

2014 Astrophysics MO PEA N Announcement of Opportunity Q&A

Change Log		
Rev.	Date	Description of Changes
01	10/10/2014	Converted Q&As from HTML to PDF. All existing Q&As (1-10) have been copied over in the same order.
02	10/10/2014	Added Q&As 11 - 18.
03	10/15/2014	Added Q&A 19.
04	11/5/2014	Added Q&As 20 - 25.
05	11/20/2014	Added Q&A 26.

Q-1

The last paragraph of Section 4.5.3.1 states, “An astrophysics Explorer MO investigation that is a SCM to the ISS should plan to complete its primary mission investigations by the end of 2024.” Please confirm that ISS payload proposals can assume science operations through calendar year 2024.

Answer:

The PEA has been updated to clarify that the investigation should plan to complete its primary mission investigations by the end of Fiscal Year 2024.

Q-2

Requirement N-6 in Section 4.7 requires budgets in both real year and FY 2015 dollars. Are the assumptions to be made for cost inflation specified somewhere?

Answer:

Requirement B-53 in the SALMON-2 AO discusses cost inflation details. The cost inflation table is provided in Table B4. Table B4 has been updated since the draft PEA was released.

Q-3

Are non-NASA contributions (e.g., from the PI's institution) to be included in the Total Mission Cost? Do such contributions count against the cost cap?

Answer:

All contributions need to be included as part of the Total Mission Cost. Contributions are to be included in the lower portion of the cost table B-3. Contributions do not count against the cost cap.

Q-4

Is Requirement N-9 applicable to PMOs? The text as written says that it is applicable.

Answer:

If the PMO host is charging the proposer a fee for a ride to space, those costs need to be included in the PI-Managed Mission Costs.

Q-5

What are disposal requirements for an L2 mission per Requirement N-23?

Answer:

NPR 8715.6A has not explicitly laid out disposal requirements for an L2 mission.

Q-6

Although this solicitation does not require EPO (Section 4.7), If an EPO plan and budget are included, would that be considered an asset to the proposal?

Answer:

Only Evaluation factors in Section 7.2 of the SALMON-2 AO will be used to evaluate the proposals.

Q-7

What is exact location of the modified Science Traceability Matrix template (Requirement N-31)? (Or will there be a copy in the final AO?)

Answer:

The modified template can be found in the mission of opportunity program library, URL: <http://explorers.larc.nasa.gov/APSMEX/MO/programlibrary.html>

Q-8

In Section 4.4.3 regarding access to space cost requirements, will NASA-provided access to the ISS be held outside of the PI-managed cost cap?

Answer:

Yes.

Q-9

Table B1, the Science Traceability Matrix example, has 2 columns reversed with respect to the example version provided in the Draft Discovery AO. Under Scientific Measurement Requirements, we recommend the format from the Discovery AO, where the Physical Parameters are listed first, followed by the Observables to the right, which more accurately reflects the logical flow down from Objectives to the what one measures to how one observes it.

Answer:

Table B1 in the program library has been modified to include the recommended changes.

Q-10

When I attempt to submit an NOI, the web form will not let me proceed until I specify the dollar amount requested for each Civil Servant Team Member. Since I do not know these amounts yet, how do I proceed?

Answer:

Since the NOI is non-binding, you may enter any amount and you will be allowed to proceed. We suggest you enter \$0 for each Civil Servant team member.

Q-11

Please change the second sentence of Requirement N-23 from “In addition, proposals shall identify instrument components anticipated to survive Earth reentry if this is the disposal method,” to “In addition, proposals shall identify instrument components anticipated to survive uncontrolled Earth reentry if this is the disposal method.” Survivability of instrument components is not an issue for controlled reentry.

Answer:

This requirement is not limited to uncontrolled reentry. Requirement N-23 states, “Proposals shall describe the instrument passivation plan at end of mission. In addition, proposals shall identify instrument components anticipated to survive Earth reentry if this is the disposal method.”

Q-12

Can NASA increase the dollar amount for Phase A concept study that is currently capped at \$250K Real Year dollars?

Answer:

No, proposers selected through this AO will be awarded a contract to conduct a Phase A concept study capped at \$250,000 Real Year (RY) dollars.

Q-13

Relative to Requirement N-3: (1) does the "threshold mission lifetime" apply only to missions that are doing temporal monitoring? (2) If the threshold requirement is to obtain the threshold mission data set (however long that takes), does a lifetime requirement need to be stated? (3) If so, should it be based on nominal performance or some potential degraded performance?

Answer:

(1) No, threshold mission lifetime applies to all missions. (2) Yes, the threshold mission lifetime requirement needs to be stated. (3) It should be based on the minimum performance.

Q-14

For PMOs, does the requirement to justify TRL6 (Requirements N-12 and N-34) apply to the proposed hardware, to the instrument that contains the proposed hardware, or to the entire host mission?

Answer:

From the SALMON-2 AO, 5.1.1 Partner Missions of Opportunity, “NASA will evaluate the proposed investigation content and feasibility, and not the sponsor's entire mission.”

Q-15

Where should Government Furnished Equipment (GFE) be shown in Table B3?

Answer:

Refer to Requirement N-9 and "Table 1: Cost Elements for NASA Center Budget Proposals in response to SMD AOs" for identifying where to include and not include GFE costs.

Also see **Q-22**

Q-16

For which elements are instrument contingencies and mass margins (Requirement N-32) required for a PMO proposal: the NASA PI-Managed portion of the investigation, the host mission instrument containing the NASA PI-Managed portion, or everything in the host mission?

Answer:

Requirement N-32 applies to all hardware within the NASA PI-Managed portion of the investigation. Requirement N-32 does not apply to other elements of the host mission.

Q-17

Does NASA data rights policy (Requirement N-26) apply to PMO, or does the host agency policy apply?

Answer:

Requirement 28, section 4.5.6.4 of the SALMON-2 PEA-N, addresses data sharing from PMO investigations. For all MO mission types, all effort should be made to minimize the data latency period (Requirement N-26).

Q-18

Section 4.4.2 of the PEA-N says that for Partner MOs, the proposing PI must provide evidence that the sponsoring organization "intends to fund the primary host mission." But it may not be known at the time of the NASA SALMON-2 proposal submission which of several potential host missions will be selected for funding by a non-NASA sponsoring organization such as ESA or JAXA. Is it sufficient to demonstrate that the non-NASA sponsoring organization intends to select and fund a currently- not-identified mission from a particular upcoming opportunity? If not, then synchronizing the timing of NASA MO proposals with non-NASA host mission selections is highly problematic.

Answer:

Yes, we interpret "intends to fund the primary host mission" to mean that if a non-NASA sponsoring organization such as ESA or JAXA says that they will fund a currently-not-selected mission from an identified opportunity, then that meets the intent of the PEA. The risk that the proposed host mission is not selected is a programmatic consideration that would be addressed at NASA HQ.

Q-19

Requirement N-18 of the SALMON-2 Explorer MO PEA N says that proposals for SCM investigations on high-altitude scientific balloons must be proposed for flight on Long Duration Balloons (LDBs) or Ultra Long Duration Balloons (ULDBs). May additional conventional balloon flights also be included in the proposed investigation, as long as the entire investigation is not appropriate for an APRA proposal? [Note: APRA is the Astrophysics Research and Analysis program, an element of the NASA Research Announcement (NRA), Research Opportunities in Space and Earth Sciences (ROSES).]

Answer:

Additional conventional balloon flights other than ULDB or LDB may be included in the proposed investigation, but the burden is indeed on the proposer to show that the proposed investigation is beyond the scope of the APRA program.

Q-20

Can you delete N-12 and N-34 requirements and use the less restrictive SALMON-2 B-27 and B-41 requirements?

Answer:

No, the current N-12 and N-34 requirements remain. The language in these requirements is consistent with the TRL definitions in the current NASA Systems Engineering Processes and Requirements, NPR 7123.1B, Appendix E. One of the main purposes of updating these requirements was to be more specific about TRL expectations. Please see the "System Level TRL 6 example" document in the program library for additional information.

Q-21

Consider a case where the proposed NASA investigation is a secondary payload that separates from the primary payload. The primary payload selects a non-NASA commercial launch vehicle that may be foreign. There is no business relationship between the launch services provider and NASA. Can you comment on how the U.S. National Space Transportation Policy applies to this case?

Answer:

The proposed payload is considered to be secondary; therefore the proposer needs to demonstrate there are no U.S. Launch services available.

Q-22

In Table B3, Should GFE be included as contributions or a separate line in the total mission cost section?

Answer:

All contributed hardware (government and non-government) should be included as part of the Total Mission Cost as contributions. Costs related to space access that are being covered by NASA should not be counted as GFE and should not be included anywhere in Table B3.

Q-23

Section “4.6.2 Alternative Access to Space” of the SALMON-2 AO states, “Access to space for NASA payloads is governed by the U.S. Space Transportation Policy

(<http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/microsites/ostp/space-transportation-policy-2005.pdf>). Is this the current document?

Answer:

Please use:

(http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/microsites/ostp/national_space_transportation_policy_11212013.pdf).

Q-24

Will NASA be posting tailored mission assurance requirements?

Answer:

No further guidance will be provided regarding tailoring of the mission assurance requirements in 320-MAR-1001E. It is the responsibility of the proposing team to identify a set of mission assurance requirements that is appropriate for the proposed mission.

A new document named "TMC on Class D Payloads" has been posted in the program library. This document, taken from Earth Venture Instrument – 2 (EVI-2) solicitation program library, outlines expectations of the TMC panel in the context of NPR 8705.4 (Risk Classification for NASA Payloads), Appendix C (SMA-Related Program Requirements for NASA Class A-D Payloads). For the purposes of the 2014 Astrophysics SMEX solicitation, proposers need to follow only the class D guidelines provided in "TMC on Class D Payloads." This guidance is in no way intended to be a comprehensive checklist regarding SMEX class D proposals, but rather is intended to be supplementary and educational with the goal of assisting the proposers.

Q-25

Could you specify a nominal start date for all projects solely for the purposes of consistent costing and scheduling, such as a selection date of March 1, 2017? We think this will help teams across the board for consistency.

Answer:

The AO targets early 2017 as the date for downselection of the investigation for flight. If proposers wish to assume a March 1, 2017 start date, that would be consistent with an early 2017 downselection date.

Q-26

Do Small Complete Missions (SCMs) need to specify a launch date or a launch readiness date no later than December 31, 2020?

Answer:

For SCMs, proposers must specify the launch readiness date in the proposal, which is to be no later than December 31, 2020.