AGP 2009
(and the future)

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The 2009 Grants Round

- The funding model we were working to for this round assumed a total allocation of 90 PDRA's and Technicians.(All PDRA numbers include Techn posts from now on in this presentation)
- We received 84 standard (SG) grant proposals
- We received 20 rolling grant (RG) proposals which contained a total request for 151 PDRA's
- On the basis of our total target of 90 we proposed awarding 14 SG and 76 RG PDRA's
- The AGP's work was essentially complete by early December

Post Prioritisation

- The AGP met on Jan 12th to discuss the outcome of the STFC review and learnt that the target number of PDRA's was possibly 75 but could be as low as 56 in later years and in future rounds.
- At the level of 75 posts modelling indicates there would be 12 SG and only 14 RG's awarded.
- At the level of 56 posts modelling indicates there would be 10 SG and 7 RG's awarded out of 20

The Future

- If the grants funding were limited to the equivalent of about 56 posts in the future, about 70% of current rolling grants would not be viable (while standard grants would be reduced in number pro rata.)
- UK Astronomy (and thereby STFC) benefits from the following facilities created and led by the kind of groups whose support would fail at the levels now being proposed

These would not have happened if funding had been at the proposed levels

- **STEREO**
- **SOHO-CDS**
- **CIXS**
- **D-CIXS**
- **Hinode**
- **SMEI**
- **Liverpool Telescope**
- **AMI**
- **Fibre Spectroscopy**
- **SPIRE**
- **Planck HFI**
- **Cassini Magnetometer**
- **Cluster instruments**
- **Rosetta instruments**
- **Bison**
- **Locuss survey**
- **Transition Edge Detectors**
- **QUAD**
- **A huge fraction of the science output from STFC and international facilities**

The Comparison
Rolling Grant vs Future Format

- **Coherent science programme**
- **Enough critical mass for international leadership**
- **Opportunities for young staff to develop management experience for use by STFC and HEI's**
- **Some stability in technical posts**
- **Technical facilities available for the timescale of technical projects and KE**
- **Enough stability to generate positive support from HEI's**

- **A small number of independent academics**
- **Each academic may expect two grants in their career on average**
- **No hope of international leadership in any projects**
- **No critical mass to compete internationally**
- **No stability on project timescales**
- **No technical base to support knowledge exchange**
- **No incentive to engage in outreach activities**

Conclusion

- **Funding the science exploitation grants in Astronomy at the levels of 60 PDRA's or below will reduce the effectiveness of STFC Astronomy by a large fraction**
  - **Effectiveness in using current facilities**
  - **Effectiveness in designing and building new facilites**
  - **Effectiveness in delivering STFC's outcomes**
    - **Science**
    - **Training**
    - **Economic benefit (Knowledge Exchange)**
    - **Public and Political Outreach**
- **Astronomy and Space Science are one of the few science areas in which the UK is 2nd in the world to the US**
- **The balance of funding between exploitation and facilities in STFC has to be revised (within the total budget allocated) if our world position in Astronomy is to be maintained**