



Atmospheric Science Program

Review of Proposals Completed

September 22, 2004

We are pleased to report that for proposals submitted in response to the recent ASP research announcement, we have completed the peer review for scientific merit, a programmatic review for balance and focus, and an interagency review of results.

154 proposals were submitted to external peer review. These proposals were reviewed and evaluated in three separate competitions by organizational category. 89 proposals were competed in the universities and private sector category. 54 proposals were competed from DOE laboratories. And 11 proposals were competed from federal laboratories. All were subjected to the same peer review process and the same peer review criteria. At least three independent reviews were conducted for each proposal.

Care was taken to assign the best available qualified reviewers to each proposal and to avoid any real or potential conflicts of interest. Due to the limited availability of qualified reviewers who were not also proposers, we did utilize some proposers as reviewers, but we did **not** assign proposers to review proposals within their own organizational category, e.g., we did not assign any university proposer to review a university proposal. Wherever practicable we utilized qualified non-proposers.

The overall average peer review score was 6.82 on a scale of 1-10. The average score for the university and private sector was 6.91. The average score for the DOE laboratories was 6.83. The average score for the federal laboratories was 6.49. Based on peer review average scores, proposals were then tentatively placed in one or another of three **initial** funding categories, i.e., prior to budget analysis and programmatic review. These three categories are: 1) recommended for funding (within the expected FY 2005 program budget), 2) considered fundable if additional funds become available, and 3) not considered fundable.

All-in-all, the 46 proposals scoring 7.5 or better were placed in the top funding category, the 52 proposals scoring between 6.5 and 7.5 in the middle funding category, and the 56 proposals scoring below 6.5 in the bottom funding category. Given a large number of proposals with

average scores between 6.00 and 7.33, we looked carefully at the reviews and especially at reviews with anomalously low or high scores.

We then conducted a programmatic review for balance and focus, to insure that the resulting mix of proposals to be funded was truly consistent with the needs and priorities of the program. This review was conducted by the Program Director in consultation with the Chief Scientist. Members of the ASP Implementation Team were also consulted in this process, to weigh the burden of each proposal on the ASP infrastructure which will be providing resources in support of science projects involving field measurements.

Funding decisions are ultimately the responsibility of the Program Director and subject to DOE approvals. Neither the Chief Scientist nor Implementation Team members make or contribute directly to funding decisions.

Based on the programmatic review, the vast majority of proposals were left in their original initial funding categories. However, some proposals were raised or lowered by one funding category, and very few by two funding categories. Most of these adjustments were reductions in funding category, as there were substantially more proposals in the top category than we expect to have funds to support. In each case there is substantial justification for these adjustments. In some cases there were duplications of effort and we could only afford one of two or more similar proposals. In some cases we simply had too many highly-rated proposals in a given functional category (laboratory measurements, field measurements, modeling and theory, and instrument development) and had to decide which of these best fit the needs of the program. In some cases the proposed scope of work was simply not the best fit with the program.

The net results of the peer review and programmatic review: 32 proposals or roughly 20 % are now recommended for immediate funding (within the expected FY 2005 program budget), 44 proposals are considered fundable if additional funds become available, and 82 proposals are not considered fundable. We note that all the proposals in the middle category are quite good proposals, and even some in the bottom category are quite good proposals but simply don't fit our needs. In the next few days we expect to send a message to each proposer with the funding recommendation (immediate funding, fundable but deferred, or declined).

Of the 32 proposals that we intend to fund right away (subject to availability of funds), 13 are projects with a laboratory measurements focus or component, 21 are projects with a field studies focus or component, 11 are projects with a modeling or theory focus or component, and 10 are projects with an instrument development focus or component (most fit more than one functional category). Similarly, 8 are projects that have a "sources" focus or component, 18 are projects that have a "transport" focus or component, 8 are projects that have a "concentrations" focus or component, 23 are projects that have an "aerosol characterization" focus or component, 24 are projects that have a "transformations" focus or component, and 4 are projects that have an

“atmospheric radiation” focus or component (most proposals fit more than one scientific category).

Thus the resulting program has a quite good functional and scientific balance, with some emphasis on field studies and on aerosol processes. **Among the challenges of the new ASP Science Team will be for us to establish strong connections with the climate modeling and atmospheric radiation communities and develop meaningful deliverables for this funding cycle.**

We anticipate having all the new funding in place as soon as practicable. For DOE laboratory projects funding should be in the November finplan. Grants and interagency agreements take longer to process but we expect they will be in place within two-to-three months. We expect to have our first “reconfigured” Science Team Meeting in January. However, all of this is contingent on FY 2005 budget levels and timeliness of FY 2005 budget approvals.

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