



December 14, 2023

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. Four members of the PhysPAG EC were scheduled to rotate off in December 2023. The remaining members of the EC have terms expiring after December 2023 (see Table 3). Accordingly, new members of the PhysPAG EC need to be appointed for terms starting in December 2023.

On September 27, 2023, 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 16, 2023, which was subsequently extended to November 30, 2023.

*Criteria for Selection:*

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

1. New members of the PhysPAG EC should be recognized experts in fields pertinent to the Physics of the Cosmos Program’s science and technology objectives and should have demonstrated ability to lead studies or interest groups in the areas central to this theme;
2. Balance among the primary PhysCOS science disciplines (e.g., Particle Astrophysics, Gamma-ray Astrophysics, X-ray Astrophysics, Gravitational Wave Astrophysics, CMB, Time-Domain and Multi-Messenger Astronomy, and Dark Energy);
3. The increased activity of PhysPAG following the Astro2020 recommendations has resulted in new Science Interest Groups (SIGs) and renewed activity in less active SIGs. Leadership of these SIGs has traditionally come from within the EC, which would now require some members to co-chair more than one SIG. NASA will benefit from an increase in the number of EC members from 14 to 15; and we will consider non-EC members as possible co-chairs for some SIGs, with an emphasis on providing opportunity and training for Earlier-Career scientists than typically join the EC.
4. Broad and diverse representation of the PhysCOS community.

*Selections:*

I am appointing the individuals listed in Table 1 to serve as PhysPAG EC members with terms to start in January, 2024 and end in December, 2026. In addition, I am extending the term of Dr. Justin Finke, as well as appointing him as PhysPAG EC Chair Emeritus (Table 2).

I hereby appoint Dr. Athina Meli as PhysPAG EC Chair and appoint Dr. David Pooley as PhysPAG EC Vice Chair.

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**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Institution</b>	<b>Expertise</b>	<b>End</b>
Brian Grefenstette	CalTech	XR SIG / HWO	Dec-26
Vivian Miranda	Stony Brook	CoS SIG	Dec-26
Jeremy Perkins	NASA GSFC	GR SIG	Dec-26
Stephanie Wissel	Penn State	CR SIG	Dec-26

**Table 2: Current member with one-year extension to their term**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Institution</b>	<b>Expertise</b>
Justin Finke	NRL	GR SIG

**Table 3: Resulting PhysPAG EC membership**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Institution</b>	<b>Expertise</b>	<b>End</b>
Justin Finke (Past Chair)	NRL	GR SIG	Dec-24
Athina Meli (Chair)	North Carolina A&T	CR SIG	Dec-24
Dave Pooley (Vice-Chair)	Trinity Univ	XR SIG	Dec-24
Eric Burns	LSU	TDAMM SIG	Dec-24
Kristin Madsen	NASA GSFC	XR SIG	Dec-24
Chiara Mingarelli	U Connecticut	GW SIG	Dec-25
Alessandra Corsi	Texas Tech	GW SIG	Dec-25
Chien-Ting Chen	USRA – MSFC	XR SIG	Dec-25
Roger O’Brient	JPL	IP SIG	Dec-25
Rebecca Hounsell	UMBC	CoS / TDAMM	Dec-25

Manel Errando	GR SIG	GR SIG	Dec-25
Brian Grefenstette	Caltech	XR SIG / HWO	Dec-26
Vivian Miranda	Stony Brook	CoS SIG	Dec-26
Jeremy Perkins	NASA GSFC	GR SIG	Dec-26
Stephanie Wissel	Penn State	CR SIG	Dec-26

For

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Mark Clampin  
 Director, Astrophysics Division  
 Science Mission Directorate

*Appendix: PhysPAG Science Interest Groups*

CoS SIG      Cosmic Structure Science Interest Group  
 CR SIG      Cosmic Ray 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         Cross-PAG Science Group focused on science with  
                  Habitable Worlds Observatory (in formation)

Ref: <https://pcos.gsfc.nasa.gov/sigs/sigs.php>