



STScI

3700 San Martin Drive  
Baltimore, MD 21218  
(410) 338-4700  
FAX: (410) 338-4976

March 30, 2020

Dear HST Cycle 28 Review Member:

Your participation in the peer review of the proposals for HST observing time in Cycle 28 is very much appreciated. This review is being implemented to ensure the strongest scientific program for HST. As part of the review process, we are asking you to keep your participation as well as the membership of all panels confidential until after the review.

The Space Telescope Science Institute (STScI) will conduct the Virtual HST Cycle 28 Proposal Review May 11 - 15, 2020. The Chair, Vice-Chair, At-Large members and all panelists will join the discussion review meeting remotely via videoconference (details TBD). SPG staff, PSSs and Levelers will be onsite at STScI if possible, or remote as the situation dictates. The eight Review Panels will meet for 2 1/2 days each, and the overall TAC will meet for 2 1/2 days, immediately after the panel meetings. Dependent on their size, proposals in Cycle 28 will be reviewed either by external panelists or by virtual review panels.

The detailed agenda for the meetings will be posted in April, details can be found at the Peer Review Web page at: <https://hst-docs.stsci.edu/display/HSP/Hubble+Space+Telescope+Science+Policies+Group+and+Peer+Review+Information>. We ask that you please review the site carefully. Follow the link from this page to our Web-based Reviewer tool, where you will find your Panel download file. A quick guide for the tool can be found on the peer review site. The reviewer tool (SPIRIT) will be used to submit preliminary and meeting grades, as well as enter any proposal comments. You will log into the system with your user-id and password from your MyST account. If you have any problems or questions about this system, please contact Brett Blacker, [blacker@stsci.edu](mailto:blacker@stsci.edu); 410-338-1281. If you are unable to download the package for any reason, please contact Brett and we will make sure you receive the products.

Following discussions with our Council, with the ST Users Committee, and with panelists from previous Cycles, all of whom have expressed a strong preference for evolving to a fully electronic TAC evaluation process, we are not providing you with paper copies of the proposals. This minimizes the time we need to get the proposals to you. We realize, however, that some panelists still want to use paper copies. If that is the case, we ask that you have them copied at your convenience (e.g., FedEx) and we will reimburse you for

any expense associated with making paper copies. *(However, please provide original receipt for reimbursement.)* If it is not possible for you to obtain paper copies, please contact us and we will make our best effort to provide those materials. Enclosed in your Download is a folder consisting of all the proposals (in PDF format) that will be considered by your Panel you will also have Download of any TAC (Large, Treasury, AR Legacy) proposals that your chair or vice-chair is assigned to review. You will not be required to provide grades, nor comments, but you will provide them with feedback for their aid during the actual TAC meeting.

**We have made some changes in the review procedures to reduce the work load on individual reviewers:**

1. Each proposal will receive preliminary grades from only 6 panelists. All of your Reviewer and Grading assignments are listed in SPIRIT. Note also that the tool will only allow you to provide preliminary grades for your assigned proposals.
2. **Preliminary grades must be submitted by April 29th.** This is essential to allow us to construct ranked lists and identify proposals for triage in advance of the TAC meeting.
3. The ranked lists will be distributed to panel members around May 1st.
4. All panelists (except those with conflicts) will submit grades for proposals discussed at the TAC meeting. **It is therefore extremely important that panelists familiarize themselves with all proposals above the triage line before they arrive for the panel meetings.**
5. Triage proposals can be raised for discussion by any un-conflicted panel member.

We have assigned 2 reviewers for each proposal. Those reviewers will lead the proposal discussion and are then responsible for the compilation of the feedback comments.

Questions about the proposals or the review procedures should be directed to Claus Leitherer, Head of the Science Policies Group (SPG), (TAC panel, [leitherer@stsci.edu](mailto:leitherer@stsci.edu); 410-338-4425). They may also be directed to other astronomers in SMO, Laura Watkins (Galaxy, IGMCGM, Exoplanets and Large Scale Structure) panels, [lwatkins@stsci.edu](mailto:lwatkins@stsci.edu); 410-338-2443), Molly Peeples (Stellar Physics and Stellar Populations panels, [molly@stsci.edu](mailto:molly@stsci.edu); 410-338-2451) or Andrew Fruchter (Supermassive Black Holes Panels [fruchter@stsci.edu](mailto:fruchter@stsci.edu); 410-338-5018) Any technical questions or Solar System Panel should be addressed to Brett Blacker, ([blacker@stsci.edu](mailto:blacker@stsci.edu); 410-338-1281). You should report any Conflicts of interest to your Panel Support Staff (PSS) member, who will be listed in the SPIRIT tool.

**Contents of Downloads**

1. All proposals assigned to your panel (PDF)
2. TAC proposals that your panel will review and provide feedback (PDF)

**Below is a Checklist of Actions that you should follow**

[1] Please review the Panel website <https://hst-docs.stsci.edu/display/HSP/Hubble+Space+Telescope+Science+Policies+Group+and+Peer+Review+Information> before you start reviewing the proposals.

[2] Please log into our Web-based Reviewer system at: <https://spirit.stsci.edu/> and receive your panel Download as soon as possible.

[3] Check for Conflicts of Interest and report those conflicts to your PSS by **as soon as possible**.

[4] Before the deadline of **Wednesday, April 29th**, please your Preliminary Grades via SPIRIT, <https://spirittac.stsci.edu/spirit>. **The grade scale runs from 1.0 (excellent!) to 5.0 (very poor), and decimal places are allowed.**

- The preliminary grades of all the panelists will be used to reject approximately 50% of all proposals via our Triage Process. Therefore, assign your grades with care, and be sure to submit them on time. After all grades have been received for your panel, we will send you the resulting 'triage' list by email for your review prior to the meeting, we anticipate sending this around May 1. **Once again, it is therefore extremely important that panelists familiarize themselves with all proposals above the triage line before they join for the panel meetings.**

I would like to convey my thanks to you for agreeing to contribute at this high level to the HST Cycle 28 Proposal Review. I hope that you will find the activity rewarding and I look forward to seeing you here in May.

Sincerely,

Claus Leitherer  
Head, Science Policies Group