

Terms of Reference approved by the APAC and APD Director

Astrophysics With Equity: Surmounting Obstacles to Membership (AWESOM) Science Analysis Group

A Cross-PAG SAG on expanding participation in NASA Astrophysics

In 2020 NASA added **Inclusion** as one of its core values, and has undertaken a number of initiatives to expand participation in NASA science. Programs related to new Astrophysics missions, including the Core Community Surveys for the *Roman Space Telescope*, *Hubble* Fellowship Program, and Great Observatories Maturation Program, are actively seeking to include scientists from a broad range of institutions and backgrounds.

However, the Astro2020 Decadal Survey has illustrated the continuing challenges in structural inequities in astrophysics. The "[*Pathways to Discovery in Astronomy and Astrophysics for the 2020s*](#)" report stated (Sec N.6.5):

"Inequities in career advancement and access to the tools of the Profession must be addressed so that the entire workforce is engaged."

With these goals and challenges in mind, we propose for a **Science Analysis Group (SAG)** to undertake a careful study of **how to expand the range of institutions and backgrounds for members of the community contributing to NASA astrophysics**. The SAG will focus specifically on engagement with research and training programs. This focus is motivated by the Astro2020 observation that (Sec N.6.5.2):

"[A]gencies no longer offer funding for long-term sustainability nor institutional or agency accountability for the continuation of past successful programs...Investments for programs that have shown progress in increasing the persistence of historically underrepresented groups are most successful if they are not time-limited but are supported for as long as they are effective."

To analyze these issues, the SAG will consist of astrophysicists from multiple disciplines including PhysPAG, ExoPAG, and COPAG, as well as subject matter experts from other fields. The SAG will be open to membership from any interested member of the community. We will engage colleagues from the BIPOC community and institutions that are underrepresented in NASA research and education programs. The point of contact for this SAG will be Ryan Hickox (ryan.c.hickox@dartmouth.edu).

The goal of this SAG is to analyze how existing NASA programs and potential new initiatives can increase engagement with research and training programs, and to make available opportunities clearer, more consistent, and easier to access.

The SAG will work in coordination with and complement ongoing NASA diversity & inclusion efforts. **The SAG will document findings in one or more publicly available white papers, with an aim to be delivered to APAC in 2023.**