



STScI | SPACE TELESCOPE
SCIENCE INSTITUTE

EXPANDING THE FRONTIERS OF SPACE ASTRONOMY

HST Cycle 32: Discussion Panelist Q&A

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for the HST Science Policies Group

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Summary

- What to do before the meeting: **Read extra proposals!**
- Panel Meetings & Dual Anonymous Peer Review (DAPR)
- Ranking
- Team Expertise
- EC Proposals
- Review Comments
- Logistics



**What to do before the meeting:
Read extra proposals!**



What to do before the meeting

Make sure you have read all the proposals that will be discussed!

- You already read and graded $\sim \frac{2}{3}$ the proposals in your panel.
- We used those grades to triage your panel and set the discussion list.
- You probably only read $\sim \frac{2}{3}$ of the proposals on the discussion list. You will be expected to discuss **ALL** proposals on the discussion list, so **you should read any proposals on the list that you did not already read.**

You can start to enter remarks and comments.

- Primaries and secondaries: Review comments for triaged proposals that won't be discussed — get a head start!
- Primaries and secondaries: Notes for proposals that will be discussed.
- Not primary or secondary: Enter shared remarks for other proposals, if you have them.



**Panel Meetings
&
Dual Anonymous Peer Review
(DAPR)**



Overview

- Hybrid approach:
 - 16 discussion panels, initial work is asynchronous, then they meet virtually
 - 6 external panels, fully asynchronous
 - 1 executive committee — panel chairs + at-large, meet in person
- External panelists: grades and comments for Small GO proposals (1 – 15 hours) and Archival proposals.
- **Discussion panels: review the remaining Small GO, Medium GO, and Survey proposals.**
- Executive committee: Large, Treasury and AR Legacy.
- Exceptions:
 - **All LSS proposals will be reviewed by the discussion panel (due to the small pool).**
 - **All Target of Opportunity proposals will be reviewed by their corresponding discussion panels in order to review them in context.**



Panel Meetings

Virtual via Webex:

- Tuesday 5/28 - Friday 5/31
- Panels meet from 10am to 4pm EDT
 - Panel chairs may shift by ~15-30 minutes but it shouldn't be more than that.
 - Panel chairs set the detailed agenda.
- **Please make every effort to be available for the whole meeting.**
 - Report any time conflicts to your panel chair ASAP.

High-level Overview:

- Introductions and Set-up
- Discussions — discussion of proposal, grading of proposal (xN proposals)
- Ranking — discussion and possible adjustment of ranking based on average grades
- EC proposals — discussion (but no grading) of EC (Large, Treasury, Legacy) proposals
- Comments — Primaries and Secondaries write comments for each proposal



Discussions

- Chair announces the proposal number.
- **Check for conflicts — conflicted people move to a breakout room. Do not state reasons for conflict.**
- Discussion:
 - Primary, gives a brief summary and strengths and weaknesses.
 - Secondary provides additional comments, then all other panelists.
 - **Please discuss special requirements and any parallels.**
 - **Discussions should focus on the science not the team.**
 - **Do not compare proposals.**
- Chair asks if everyone is ready to grade, then everyone grades.
 - You must be present for the whole discussion to grade.
 - If you cannot enter a grade, message the PSS **privately** with your grade.
- PSS locks the grades.
 - **You cannot go back and change grades.**



Why Dual Anonymous Proposal Review?

Goal

Primary objective of peer review process:

Best-Justified Science

Anonymising proposals:

Places focus directly on **Science**

Removes focus from **Team**

Tool



DAPR for **Proposers**: Do's and Don't's

- ✗ Names/affiliations of proposing team, links to personal websites.
- ✗ Claims of ownership of past work.
- ✓ Focus on work proposed, include relevant info needed to assess scientific merit.
- ✓ Fully and properly cite relevant work, including proprietary data/software.
- ✓ Make reasonable effort to anonymize their submissions.



DAPR for Reviewers: Do's and Don't's

- ✗ Do not try to guess the proposing PI or team! (It's not a test.)
- ✗ Do not discuss, imply or insinuate the identity of the proposing team.
- ✗ Discuss the experience and expertise of the team.
- ✓ Focus on the **scientific merit** of the work proposed.
- ✓ Refer to the **proposal** not the **proposers**.
- ✓ *Private communication* is **not** code for “hey, we’re the team”.

Guesses are
often **wrong!**

If an STScI staff
member asks you to
refocus, please refocus.



Non-Compliant Proposals

- ⚠ Egregious breaches have (probably!) been reported. Some minor cases may remain.
- ✅ **Report** any cases to your **PSS** and your **SPG manager**.
- ✅ Not sure? **Report** it anyway.

Minor violations:

- ✅ Try to ignore and proceed with your review of the **scientific merit**.
- ✅ Highlight anonymity concern in feedback comments.

Major violations, or impossible to ignore:

- ❌ **Halt discussion**. We will ask you to move on to the next proposal while the STScI reviews the case.

Ranking



Ranking

- **Purpose of ranking is to consider scientific balance of the panel.**
 - Compare duplicated targets or proposals.
 - Reflect on overall science program (but remember external panels and EC).
 - **Goal is not to play Tetris with Orbits.**
 - Ranking reflects panel consensus, not any individual panelist.
- **Discussion must focus on Scientific Merit.**
- Panel must discuss adjacent proposals pairwise.
 - Anyone conflicted on either of the pair must leave the call.
 - Exception: Duplicate proposals — these may be discussed even if they are not adjacent.



Ranking: Orbit Allocations

- Each panel has:
 - **General (Small) Allocation = N:**
 - Used to set “1N line” (approval line) and “2N line”.
 - Primarily used to “fund” Small programs.
 - **Can** be used to fund Medium programs.
 - **Medium Allocation = M:**
 - Only used to “fund” Medium programs.
 - **CANNOT** be used for Small programs.
 - Only Mediums above the 1N line (set by Small programs) are approved.
 - Unused Medium allocation returns to the general pool.
- Panel must rank to **2N** and set **Do Not Support** line.
- **Allocations are more like guidelines to help frame your discussion.**



Ranking — Example with Smalls only

**General
Pool

140**

Rank	Size	Requested	General Pool Used	Notes
1	Small	20	20	Approved
2	Small	25	45	Approved
3	Small	30	75	Approved
4	Small	25	100	Approved
5	Small	20	120	Approved
6	Small	25	145	1N line, status TBD
7	Small	30	175	Not Approved

Result: 5 Small proposals approved, +1 Small on the line pending.



Ranking — Example with Smalls and Mediums, unused Mediums

General Pool	Medium Pool
140	80

Rank	Size	Orbits Requested	General Pool Allocation	Medium Pool Allocation	Notes
1	Small	20	20	0	Approved
2	Medium	50	20	50	Approved
3	Small	30	50	50	Approved
4	Small	25	75	50	Approved
5	Small	20	95	50	Approved
6	Small	25	120	50	Approved
7	Small	30	150	50	1N line, status TBD
8	Small	20	170	50	Not Approved

Result: 5 Small proposals approved, +1 Small on the line pending. 1 Mediums approved, 30 Medium orbits return to the float.



Ranking — Example with Smalls and Mediums, Mediums exceeded

General Pool	Medium Pool
140	80

Rank	Size	Orbits Requested	General Pool Allocation	Medium Pool Allocation	Notes
1	Small	20	20	0	Approved
2	Medium	50	20	50	Approved
3	Small	30	50	50	Approved
4	Small	25	75	50	Approved
5	Medium	50	95	80	Approved, using 30 medium orbits and 20 small orbits
6	Small	25	120	80	Approved
7	Small	30	150	80	1N line, status TBD
8	Small	20	170	80	Not Approved

Result: 4 Small proposals approved, +1 Small on the line pending. 2 Mediums approved, Medium pool exhausted.



Ranking — Example with Smalls and Mediums, no Mediums approved

General Pool	Medium Pool
140	80

Rank	Size	Orbits Requested	General Pool Used	Medium Pool Used	Notes
1	Small	20	20	0	Approved
2	Small	25	45	0	Approved
3	Small	30	75	0	Approved
4	Small	25	100	0	Approved
5	Small	20	120	0	Approved
6	Small	25	145	0	1N line, status TBD
7	Small	30	175	0	Not Approved
8	Medium	50	195	/	Not Approved

Result: 5 Small proposals approved, +1 Small on the line pending. No Mediums approved. 80 Medium orbits return to float.



Ranking View

Views ▾

Discussion / Galaxies / Final Ranking

Galaxies Final Ranking

Actions ▾

59 Proposals

59 GOs

0 SNAPs

0 ARs

145 General Allocation

106 Medium-Proposal Allocation

1305 Requested Orbits

1305 Awarded Orbits

Small Pool

Medium Pool

Final ranking is locked. You can unlock it via the Actions menu above if necessary.

Key: 48 Triaged Proposal +N Over Allocation (N x allocation) Enter text and press Return to filter table

Show/hide columns

De-anonymize selected proposals ...

Re-anonymize all proposals

Rank	ID	Normalized Grade	Normalized Panelist Deviation	Category	Type	Size	Title	Request	Req Ttl	Award	General Awd Ttl	Medium Awd Ttl	
1		1.81	0.44	Galaxies	GO	SMALL		19	19	19	19	0	
2		2.00	0.47	Galaxies	GO	MEDIUM		74	93	74	19	74	
3		2.18	0.57	Galaxies	GO	SMALL		23	116	23	42	74	
4		2.38	0.72	Galaxies	GO	SMALL		33	149	33	75	74	
5		2.44	0.58	Galaxies	GO	SMALL		21	170	21	96	74	
6		2.54	0.49	Galaxies	GO	MEDIUM		40	210	40	104	106	
7		2.54	0.58	Galaxies	GO	SMALL		25	235	25	129	106	
8		2.56	0.55	Galaxies	GO	SMALL		20	255	20	149 +1	106	
9		2.60	0.48	Galaxies	GO	SMALL		23	278	23	172 +1	106	
10		2.61	0.79	Galaxies	GO	MEDIUM		55	333	55	227 +1	106	
11		2.65	0.60	Galaxies	GO	SMALL		20	353	20	247 +1	106	
12		2.66	0.84	Galaxies	GO	SMALL		18	371	18	265 +1	106	
13		2.68	0.40	Galaxies	GO	SMALL		26	397	26	291 +2	106	
14		2.68	0.73	Galaxies	GO	MEDIUM		40	437	40	331 +2	106	
15		2.74	0.70	Galaxies	GO	MEDIUM		40	477	40	371 +2	106	
16		2.79	0.61	Galaxies	GO	SMALL		34	511	34	405 +2	106	

1N line +1

2N line +2



What happens to unallocated orbits?

- **You will very likely have some unallocated orbits!** (Could be a few, could be a lot.)
- Unallocated orbits from all panels are pooled together, then they are redistributed back to the panels:
 - We aim to ensure that the success rate is as even as possible across all science areas and proposal types.
 - We follow guidance from the Executive Committee.
- **What can you do?**
 - Rank carefully down to $2N$ in case we need to go deeper!
 - Make scientifically-motivated recommendations to your Panel Chair (and Vice Chair) about what to do with extra orbits.
 - Your Panel Chair will communicate these recommendations at the EC meeting and in their panel report.



Team Expertise



Team Members & Team Expertise Statements

⚠ **Not** anonymous.

✗ **Not** considered during scientific discussions and ranking.

✓ Only **recommended** proposals **after** ranking phase.

- ~20 minutes to read expertise statements. Panelists cannot opt out.
- Raise clear, **compelling** deficiencies in expertise required to **meet science goals**.
- By **consensus**, panel can recommended disqualification, and must provide a **detailed justification**.

✗ If a proposal is disqualified, **time cannot be re-allocated**.



“Compelling Deficiencies”

- ✓ Discretion of panelists:
 - Particularly difficult datasets.
 - Particularly difficult analyses.
 - Programs of exceptionally high risk.

- ✗ Inexperience with HST data.

- ✗ Failure to publish past datasets.

- ⚠ Comments to proposers should be based on the **scientific discussion**, not on the team or their expertise.

EC Proposals



EC Proposals

- The Executive Committee (EC) reviews Large GO, Treasury GO, and AR Legacy proposals. Also for this cycle, the EC will review Multi-Cycle Treasury (MCT) proposals.
- We ask panels to read a subset of the EC proposals.
- **Why?**
 - These are (very) large investments of time and resources! These should have broad scientific impact and interest.
 - EC covers all science areas, EC members may have general but not specific expertise.
 - Provide feedback to the Panel Chair and Vice Chair (and At-Large Members).
- Panels **discuss** but **do not grade these**.
- **Still check for conflicts.**

Review Comments



Review Comments

- Primary and secondary must write comments for their assigned proposals.
- **This includes triaged proposals.**
 - Reviewers can ask for feedback from other panelists.
- General workflow:
 - Secondary writes comments, clicks *Mark Completed*.
 - Primary writes final review combining their own comments, the secondary's comments, and any other remarks. Clicks *Mark Completed*.
 - Primary submits review by clicking *Submit As Final*.
 - Panel chair reviews submission and signs off by clicking *Review Sign Off*.



Review Comments — Guidelines

- **Strengths** and **Weaknesses** are compulsory. Other fields are optional.
- A **short** summary is ok, but it is not a strength by itself.
- Refer to the **proposal/program/work/analysis** not the **proposers/team/authors**.
- Do not refer to the panel or the reviewer.
- Do not ask questions.
- Do not state that a proposal will be accepted or rejected.
- Comments should be sensible and meaningful regardless of outcome.
- Do not imply that a minor issue (e.g. a typo) caused the proposal to be rejected.
- **Be polite and be kind.**
- **Do not use generative AI (eg ChatGPT) to write comments!**

Logistics



Logistics

- Slack channels for each panel.
 - Feel free to chat but don't give specifics about proposals (because conflicts).
 - **OK:** *"Hey, could anyone DM some comments about proposal 1234, it was triaged but I actually really liked it."*
 - **Not OK:** *"I felt 1234 didn't justify their sample size well enough."* ← send this via DM not to the channel.
- Please remember the review is **Confidential**
 - All discussions
 - All materials
 - Panel membership (until published in the newsletter)
- Remove all documents from your computer after the review.

**Thank you for serving on the HST
Cycle 32 TAC!**

See you on May 28 at 10am EDT!