

NASA Office of Biological and Physical Research (OBPR) Research Maximization and Prioritization Task Force

Terms of Reference

These Terms of Reference establish the Research Maximization and Prioritization (ReMaP) Task Force of the NASA Advisory Council (NAC). The ReMaP Task Force is chartered to perform an independent external review and assessment of research productivity and priorities for the entire scientific, technological, and commercial portfolio of NASA's Biological and Physical Research Enterprise, and to provide recommendations on how to achieve the greatest progress in high-priority research within the President's budget request.

This task force will produce a final report that will focus specifically on the following items:

1. Evaluate and validate high priority science and technology research to be funded by OBPR to maximize the research return within the available resources in the President's FY 2003 Budget for OBPR and International Space Station (ISS).
2. Evaluate the major thrust areas and key research objectives for OBPR with an emphasis on establishing the research content for the ISS US Core Complete configuration.
 - a. Assess how these key objectives can be addressed by the ISS relative to other means (e.g. ground-based research, free-flyers, Space Shuttle).
 - b. Recommend how the ISS capabilities or other means could be used to best achieve high-priority research objectives.
 - c. Given these major thrust areas and the results of item 2b, assess research content options consistent with the ISS US Core Complete configuration. Assess the extent to which each option allows for a viable evolution of the research strategy, given the possibility of research-driven enhancement to the ISS beyond US Core Complete.
 - d. Recommend modifications and/or additions to the OBPR research goals and objectives.
3. Recommend ways to increase scientific productivity (e.g. automation, a non-governmental organization for managing research, etc.) and the metrics to measure productivity.
4. Recommend criteria that can be used by OBPR to implement specific research activities and programs based on documented priorities.

5. Identify areas for priority consultation with the international partners.

MEMBERSHIP

The NASA Administrator shall appoint the Chair and Members of the Task Force. The Chair shall be a nationally recognized science and technology leader with strong management and/or policy experience.

Membership will include recognized scientists and technologists from academia, government, and industry with expertise spanning diverse disciplines in biological and physical sciences. The membership will be between fifteen to twenty individuals with a distribution including researchers associated with NASA programs and scientists and technologists with no NASA program involvement. Members will be appointed as Special Government Employees.

MEETINGS

The Task Force will meet a minimum of three times in formal sessions and will also meet with support teams/subgroups when necessary.

REPORTING

The Task Force will present its findings and final report to the NAC at its June 2002 meeting. The NAC will consider the findings by this Task Force and formally present its recommendations to the NASA Administrator for an Agency response.

ADMINISTRATIVE PROVISIONS

The Executive Secretary will be appointed by the Administrator, and will serve as the Designated Federal Official. The Office of Biological and Physical Research will provide the staff support and the travel funds for the Task Force. The funding allocation is \$300,000.

DURATION

The Task Force will complete its charter by June 2002. [NOTE: The NAC will deliberate at the June meeting and report out to the Administrator – similar to what was done with the IMCE task force.]