NASA PSD
Early Career Award

LPSC Workshop
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Overview of this session

- Program overview/background
- Eligibility
- How review process works
- Questions

I am very informal and hate the sound of my voice, so please feel free to ask questions at any point. My goal is to not talk at you for an hour.

About the Early Career Award (ECA) program

- Newer PSD program, first solicited in ROSES-2019 (in year 5)
- Evolved from previous (2007–2016) Early Career Fellowship
- Established to:
  - Support the research and professional development of outstanding early-career scientists
  - Stimulate research careers in areas supported by PSD (stretch your research/project!)
  - Allow promising individuals to play an increasing and meaningful role in the planetary science community
- We aim to award *up to* 5 awards/year
- Awards are *up to* $200,000 total to be used over five years (max)
  - Can be shorter; think carefully about how/when you want to use the monies
  - Number of years could be a factor in the panel's findings depending on project
  - Remember overhead! Comes out of the &200k...

About the Early Career Award (ECA) program

- Please read the program element carefully (QR code to right)

- These are FIVE (5) page proposals that need to:
  - Describe your project
  - How that work would enhance your career
  - How that work would enhance the community

- Project needs to be different than the parent award
  - NOT an extension of parent award
  - Look at previously awarded ECAs

SCAN ME

About the Early Career Award (ECA) program

- **Last year's recipients**
  - **Lynnae Quick (GSFC)**: A Historically Black College and University (HBCU) Pilot Program to Aid in the Diversification of the Planetary Science Pipeline
  - **Michael Sori (Purdue University):** Enabling the Future of Planetary Geodesy at Mars
  - **Xinting Yu (UT San Antonio):** The Next-Generation Laboratory Experiments on Planetary Materials
  - **David Welch (Columbia University):** Development of an Inexpensive UV Spectrometer for Science Education
  - **Jamie Molaro (PSI):** Efficacy of thermally driven regolith creep on lunar, martian, and asteroid surfaces

Eligibility for the ECA program (ROSES 24)

- PI must have received their PhD no earlier than **January 1, 2014**

(unless a waiver was granted; would be an included letter/email from PO)

-Within 10 years from terminal degree = Early Career

- PI (or Science-PI) must be the PI, or Science-PI, on a selected ROSES grant from **ROSES-22** or **ROSES-23;** parent awards must therefore have proposal numbers consistent with 22-PROGRAM22 or 23-PROGRAM23

- PI cannot have *received* Early Career Fellowship funds

Required Proposal Components

ECA proposals must have the following sections (full details in the ECA Solicitation)

- Parent proposal information
  - Parent award program (ROSES year, title, award number, award start date)
  - ECA applicant on parent award
- Science/Technical/Management (STM) section (max. 5 pages)
  - Description of the applicant's future research and career plans
  - How the proposed activities would serve to enhance the applicant's career
  - How the proposed activities would support the planetary science community (e.g., service activities, dedication to diversity and inclusion, mentorship)
- Curriculum vitae (max. 2 pages) and publication history (no page limit)
- Open Science Data Management Plan (OSDMP; max. 2 pages) OR explanation as to why one is not needed.
- Budget Information (same as all other ROSES proposals)

How ECA review process works

- We received 29 proposals to this year's program (ROSES 23)
  - 2 proposals were found to be non-compliant and will not be reviewed
  - *NO* Triage for these proposals
  - Split among multple groups for review (a bit eclectic)
  - Will select 5 proposals total; ~18% selection rate
- Each group will discuss each of the proposals assigned to them
  - Each proposal evaluated with equal care
  - Proposals are not compared or ranked
- Findings in the panel evaluation are used by the Program Officers to make funding *recommendations* to selecting official (Delia Santiago-Materese/Kathleen Vander Kaaden)

Evaluating the Proposals

- Panel will make their evaluations based on these criteria:
    1. Potential Impact: Career Development (*merit*)
    2. Potential Impact: Community Support (*merit*)
    3. Data Management Plan (if applicable; *merit*)
    4. Relevance to NASA's Planetary Science Division (*relevance*)
    5. Cost reasonableness (*cost*)
- Will then vote on the proposal based on the Merit, Relevance, and Cost

Panel will always *evaluate what is written in the proposal*

They do not guess, infer, interpolate, extrapolate, or read between the lines

Potential Impact: Two Criteria

- Career Development
  - Would the proposed activities significantly enhance and/or expand the research skills of the PI, as needed to achieve the PI's career goals?
  - Would the proposed activities significantly contribute to improved job performance and career advancement, as needed to achieve the PI's stated career goals?
- Community Support
  - Did the proposal demonstrate the PI’s potential for future, ongoing leadership and engagement in the planetary science community?
  - Would the proposed work enable the PI to play an increasing and meaningful role in the planetary science community?

- Example questions not exhaustive; you may consider other aspects
- Organize findings into key strengths and weaknesses

Potential Impact: Things to Keep in Mind

- Not all ECA applicants are at the same stage of their career
  - Evaluate the potential impact given the current career stage of the PI
  - Are the achievement and ambitions of the PI above/below what you would expect at their current career stage?

- Things to consider (as/if outlined in the proposal) when evaluating these criteria:
  - Publication rate/indices
  - Number (rate) of grants awarded
  - Media exposure/coverage (of their research/activities)
  - Social media presence
  - Public engagement activities
  - Commitment to inclusion and diversity
  - Involvement in ‘high-impact’ science projects (e.g., missions)
  - Leadership roles (at all levels)
  - Community involvement/service

Open Science Data Management Plan (OSDMP)

- Proposals must present a plan for making scientifically appropriate data resulting from federally funded research freely available to the public.
  - Max. 2 pages, located after the STM section
  - Proposals may also explain why an OSDMP is not needed for the proposed work
- The OSDMP must cover:
  - Data needed to validate the scientific conclusions of peer-reviewed publications
  - Software that enables future research or replication/reproduction of published results
  - Physical materials/samples planned for collection, purchase, or production
- The OSDMP must include:
  - Description of data types, volume, formats, and standards,
  - Description of the schedule for data archiving and sharing,
  - Description of the intended repositories for the archived data, including mechanisms for public access & distribution,
  - Discussion of how the plan enables long-term preservation of data, &
  - Discussion of roles and responsibilities of team members in accomplishing the OSDMP.

Potential Impact: Scores & Adjectival Ratings

For these two criteria panelists will vote on a 1 to 5 scale (half votes allowed):

1. **Poor**: A proposal of no merit; if selected, the activities would have no impact, or would not advance the PI's research career and/or standing in the planetary science community
2. **Fair**: A proposal of low merit; if selected the activities would be unlikely to have much impact, or would be unlikely to advance the PI's research career and/or standing in the planetary science community
3. **Good**: A proposal of modest merit; if selected the activities would likely have a minor impact, or would somewhat advance the PI's research career and/or standing in the planetary science community
4. **Very Good**: A proposal of high merit; if selected the activities would likely have a strong impact, or would strongly advance the PI's research career and/or standing in the planetary science community
5. **Excellent**: A proposal of outstanding merit; if selected, the activities would likely have a great impact, or would significantly advance the PI's research career and/or standing in the planetary science community

Half votes are allowed!

Relevance

- The proposal should describe how the applicant's past, current, and planned activities support, and are relevant to, the goals of NASA's Planetary Science Division (PSD)
    - PSD supports investigations to help ascertain the content, origin, and evolution of the Solar System and the potential for life elsewhere
    - See the outlined science strategy
    - See the C.1 Planetary Science Research Program Overview ROSES-2024
    - Vote for this criterion is either relevant or not relevant
    - If found to be not relevant, provide a brief explanation as to why; if relevant, put N/A

Cost

- Proposers were asked to provide a budget with a max of $200k
- Examples of things to consider:
  - Are the levels of work effort, travel, and other items commensurate with those required to accomplish the proposed work?
  - Are the stated costs (not salaries) justified and appropriate?
  - DO NOT worry about smaller things (e.g., $30 cost)
- Vote for this criterion is either reasonable or unreasonable
  - If found to be unreasonable, provide a brief explanation as to why

Big Advice to Panelists

Please keep the big picture in mind – do not get distracted by the weeds. Please look *past* the weeds!
Remember these are 5 page proposals – some details will need to have been cut by necessity.

Thank you!!

Questions?