

DRAFT STATEMENT OF INTENT REGARDING US FEDERAL SUPPORT FOR ASTRONOMY AND ASTROPHYSICS

In its 2012-2013 annual report¹, the Astronomy and Astrophysics Advisory Committee (AAAC) recommended that “Negotiations towards the coordination of projects or the development of partnerships should proceed on the basis of the principles of reciprocal participation and mutually agreed sharing of costs and responsibilities.” In the current environment of complex partnerships to realize large astrophysics projects and facilities for the benefit of the global astrophysics community, there is a need to articulate the principles that enable the best science within constrained resources.

Under the coordination of the Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) Division of Science, the NASA Astrophysics Division, NSF Division of Astronomical Sciences, and DOE Office of High Energy Physics have developed these *Principles for Access to Large Astrophysics Projects and Facilities*. It is the intent of these organizations to

- apply these principles to all large astrophysics projects and facilities which are funded by these organizations,
- apply these principles to international collaborations, to collaborations among Federal agencies, and to collaborations with other public and private entities within and outside the United States,
- assess all proposed large astrophysics projects and facilities against these principles before deciding to undertake them, and
- discuss these principles with our partners in current and future large astrophysics projects and facilities.

These organizations expect to come to a common understanding with our partners on application of these principles to all large partnership projects and facilities in astrophysics. Deviations from these principles must be justified and any rationale for deviation must be articulated explicitly.

PRINCIPLES FOR ACCESS TO LARGE ASTROPHYSICS PROJECTS AND FACILITIES

THE PRIMARY GOAL OF THE ASTROPHYSICS COMMUNITY IS TO PRODUCE THE BEST SCIENCE RESULTS WITHIN CONSTRAINED RESOURCES. Astrophysics projects and facilities should be implemented so as to enable the best science possible. While preserving the opportunity for the implementing consortium (collaboration) or the funding partners to reap the benefits of the resulting data, policies should ensure that the best science possible will be realized.

1. **GLOBAL COORDINATION TO OPTIMIZE USE OF CONSTRAINED RESOURCES.** Nations and funding partners have recognized that the world will achieve greater advances in astrophysics when community-wide coordination and collaboration allow constrained resources to be used efficiently, effectively, and without unnecessary duplication. It is recognized that coordination could mean jointly developing an astrophysics project as a partnership or choosing unique astrophysics projects that are complementary.

¹ http://www.nsf.gov/mps/ast/aaac/reports/annual/aaac_2013_130308finalreport.pdf

2. **OPEN DATA.** Realizing the best science means inviting the global astrophysics community, the broader science community, and the public to extend the science outcomes of the project. A period of limited access to data for the implementing consortium or the funding partners to reap the benefits of their investment is reasonable. However, policies should ensure that standard data products are made publicly available in a timely and useable manner.
3. **OPEN ACCESS:** Realizing the best science relies upon selecting the most compelling astrophysics investigations. Access to an astrophysics project or facility (typically observing time) should be allocated through an open, merit-based process, recognizing that some level of preferred access may be reasonable for the implementing consortium and the funding partners to reap the benefits of their telescope investments. Calls for proposals should be open to the global astrophysics community.
4. **OPPORTUNITY TO CONTRIBUTE:** Realizing the best science is fostered by including the most-qualified scientists in the implementing consortium. Opportunities to participate in the implementing consortium of an astrophysics project or facility should be based upon openly advertised criteria and processes that are equally applied, regardless of institutional or national affiliation. The criteria and processes should be based on merit and/or consortium sponsorship.
5. **RECIPROCITY:** Realizing the best science requires that nations and other funding partners of large astrophysics projects and facilities practice reciprocity with their colleagues. Nations and funding partners whose scientists desire data from another astrophysics project or facility funded by a different organization should share their own resources (funding, data, access, observing time, and consortium membership) with the national and international community. Nations and funding partners that expect external resources to be available to their community should offer access to their own resources for the national and international community.

Addressing all of these principles explicitly will lead to the most productive scientific use of the current and coming generations of large astrophysics projects and facilities.

REVIEW AND ENDORSEMENT

A future version of this document, authored and agreed upon by the AAAC, will be submitted by the AAAC as a recommendation in their <<YEAR>> annual report to Congress and the agencies.