



Atmospheric Science Program

Frequently Asked Questions, Part 3

March 10, 2004

1. Are there any formatting requirements for abstracts due March 17th? Are these abstracts required or can we simply submit a proposal once the announcement is published? Should the abstracts include budget information?

A. There are no special formatting requirements for the abstracts due March 17th. We would prefer they be no more than two pages. They are not required, but they would be helpful in two ways, namely (1) we can provide feedback in terms of scientific scope and appropriateness and (2) based on the number and mix of abstracts received we can begin to identify reviewers and prepare for the peer review. Budgets are not needed at this stage.

2. To what extent will radiation transfer measurements and modeling be included in the program?

A. As the focus of the program is examination of the climate influence of tropospheric aerosols, quantification of aerosol influences on atmospheric radiation and attribution of these influences to aerosol components, including suitable radiation-transfer modeling, are within the scope of the program. Given the complexities of determination and calculation of forcing under partly cloudy sky conditions, for example, examination of aerosol radiative influences will likely be limited to documentation of aerosol influences on optical depth and to calculation and parameterization of aerosol radiative forcing under rather idealized geometries.

3. To what extent does budget influence the selection process?

A. The budget should reflect the cost of doing the proposed work. Budget is a consideration, but most proposals are selected on the basis of scientific merit and relevancy. If the budget for an otherwise meritorious proposal is deemed unreasonable, then we will enter into a discussion with the principal investigator to resolve budget issues.

4. How do I budget costs for field projects when it is not yet decided where the projects will take place, how frequently, and for what duration?

A. This is a really tough issue. In a normal research cycle we would to some extent be able to better anticipate upcoming field studies. With our new scientific focus, it is more difficult to do that. There are a number of upcoming opportunities, e.g., multi-agency studies in the planning stages, but it is not clear yet which of these may figure into our program. We need to be driven much more by the science than simply opportunities to take measurements. Our advice is simply to describe the kind of measurements and field study context needed to support the science being proposed and budget accordingly, as best you can. Once the Science Team has been formed, the Science Steering Committee will evaluate upcoming multi-agency field studies, and we will likely develop field campaigns of our own. It is then up to the Program Director to commit resources to specific field studies to facilitate the most urgent research, and for Science Team members to adapt to those field study opportunities.

5. Is it within the scope of the upcoming announcement to conduct pertinent field measurements at my home institution, in conjunction with other-agency or multi-agency field studies, or in conjunction with ARM sites, or will we be limited to ASP studies once they are defined?

A. We would not preclude your conducting field measurements at your home institution or in conjunction with other-agency or multi-agency field campaigns, provided such studies materially advance the science that is the thrust of your proposed research. However, we are unlikely to support such activities if they result in your effort as a whole becoming isolated from the bulk of ASP studies or focus or if their budgetary consequence is such as to appreciably impact those studies. With respect to field studies, our plan is to conduct studies that will enable us to advance the science as much as we can with our limited resources. This generally means conducting campaigns identified with ASP, in which the bulk of the ASP investigators can participate, contribute capabilities, share results and findings, and contribute to the interpretation, perhaps in conjunction with other programs or agencies. We thus anticipate working closely with ARM and conducting studies in conjunction with ARM sites. We also anticipate working with other agencies and leveraging multi-agency campaigns such as the upcoming Mexico City study. But we are reluctant to make formal commitments to particular studies until we have a Science Team in place and can see what makes the most sense for ASP.

Programmatic questions may be addressed to the Program Director, while questions pertaining to scientific scope may be addressed to either the Program Director or the Chief Scientist. We will try to provide answers in future FAQ's so that they are available to all interested parties. For this reason email is probably the best way to submit questions.

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