

## Schedule Update: Astrophysics Probe Announcement of Opportunity Community Announcement

The NASA Science Mission Directorate (SMD) has released a second Community Announcement (SAM.gov notice ID NNH22ZDA008L at <https://sam.gov/opp/abcb453b2de84ac39d68ff7217ecf159/view>) concerning its intention to solicit investigations for the Astrophysics Probe Program.

Change 1: As announced in the NASA FY 2023 budget request (available at <https://www.nasa.gov/news/budget/>), the planned Astrophysics Probe Announcement of Opportunity (AO) release date has been delayed. Revised planning calls for NASA SMD to release an Astrophysics Probe AO in July 2023 to solicit proposals for the Astrophysics Probe. All other information contained in the original Community Announcement, available from the Astrophysics Probe Acquisition website (<https://explorers.larc.nasa.gov/2023APPROBE/>) remains unchanged. Please also see the Q&As posted at the same website for additional information.

The schedule for the solicitation is intended to be:

|                                            |                                  |
|--------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Release of this second notice              | May 2022                         |
| Release of draft AO:                       | July 2022 (target)               |
| Release of final AO:                       | July 2023 (target)               |
| Preproposal conference:                    | ~ 3 weeks after final AO release |
| Proposals due:                             | 90 days after AO release         |
| Selection for competitive Phase A studies: | Mid 2024 (target)                |
| Concept study reports due:                 | Early 2025 (target)              |
| Down-selection:                            | Mid/Late 2025 (target)           |

Change 2: The European Space Agency (ESA) is considering whether the Athena mission will be substantially replanned. It is no longer practical to require proposed X-ray probes to “complement ESA’s Athena Observatory.” This requirement has therefore been removed. Responses to the Astrophysics Probe AO will be limited to one of the following two mission themes:

- A far infrared imaging or spectroscopy mission, and
- An X-ray probe.

The Astrophysics Probe AO may contain provisions that differ substantially from this special notice, in which case the provisions in the AO will take precedence. The Astrophysics Probe AO will currently be based on the SMD Standard PI-led Mission AO Template available at [http://soma.larc.nasa.gov/standardao/sao\\_templates.html](http://soma.larc.nasa.gov/standardao/sao_templates.html). However, proposers must read carefully the Draft and Final Astrophysics Probe AO when they are released on NSPIRES, as things may be revised.

NASA has not approved the issuance of the Astrophysics Probe AO, and this notification does not obligate NASA to issue the AO and solicit proposals. Any costs incurred by prospective

investigators in preparing submissions in response to this notification or the planned Draft Astrophysics Probe AO are incurred completely at the submitter's own risk.

Further information, as it becomes available, will be posted on the Astrophysics Probe Acquisition website at <https://explorers.larc.nasa.gov/2023APPROBE/>. Questions and feedback on the policies in this notice are due by June 8, 2022, in order to be considered as a part of the development of the Draft AO and may be addressed by email with “Astrophysics Probe” in the subject header to Dr. Patricia Knezek, Astrophysics Probe Program Lead Scientist, Astrophysics Division, [patricia.m.knezek@nasa.gov](mailto:patricia.m.knezek@nasa.gov). Questions and feedback will be acknowledged, and responses to inquiries will be posted at the Questions and Answers (Q&A) location on the Astrophysics Probe Acquisition website. Anonymity of persons or institutions submitting questions will be preserved.