



**Call for Expressions of Interest to become Member of the
Space Science Advisory Committee
Astronomy Working Group
Solar System and Exploration Working Group**

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1 PURPOSE OF THE PRESENT CALL

The European Space Agency's science advisory structure is the main channel for ensuring an effective relationship between ESA and the scientific community in Europe. It is an essential element to interpret the views and needs of the scientific community as regards access to space experimentation and usage of the data of the Science Programme.

The Space Science Advisory Committee (SSAC) is the senior advisory body to the Director of Science, who is acting as the Director General's representative, on all matters concerning space science included in the mandatory science programme of ESA.

A number of Working Groups support the work of the Science Advisory Committees and Directorates as appropriate with specific expertise. They report to the Science Advisory Committees on matters concerning their specific science areas. In particular, the Astronomy Working Group (AWG) and the Solar System and Exploration Working Group (SSEWG) report mainly to SSAC, but also to the Human Spaceflight and Exploration Science Advisory Committee (HESAC) and to the Advisory Committee for Earth Observation (ACEO). Any other ESA Directorate can request appropriate advice from the Working Groups. These Working Groups advise on all science matters related to Astronomy and Solar System science and exploration, excluding Earth sciences.

With the present call, the Director of Science invites scientists affiliated with institutions in the ESA Member States to express their interest to become members of SSAC, AWG, or SSEWG.

The goal is to update a pool of potential candidates to be considered in future years to replace members completing their mandate, guaranteeing proper discipline balance and various diversity criteria in the composition of the SSAC, AWG, and SSEWG.

The plan is to issue periodic calls for expressions of interest like this one to refresh the pool of potential candidates to be considered in future years. The new calls will be advertised as broadly as possible.

Appointments are in general for a period of three years. The tenure of the Chair is independent of previous normal membership.

2 TERMS OF REFERENCE AND COMPOSITION

The ESA Science Advisory structure seeks to implement the vision of a science-led ESA, maximising synergies across all science and technology activities of the Agency. The goal is to develop a coherent and comprehensive science policy with homogeneous interfaces to the scientific community.

The role of the Space Science Advisory Committee (SSAC) is to provide the Director of Science broad advice on science and scientific programmatic aspects, considering the recommendations of the Working Groups.

The Astronomy Working Group (AWG) and the Solar System and Exploration Working

Group (SSEWG) advise on all science matters related to Astronomy and Solar System science and exploration, respectively, excluding Earth sciences.

The terms of reference of these bodies are reported in the following sub-sections.

2.1 Terms of Reference and composition of SSAC

The main tasks of SSAC are to advise and/or make recommendations (including ranking, as appropriate) on:

- the needs of the scientific community for access to space for their research;
- scientific activities during the definition, implementation, operations and post operations phases of the projects/missions of ESA's mandatory science programme;
- the formulation and updating of medium- and long-term space science policy in Europe in regard to the interests of the scientific community;
- the selection and formulation of future space science missions;
- the scientific studies and activities required to lay the foundations for future missions, taking account of the recommendations of the Working Groups.
- the selection of new scientific projects.

The SSAC also has the highest-level advisory capacity, through the Director of Science, for matters to be treated at the level of the Science Programme Committee, which may also request advice on issues of a scientific nature.

The SSAC provides advice and/or makes recommendations on items referred to it by the Director of Science. Members of the Committee may however raise issues they wish to discuss. In providing advice and/or making recommendations, the SSAC takes into consideration the views expressed by the Working Groups which are set up to advise on all scientific matters in their respective disciplines.

The SSAC meets at dates and places jointly agreed between the Chair and the Director of Science, but at least about two weeks before every meeting of the Science Programme Committee (SPC).

ESA will cover the cost of travel and subsistence in connection with these meetings.

The SSAC is composed of twelve European scientific experts. Membership must reflect an equitable balance across their main disciplines, while at the same time being restricted to scientists of international stature. The members are chosen from within Member States.

The Director General, in consultation with the Director of Science, appoints the Chair and the members of the SSAC.

2.2 Terms of Reference and composition of AWG and SSEWG

The main tasks of AWG and SSEWG are to provide assessments on:

- needs of the scientific community for access to space for their research;
- scientific activities during the definition, implementation, operations and post operations of the projects/missions of ESA's mandatory science programme;
- interests of the scientific community;
- science case and formulation of future space science missions and projects;
- scientific studies and activities required for future missions.

The AWG and SSEWG provide advice and/or make recommendations on items of scientific relevance, referred to them by the Director of Science. Members of the AWG and/or SSEWG may however raise issues they wish to discuss.

AWG and SSEWG meet at dates and places jointly agreed between the Chair and the ESA Executive Secretary, but at least about one week before every meeting of the SSAC.

ESA will cover the cost of travel and subsistence in connection with these meetings.

The AWG and SSEWG are each composed of twelve European scientific experts. Membership must reflect an equitable balance across their main disciplines relevant for the working group, while at the same time being restricted to scientists of international stature. The members are chosen from within Member States.

The Chairs of the AWG and SSEWG are also members of SSAC.

3 FORMAT AND CONTENTS OF THE EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

Expressions of interest for membership of the SSAC, AWG, or SSEWG should consist of three parts:

1. A cover letter (stating the proposer's name and affiliation and explicitly mentioning the proposer's title, position, institute, address, e-mail address, and which committee they are applying for);
2. A curriculum vitae (maximum 2 pages);
3. The actual Expression of Interest (maximum 2 pages).

The curriculum vitae should include all information about the applicant's career that the applicant considers relevant.

The Expression of Interest should indicate the preference to serve in the AWG/SSEWG and/or SSAC and describe the applicant's areas of expertise, potential contributions, etc. The application should not contain a list of publications, but rather it should explicitly list the applicant's five "notable achievements" that in the applicant's opinion make him/her particularly suited for consideration. These might be specific publications the applicant has authored, responsibility in the development of a scientific mission and/or instrument, responsibility in science policy, etc.

Details of the personal data protection measures that apply to this Call can be found in the privacy notice on the submission website.

3.1 Submitting applications

Expressions of interest will be accepted exclusively in PDF format, with a maximum file size of 5 MB, using the interface available at:

<https://www.cosmos.esa.int/web/expression-of-interest-for-science-advisory-members-2026>

The deadline for submission of expressions of interest in response to the present Call is

1 July 2025 at 12:00 (noon) CEST.

The submission deadline will be implemented strictly and proposers are invited to submit their proposals well in advance of the deadline. Applications received after the deadline will not be considered. Applications that exceed the page limit or that do not respect the structure described above in Section 3 will not be considered.

4 FURTHER INFORMATION AND CONTACT POINTS

Requests for further information should be addressed to:

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