

National Aeronautics and Space Administration
Headquarters
Washington, DC 20546-0001



December 23, 2025

From: SMD/ Director, Astrophysics Division

RE: Appointment of new members of the Physics of the Cosmos Program Analysis Group (PhysPAG) Executive Committee (EC)

Background:

As stated in the PhysPAG Terms of Reference, the nominal term of the PhysPAG Executive Committee (EC) members is three years. Eight members of the PhysPAG EC were scheduled to rotate off in December 2025. The remaining members of the EC have terms expiring after December 2025 (see Table 3). Accordingly, new members of the PhysPAG EC need to be appointed for terms starting in January 2026.

On September 27, 2025, NASA HQ issued a “Dear Colleague” letter to the U.S. community seeking expressions of interest in joining the PhysPAG EC. The deadline for nominations to the PhysPAG EC was November 14, 2025, which was subsequently extended to December 5th, 2025, as a consequence of the federal government shutdown.

Criteria for Selection:

The following criteria and considerations were adopted for selection of the EC nominees:

1. Personal and professional backgrounds, geography, institution size, institution type, career stage, breadth of science and technology expertise.
2. New EC members should provide NASA with expert analysis of the science and/or technology gaps and offer analysis of solutions on how these gaps may be closed to realize the vision for our desired understanding of the Physics of the Cosmos.
3. Relevant expertise to lead the current or planned SIGs (e.g., Particle Astrophysics, Gamma-ray Astrophysics, X-ray Astrophysics, Gravitational Wave Astrophysics, CMB, Time-Domain and Multi-Messenger Astronomy, and Dark Energy, Habitable Worlds and Astrophysics from the Moon), and/or to spearhead analysis efforts that aid NASA’s implementation of the recommendations of Astro2020 and preparations for Astro2030.
4. EC members should also be “connectors” and “communicators”, i.e., be active and engaged in the astrophysics community so that they can help facilitate a vibrant exchange of ideas, information, and knowledge between NASA and the broader community.

Selections:

I am appointing the individuals listed in Table 1 to serve as PhysPAG EC members with terms to start in January, 2026 and end in December, 2028. In addition, I am extending the term of Dr. David Pooley, as well as appointing him as PhysPAG EC Chair Emeritus. I hereby appoint Dr. Manel Errando as PhysPAG EC Chair and extend his term and appoint Dr. Chien-Ting Chen as PhysPAG EC Vice Chair and extend his term (Table 2). The final composition of the PhysPAG EC is presented in Table 3, with PhysPAG EC members serving as chairs of the standing Science Interest Groups (SIGs) based on their expertise, presented in Table 3.

Note: The key to the expertise of each EC member is provided in the Appendix to this memorandum.

Table 1: New members of the PhysPAG EC.

| Name | Institution | Expertise | Start | End |
|-----------------------|---------------|--|--------|--------|
| Igor Andreoni | UNC | TDAMM & GW SIG | Jan-26 | Dec-28 |
| Dida Markovic | JPL | CoS SIG | Jan-26 | Dec-28 |
| Scott Randall | SAO | XR, CoS SIG | Jan-26 | Dec-28 |
| Fabio Pacucci | Harvard | HWO, XR SIG | Jan-26 | Dec-28 |
| Veronica Dexheimer | Kent State | nuclear theory / astro theory | Jan-26 | Dec-28 |
| Tom Essinger-Hileman | GSFC | Inflation Probe SIG | Jan-26 | Dec-28 |
| Francois Foucart | New Hampshire | nuclear theory / astro theory | Jan-26 | Dec-28 |
| Tiffany Lewis | Michigan Tech | GR SIG | Jan-26 | Dec-28 |
| Philip von Doetinchem | Hawaii Manoa | CRN SIG | Jan-26 | Dec-28 |
| TBD | TBD | Astrophysics from the Moon to Mars & Beyond STIG (A-M2M+ STIG) | Jan-26 | Dec-28 |

Table 2: Current member with extension to their term.

| Name | Institution | Expertise | Start | End |
|-------------------------------|--------------------|-----------|--------|--------|
| David Pooley (chair emeritus) | Trinity University | X-ray SIG | Dec-21 | Dec-26 |
| Manel Errando (chair) | Wash U. St. Louis | GR SIG | Dec-22 | Dec-27 |
| Chien-Ting Chen (vice chair) | USRA – MSFC | X-ray SIG | Dec-22 | Dec-28 |

Table 3: Resulting PhysPAG EC membership.

| Name | Institution | Expertise | Start | End |
|-------------------------------|--------------------|------------------------|--------|--------|
| David Pooley (chair emeritus) | Trinity University | X-ray SIG | Dec-21 | Dec-26 |
| Manel Errando (chair) | Wash U. St. Louis | GR SIG | Dec-22 | Dec-27 |
| Chien-Ting Chen (vice chair) | USRA – MSFC | X-ray SIG | Dec-22 | Dec-28 |
| Jeremy Perkins | GSFC | GR SIG | Dec-23 | Dec-26 |
| Stephanie Wissel | Penn State | CRN SIG | Dec-23 | Dec-26 |
| Igor Andreoni | UNC | TDAMM & GW SIG | Jan-26 | Dec-28 |
| Dida Markovic | JPL | CoS SIG | Jan-26 | Dec-28 |
| Scott Randall | SAO | XR, CoS SIG | Jan-26 | Dec-28 |
| Fabio Pacucci | Harvard | HWO, XR SIG | Jan-26 | Dec-28 |
| Veronica Dexheimer | Kent State | Nuclear / Astro theory | Jan-26 | Dec-28 |
| Tom Essinger-Hileman | GSFC | Inflation Probe SIG | Jan-26 | Dec-28 |
| Francois Foucart | New Hampshire | Nuclear / Astro theory | Jan-26 | Dec-28 |
| Tiffany Lewis | Michigan Tech | GR SIG | Jan-26 | Dec-28 |
| Philip von Doetinchem | Hawaii Manoa | CRN SIG | Jan-26 | Dec-28 |



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Appendix: PhysPAG Science Interest Groups

CoS SIG: Cosmic Structure Science Interest Group

CRN SIG: Cosmic Ray and Neutrino Science Interest Group

GW SIG: Gravitational Wave Science Interest Group

IP SIG: Inflation Probe Science Interest Group

XR SIG: X-ray Science Interest Group

GR SIG: Gamma-ray Science Interest Group

TDAMM SIG: Time-Domain and Multi-Messenger Astronomy Science Interest Group

HWO CrosPAG SIG: Science Group focused on science with Habitable Worlds Observatory

A-M2M+ STIG: Astrophysics from the Moon to Mars & Beyond Science and Technology
Interest Group (STIG in formation)

Ref: <https://science.nasa.gov/astrophysics/programs/physics-of-the-cosmos/>