

Space Studies Board

## Solar and Space Physics (Heliophysics) Decadal Survey FAQs

Updated 8/19/2022

### Nominations

**Question:** Are white paper authors eligible to serve on the survey steering committee and the supporting panels?

**Answer:** The authors of science-focused white papers are eligible to serve on the steering committee or one of the supporting panels. However, the National Academies' conflict of interest requirements preclude the first author (or PI) of a mission- or project-focused whitepaper from serving on the steering group or on a panel that might be assessing the proposed mission or project.

### White Papers

**Question:** What topics are appropriate for a white paper and/or mission or project concept?

**Answer:** The white paper should deal with one or more of the disciplines associated with Solar and Space Physics (Heliophysics) as described by Item 1 of the Statement of Task or be a topic of relevance to assessing the state of the profession as described in Item 4 of the Statement of Task. (<https://nas.edu/ssphdecadal>)

If a topic does not clearly fit into one of those categories, authors may still submit a paper. Still, they should explain why they believe the paper should be considered in this survey. Authors should also consider whether their topics fall within other areas covered by other decadal surveys.

[Decadal Survey on Astronomy and Astrophysics](#)  
[Planetary Science and Astrobiology Decadal Survey](#)  
[Decadal Survey for Earth Science and Applications from Space](#)

Mission- or project-focused papers should emphasize the science that can be accomplished and a description of the notional mission or project.

**Question:** When are white papers due?

**Answer:** Midnight, Pacific Time, September 7, 2022 (formerly August 18, 2022). This is the final extension.

**Question:** Does the committee give different weights to white papers based upon the number of coauthors versus contributors, senior versus junior contributors, number of endorsers, U.S. versus foreign coauthors, etc.?

**Answer:** No. White papers will be assessed on the merit of their content, not on who is listed on the cover page or how many other similar white papers are received. To streamline the review process, having a single white paper with multiple authors is preferable to having many very similar white papers with a single author. In addition, the number and names of endorsers have no impact on a white paper's importance to the committee. All white papers will be read and evaluated, and their use is solely based on content.

**Question:** If I submit a white paper, will I be acknowledged and/or published in the decadal survey report?

**Answer:** No. White papers will not be included in the survey report. However, the white papers will be part of the public record and available online during the study and for some time after the study.

**Question:** Can white papers include ITAR or proprietary information?

**Answer:** No. Your white paper submission will be available publicly and quickly posted to the website and may not include ITAR restricted data or other sensitive materials.

**Question:** How should mission concepts submit detailed information to the committee? A seven-page white paper (see draft specifications below) doesn't allow for information necessary for a technical evaluation.

**Answer:** The white papers are intended as synopses of projects and activities that are sufficient to allow the committee and panels to understand a) the scope of the project, b) the level of existing information, and c) what additional inputs will be required to evaluate the project or activity fully. The Survey Steering Committee and supporting Panels are empowered to ask for more information.

**Question:** Can white papers be submitted anonymously, such as for state of the profession-focused topics?

**Answer:** White papers will be posted publicly and should not contain information of a personal, sensitive nature. Anonymous submission is discouraged because the Survey would not be able to follow up to ask for additional information.

**Question:** Will the white papers be published?

**Answer:** The white papers will be available via the decadal survey website. In addition, we are working with the American Astronomical Society to publish the white papers in the Bulletin of the American Astronomical Society (baas.aas.org). Publication means that your white paper is assigned a DOI, becomes citeable as a journal article, and has its full text accessible via the NASA Astrophysics Data System in perpetuity. If you do not wish to have your white paper

published in the BAAS, you may opt out before submitting it. Your white paper will still be available via the decadal survey website.

**Question:** I submitted a white paper and then found an error in the text. Can the white paper be changed or updated?

**Answer:** If this is before the white paper due date, resubmit the paper and fill out the submission form completely again. If it is after the due date, please email [ssphdecadal@nas.edu](mailto:ssphdecadal@nas.edu).