

Chandra Users' Committee Meeting Report

April 20, 2020

Andrea Prestwich gave an update on Cycle 22 and Impact of COVID-19 on plans for a remote peer review.

Cycle 22:

The Cycle 22 Call for proposals was released on Dec 17 2019, with a deadline of March 17. An update to the Call was released on 24 March to allow for the introduction of Resource Costs (RC). The RC of an observation quantifies the ease with which a non-TOO target can be scheduled: RC replace the old constraints categories and folds in ecliptic latitude. In addition to the introduction of RC, other major changes in Cycle 22 include a review wide limit on high ecliptic latitude time and changes to TOO accounting (TOO follow-ups now count as half triggers and the number of available TOO triggers increased slightly.)

The deadline for Cycle 22 proposal submission was extended by 2 weeks in response to the COVID-19 crisis - in particular to help proposers who were required to rapidly transition to on-line teaching. The Director's Office considered a supplemental call for proposals to help people who were unable to propose in the spring due to COVID-19. The Cycle 22 proposal numbers were very similar to Cycle 21, and there was no evidence for a decrease in proposal numbers from countries that had been severely impacted by COVID-19. We ultimately decided not to issue a summer supplemental call.

Cycle 22 proposal statistics are similar to Cycle 21. There is a slight uptick in the number of proposals, and the oversubscription in time (all proposal types) is 4.7.

Impact of COVID-19 on CXC Operations:

Chandra continues to operate as usual. Most CXC staff are working from home. A small number of people need access to the Operations and Control Center. Schedules for these people have been shifted to minimize contact and enhanced cleaning protocols are in place. Procedures are in place for CXC staff to access buildings in case of a spacecraft anomaly.

Cycle 22 Peer Review:

The Cycle 22 peer review will be held remotely. Panel facilitators will run the meeting software (Zoom or Google Meet) and the database software (which tracks grades, exposure time and other "currencies") from home.

Based on feedback from TESS and NuStar reviews, panel discussion will be held in focused 5-hour blocks timed so that no reviewers are working earlier than 7AM or later than 9PM in their local timezones. For most panels, this translates to panel discussion times between 10 AM to 2PM EST. The topical panels will be held Monday-Thursday (June 15-18) with the first Big Project Panel session held on Friday June 19. The final BPP sessions will be held on Monday and Tuesday the following week.