, in a decision that will ensure hatred and derision, requires the use of the comic sans font for all proposals to Program element C.XX. This is just a matter of changing the font, so it's easy to make, but it would not take effect immediately in case your proposal is already converted to PDF and released to org. In this case, when the new requirement is announced it will come with an effective date (e.g., a week hence) and proposals submitted before the effective date when it takes effect need not be in comic sans, only those submitted after the effective date must comply with the change.

Example 3: Program element C.XX is Amended to add a new requirement for some additional documentation for certain team members, increasing administrative burden on some proposers. But this is not a change to the technical scope. Again, when the new requirement is announced it will come with an effective date (e.g., a couple/few weeks hence) and proposals submitted before the effective date when it takes effect need not provide that additional documentation, only those submitted after the effective date must comply with the change.

Example 4: Program element C.XX is Amended to eliminate a topic from the program. This will require a major revision if not totally reworking some proposals that are in development and it would seem unfair to make this change suddenly, especially compared to a proposal submitted just yesterday that may have included that topic as a task. The effective date of such an amendment is would be at least 90 days in the future to allow submission of proposals in development.

2. One-Year Moratorium

No proposal may be submitted to any NoDD program if it was previously submitted to any program covered by C.1 within the past 12 months (this includes all non-NoDD programs). This prohibition applies to both duplicate proposals and to resubmissions. Further, no proposal may be submitted to more than one program covered by C.1 within a single ROSES year, nor may it be submitted to any program while still under consideration by another C.1 program in any ROSES year. Proposals may not be resubmitted until the original anniversary date. Proposals that are submitted prior to the anniversary of their last submission will be returned without review. The anniversary date is calculated either from the due date of proposals for the program to which it was last submitted or, for a case where it was submitted to a NoDD program, from the last date of submission.

Moratorium Example 1: A proposal is submitted on March 7, 2021 to C.XX, a NoDD program element of ROSES-2021. This proposal may not be submitted to any other program covered by C.1 within ROSES-2021, nor may it be submitted to any NoDD program earlier than March 7, 2022.

Moratorium Example 2: A proposal was submitted to the Hypothetical Data Analysis Program (HDAP20 not a NoDD program) on December 17, 2020. The notification letter for the proposal was received on May 17, 2021. The proposal may not be submitted to any program under C.1 while the proposal is under consideration: i.e., until the notification letter is received. After receipt of the notification letter on May 17, it may be submitted to any non-NoDD program (i.e., with a normal due date), but it may not be submitted to any NoDD program within one year of the prior submission and therefore no earlier than December 17, 2021.

Moratorium Example 3: A proposal is submitted to C.XX, a NoDD Program element on August 7, 2021. The proposal is declined, and in the review, the panel recommends that the proposed effort is more relevant to C.YY, another NoDD Program . The proposal may be (re)submitted to either of these NoDD Programs any time after August 7, 2022. Note, however, that if the program officer identifies a proposal as more appropriate to a different program, it could be moved to review by that program with the consent of the PI.

Moratorium Example 4: A proposal is submitted to C.XX, a NoDD Program element on August 7, 2021, and the PI is notified of the result on December 15, 2021. The Co-I notes that the proposal is also relevant to HDAP21 (not a NoDD program) which has a due date of December 17, 2021. The proposal may not be submitted to HDAP21 because the December 17, 2021 due date falls in the same ROSES year. However, The Meta-Data Analysis Program (MetDAP), in ROSES-22, has a due date of April 12, 2022. The proposal may be submitted to MetDAP22, because (a) it is a different ROSES year, (b) the proposal is not under consideration by any other program under C.1, and (c) MetDAP is not a NoDD program. Once submitted to MetDAP, however, the proposal may not be submitted to a NoDD program until April 12, 2023.

3. Resubmissions and Duplicate proposals

Section 3.2 of C.1 the Planetary Science Research Program Overview states that a "duplicate" proposal may not be submitted to more than one program within a ROSES year, nor may it be submitted to any program covered by C.1 if it is still pending in another program element regardless of the ROSES years of the two programs." If there is any question as to whether your proposal would be considered a resubmission or as a duplicate proposal, please contact the relevant Program Officer for guidance.

A proposal is considered a resubmission if it was submitted previously to any program covered by C.1, even if the proposal was significantly reworked in response to previous panel review.

A proposal is considered duplicative if it consists of the same, or essentially the same, work as another proposal submitted by the same PI/Co-I team (i.e., the same or similar set of proposers, regardless of who is listed as the PI). If a second proposal contains substantive changes in areas that are critical to the intrinsic merit evaluation, such as the goals, objectives, or methodologies, then it is not considered a duplicate proposal. Changes that fall outside the merit evaluation (e.g., budget) and/or minor changes to aspects of the proposal covered by the merit evaluation (e.g., the team) may not be considered substantive. If you have any questions as to whether a proposal might be considered duplicative, please contact the relevant program officer (who's address can be found at the bottom of the ROSES element).

Example 1 Duplicate Proposals: After submitting Proposal X, the PI rewrites the proposal to provide a more detailed Data Management Plan – all other aspects of the proposal remain the same. Though changes to the DMP may affect the intrinsic merit of the proposal, this is a duplicate proposal, as this does not comprise a "substantive" change.

Example 2 Not Duplicate Proposals: After submitting Proposal X, the PI writes a second proposal (Proposal Y). Proposal Y uses the same laboratory setup as Proposal X but uses different samples in order to test a different scientific question. These are not duplicate proposals.

Example 3 Resubmission: After receiving the review for Proposal X, the PI rewrites the proposal, modifying individual proposed tasks to address weaknesses identified by the review. This is a resubmission, regardless of the extent of modifications to the proposal.

Example 4 Duplicate Proposals: Proposal X contains three tasks, but the most significant of these is building the Massively Useful Model (MUM) comprising 80% of the proposed effort. Proposal Y is similar, with the same primary task but with differences in the other two tasks. Because the majority of the work proposed in the two proposals is identical and that work would inform the bulk of a panel evaluation, these two proposals would be considered duplicative.

4. Rolling Evaluation Panels

Proposals submitted to NoDD programs will be evaluated using the same basic processes used for other programs in PSD. However, because proposals will be arriving throughout the year, review panels will also be held throughout the year. This will be

facilitated by using Rolling Evaluation Panels (REPs). REPs will consist of a group of reviewers who have agreed to serve for some duration of time or some number of reviews; the amount of time/reviews may be different for different programs, but might be 6 months, or completing 10 written reviews and/or associated discussion. Each NoDD program will have an independent REP.

Serving on REPs: You may serve on a program REP if you are not the Principal Investigator (or Science PI) for, or have a financial conflict with, any proposal currently under consideration by that program. Other potential conflicts of interest or appearance of bias may limit participation in specific REP evaluations/panels, as with all programs. Submissions to other programs do not affect eligibility to serve as a reviewer. We also advise that you not agree to serve on an REP if you plan on submitting a proposal to that program within the next 3-4 months. Previous service on an REP does not affect eligibility to serve, and there is no restriction on being on multiple REPs at the same time (or serving on panels for programs with due dates while also being on an REP).

While serving on the REP, the program officer will contact you to ask you to provide proposal reviews and/or to serve on panels. You are not obliged to agree to all of these requests – we understand that other circumstances may make serving at a given time impossible – but we do ask that you make a good faith effort to help when possible. You may resign from an REP at any time but we request that you give at least 1 month notice to the program officer. Details of honoraria for service on an REP are still under discussion but are likely to consist of a fixed amount per written proposal review plus an additional amount per panel.

Conflict Avoidance Period: Also known as the "cooling off" period, the Conflict Avoidance Period (CAP) exists to avoid conflicts of interest. After serving on an REP, you may not submit a proposal to that same program for a short period of time, typically in the range of 4-6 months, dependent on the program. This ensures that any proposals that you reviewed are fully dispositioned prior to your proposal entering review, thereby avoiding post-facto conflicts of interest.

REP Example 1: You submitted proposal X to C.XX, a NoDD Program element on March 1, 2021; this is the only proposal you currently have in the system. You may serve on the REP for other NoDD programs or as a reviewer for any other program, subject to normal conflict of interest restrictions. Once you are notified of the final outcome of your proposal to C.XX, you are also eligible to serve on the C.XX REP.

REP Example 2: After receiving notification for the proposal in the above example, you agree to serve on the REP for C.XX. While serving on the REP for C.XX you may submit proposals to any other program (within the normal bounds of proposal submission). After completing your service, you must wait for the Conflict Avoidance Period to pass before you can submit any proposal (whether new or a resubmission) to C.XX.

6. Triage

As part of the review of proposals to NoDD programs, PSD will be using triage. As with all ROSES programs, proposals will be initially reviewed and scored by a minimum of three reviewers. Those proposals which Triage-score below a given threshold will not

be discussed in panel. The primary reviewer will be responsible for providing a compilation of the initial reviews in order to provide quality feedback to the proposers. PSD analyzed data from over 1500 proposals from the past three years of programs that will be going into NoDD and found that only 6 (0.4%) proposals that were ultimately selected would have been removed by the triage process. For this analysis, we used an individual evaluation threshold grade of "Good" Individual triage threshold levels will be set for programs at a point designed to decline the lowest-scoring (during triage) ~20% of proposals prior to panel discussion. We expect that this will roughly correspond to a "good" adjectival score for programs.

7. <u>Notification</u>

At present, we strive to notify all proposers of results within 180 days of proposal submission. With NoDD, we will continue to provide notifications in a timely manner, but the timeline will vary between programs and from proposal to proposal. Our goals for notification time are: (1) an average time to notification of 150 days; (2) a maximum time to notification of 225 days.

Notification example 1: C.XX, a NoDD Program element receives approximately 14 proposals per month. Proposer A submits a proposal on March 1 (all earlier proposals are in review already), Proposer B submits on April 30 (the last proposal going into the next review). Both of these proposals go to the same review panel. August 1, both proposers are notified of results. The time to notification for Proposer A is 153 days; for Proposer B is 93 days, with an average of 123 days.

Notification example 2: C.YY, another NoDD Program element receives approximately 3 proposals per month. Proposer A submits a proposal on March 1 (all earlier proposals are in review already). Because of the lower rate of proposal submission to this program, the last proposal to go into this review is submitted by Proposer B on June 30. Both proposers are notified on October 1. Time to notification for Proposer A is 214 days; for Proposer B is 93 days, with an average of 154 days.

Notification example 3: In example 1, Proposer A submitted a proposal on March 1. But that proposal is from a small subfield, and the program officer decides to delay review on that proposal for an extra two months to wait for additional proposals within that sub-field (to both simplify the review and to ensure consistency within that set of proposals). Notification for Proposer A is, therefore, delayed by 61 days (to a total of 214 days), but the average notification time shifts upward by only 3 days (to 126 days) due to the large number of proposals in that program.

To provide a buffer between selections and budget availability, we anticipate making additional use of the "Selectable" category. Any proposer receiving a notification that their proposal was "Selectable" will receive formal notification of the final disposition of their proposal within 6 months. For purposes of serving on REPs, notification to a PI that their proposal is "Selectable" does not constitute final notification of the proposal's outcome. PI's of such proposals will be considered conflicted and barred from joining the review panel of the program the proposal was submitted to, until final disposition of the proposal.

8. A Final Note

Finally, we expect that the first year of NoDD will be the most challenging, in a number of ways. For this reason, we note that there may be some delays in notifications during this year. We appreciate your patience!

Questions regarding specific NoDD programs should be directed to [the point of contact for the program](#) and more general questions about NoDD may be directed to [Stephen Rinehart](#), and please cc SARA@nasa.gov.