

Solar System Advisory Panel (SSAP)

Developing the Roadmap for Solar System Science

Note: This announcement relates to *Projects*, rather than *Science*. A separate announcement with the notes from the Town Meeting, calling for additional science input, will be circulated next week.

Town meeting

The SSAP (chaired by Monica Grady) held a very successful town meeting at the RAS on Monday 10 September, with over 70 representatives of the community from a wide variety of institutions present. Thanks to all those who attended and contributed to the discussion. The meeting included short presentations from a number of scientists providing an opportunity to highlight key issues in solar system science or to promote future missions or project opportunities. The afternoon was devoted to area-specific sessions, drafting a list of key questions for the science, along with the most pertinent sub-questions for solar system science in the coming years. Key science questions were grouped into two thematic areas, “Our ever-changing Sun” and “Planets and Life”.

The next step is to ask the community for more detail on the science priorities - a request for submissions will be made next week. This note seeks input on what missions and project opportunities are likely to arise in the coming years.

The SSAP will use these submissions to start formulating a science vision for the coming years. The science vision will be accompanied by a Roadmap, setting out the facilities and missions that are critical to the science goals, against a timeline.

We plan to circulate the draft report, prepared by the SSAP in w/c 8th October. The community will then have 2 weeks during which to make comments, prior to a revised version of the report being submitted to STFC’s Science Board on 1st November 2012.

Missions and facilities

The SSAP wishes to ensure that, as far as possible, all of the opportunities to support its science in the coming years are known to it. As the Roadmap will extend for 10-20 years, the SSAP understands that it will need to be revised to take account of emerging opportunities, cancelled missions and changing priorities but wishes to ensure an accurate snapshot as at the time of its report to STFC’s Science Board.

You are therefore invited to submit a single A4 page (or equivalent) describing any new mission or project opportunities you feel should be considered by the SSAP. ‘New’ should be defined as anything that is not either in-flight / in operation, or in the current ESA planning for ‘M’ or ‘L’ class missions (as these have already provided summaries to STFC). Projects might include development of new laboratory services or facilities or the provision of project specific HPC or data storage.

The description should seek to answer:

- why the mission or project should be supported (the key science questions)?
- whether the UK has leadership in the area?
- why the UK should be involved?
- why it is timely to support the mission or project now?

Submissions should include an indicative timeline to science exploitation and a list of groups likely to be involved.

Please send the descriptions to Monica Grady (m.m.grady@open.ac.uk), copied to Simon Berry (simon.berry@stfc.ac.uk), by 28th September

Prof Monica Grady (Chair SSAP)