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# Astronomy & Astrophysics Advisory Committee

Welcome, Charge &  
Conflicts of Interest



# Thanks for Serving!

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- Advisory committees play an important role in shaping the programs and policies of the federal government.
- Your deliberations and feedback, both collectively and as individuals, help federal agencies decide how to best use taxpayer dollars.
- We hope you find the experience interesting and fulfilling!



# Introductions

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- NSF Personnel

- Richard Green, AST Division Director & Designated Federal Officer for the AAAC.
- Chris Davis, Program Director & AAAC Liaison at NSF.
- Liz Pentecost, Project Administrator, Logistics & Travel Support.
- Diana Phan, Program Analyst, Logistics & Travel Support.

- NASA & DOE Representatives

- Committee Members – Introductions...



# Current AAAC Membership

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- Terms Expiring in 2019

- Kelsey Johnson (UVA), Rachel Bean (Cornell), Shane Larson (Northwestern), Dieter Hartmann (Clemson), Brian Keating (UCSD)

- Terms Expiring in 2020

- Eliza Kempton (Maryland), John O'Meara (St. Michael's), Constance Rockosi (UCSC)

- Terms Expiring in 2021\*

- Andrew Connolly (Washington), Ian Dell'Antonio (Brown), Scott Dodelson (CMU), Mansi Kasliwal (Caltech)

\*Currently one vacant position



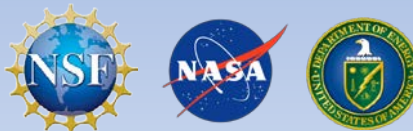
# Role of the AAAC

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- *The Astronomy and Astrophysics Advisory Committee (AAAC) advises the National Science Foundation (NSF), the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) and the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) on selected issues within the fields of astronomy and astrophysics that are of mutual interest and concern to the agencies\*.*
- For a copy of the AAAC Charter, a list of committee members, active and past subcommittees, and annual reports:

<https://www.nsf.gov/mps/ast/aaac.jsp>

\*As established in SEC. 23 of P.L. 107-368 (the National Science Foundation Authorization Act of 2002) and amended by SEC. 5 of P.L. 108-423 (the Department of Energy High-End Computing Revitalization Act of 2004).



# AAAC Charter

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- Assess, and make recommendations regarding, the **coordination** of astronomy and astrophysics programs of NSF, NASA and DOE;
- Assess, and make recommendations regarding, the **status of the activities** of NSF, NASA and DOE as they relate to the recommendations contained in the National Research Council's 2001 report ... and the recommendations contained in subsequent NRC reports of a similar nature;
- **Not later than March 15**, transmit a report to the [NSF] Director, the Administrator of NASA, the Secretary of Energy, the Committee on Science of the House of Representatives, the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate, and the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate on the Advisory Committee's findings and recommendations ... .



# AAAC Charter

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- AAAC shall consist of 13 members, none of whom shall be a Federal employee, including -
  - 4 selected by the NSF Director
  - 4 selected by the NASA Administrator
  - 3 selected by the Secretary of Energy (DOE)
  - 2 selected by the Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP)
- Advisory Committee shall select a chairperson from among its members.
- Advisory Committee shall convene ... at least 4 times a year.
- *Subject to Federal Advisory Committee Act.*



# This is a FACA Committee!

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- Through enactment of the ***Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) of 1972 (Public Law 92-463)***, the U.S. Congress formally recognized the merits of seeking the advice and assistance of our nation's citizens to the executive branch of government.
- FACA Committees must
  - Provide advice that is relevant, objective, and open to the public;
  - Act promptly to complete their work;
  - Comply with reasonable cost controls and recordkeeping requirements;
- AAAC is sponsored by NSF, which provides a Designated Federal Official.
- AAAC Meetings are open to the public and are announced in the Federal Register (and on the AAAC website: <https://www.nsf.gov/mps/ast/aaac.jsp>).
- Agenda, Minutes & Presentations posted online.
- A list of meeting attendees is also recorded.





# Conflicts of Interest

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- Standard Conflicts of Interest rules apply to the AAAC.
- Committee Members have a conflict of interest and should recuse themselves from offering project or program advice if they...
  - are employed at an **institution** that would receive financial benefit as a result of an Agency following such advice;
  - serve on the **Board of Directors of an awardee** with financial responsibility for the project or program;
  - have a **financial interest in** any contractor that would be directly impacted by such advice;
  - feel that they **cannot be fully objective and unbiased**, or that another person could have reason to question their objectivity.



# Conflicts of Interest (Examples)

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- AAAC Member serves on the Board of Directors of an awardee managing an observatory; must recuse themselves from giving any advice with financial consequences.
  - Example: if you serve on the AUI Board, you should not be commenting on NRAO or ALMA.
- AAAC Member has a financial stake in a major contractor involved in the construction of an observatory.
  - Example: if you have shares in Northrop-Grumman, you should not be commenting on JWST construction activities.

