



National Science Foundation
WHERE DISCOVERIES BEGIN

Astronomy and Astrophysics Advisory Committee Roles and Responsibilities

Martin Still | September 26, 2022

Division of Astronomical Sciences | Directorate for Mathematical & Physical Sciences

AAAC Purpose

Through a report to be delivered by Mar 15 each year:

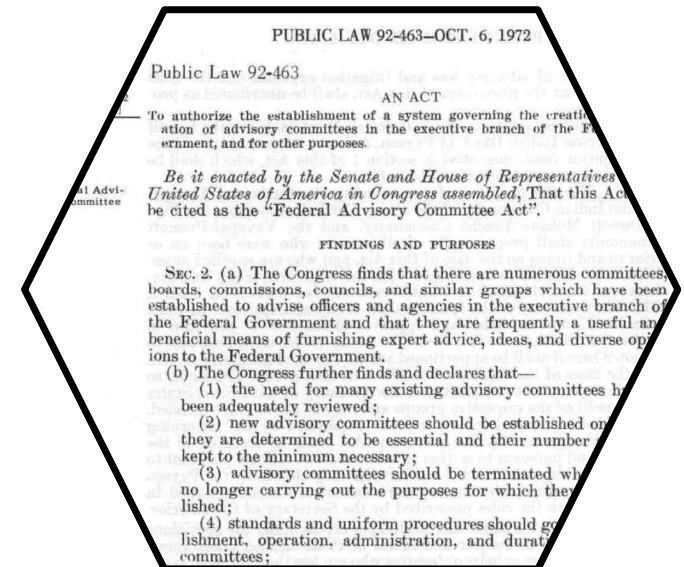
1. Assess and make recommendations regarding the coordination of astronomy and astrophysics programs between NSF, NASA, and DOE.
2. Assess, and make recommendations regarding, the status of the activities of NSF, NASA, and DOE as they relate to the recommendations contained within the Astro2020 Report.



The AAAC is a FACA Committee

<https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/STATUTE-86/pdf/STATUTE-86-Pg770.pdf#page=1>

- Through enactment of the *Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) of 1972 (Public Law 92-463)*, the U.S. Congress formally recognized the merits of seeking the advice and assistance of our nation's citizens to the executive branch of government.
- FACA was enacted to ensure that advice given to federal government agencies by groups of individuals that include non-federal employees is objective and accessible to the public.
- Advisory committees play an important role in shaping the programs and policies of the federal government.
- Your deliberations and feedback, both collectively and as individuals, help our three federal agencies decide how to best use taxpayer dollars for their investment.



FACA Procedures

<https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/STATUTE-86/pdf/STATUTE-86-Pg770.pdf#page=1>

- Meetings are open to the public and announced in the Federal Register and on the AAAC website. Portions of a meeting can be closed when the information being discussed is proprietary, would constitute an invasion of privacy, and/or would frustrate proposed agency actions.
- Interested persons shall be permitted to attend, appear before, or file statements with the committee, subject to reasonableness.
- Records, reports, transcripts, minutes, agenda, or other documents which were made available to or prepared for or by the Committee shall be available for public inspection.
- Detailed minutes of each meeting shall be kept and shall contain a record of the persons present, a complete and accurate description of matters discussed and conclusions reached. The accuracy of all minutes shall be certified by the Chair.
- NSF sponsors the meeting and provides a *Designated Federal Official*.
- The Committee shall not hold meetings except at the call of, or with the advance approval of, a designated officer or employee of the Federal Government, and with an agenda approved by such officer or employee.



AAAC Annual Cycle

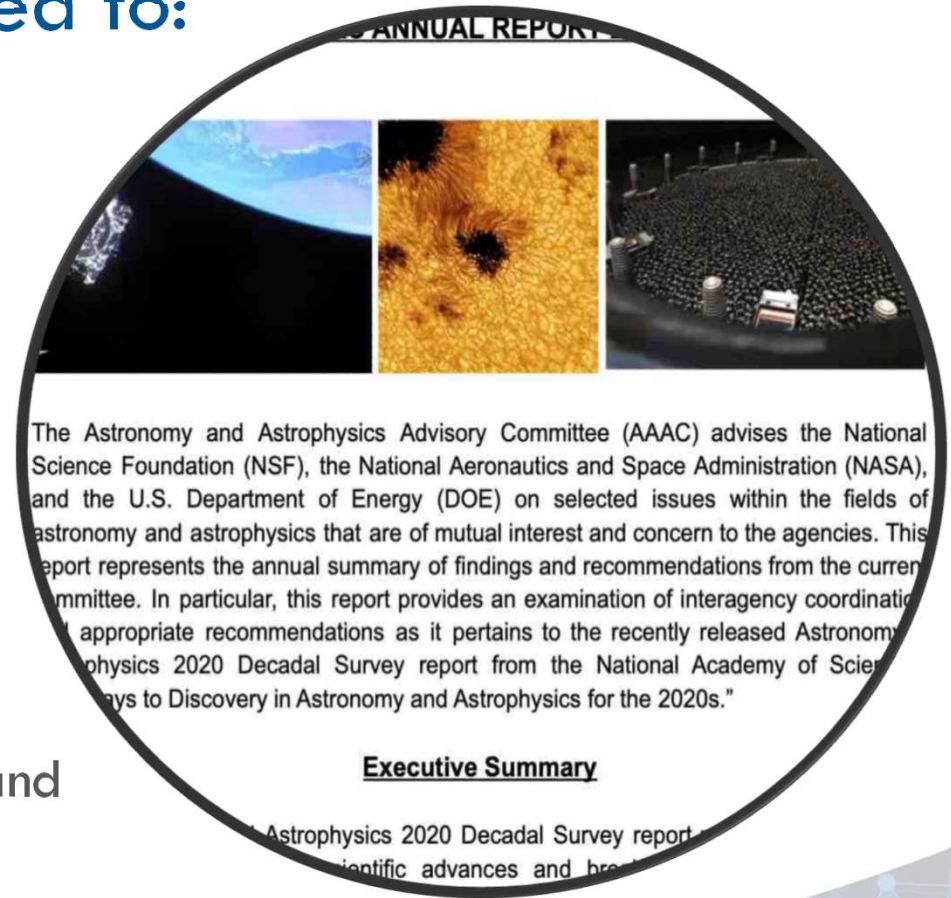
Date	Event	Format
Sep	Presentations and discussion	2-day meeting
Jan	Presentations and discussion	2-day meeting
Mar	Committee prepares for the AAAC annual report	4-hour meeting
Mar 15 th	Deliver annual report	E-mail
Jun	Committee outbriefs the report to agencies	4-hour meeting

- The Committee hears presentations of current programming by representatives from NSF, NASA, DOE and other agencies relevant to astronomy and astrophysics to:
 - discuss current and potential areas of cooperation between the agencies, and;
 - formulate recommendations for continued and new areas of cooperation and mechanisms for achieving them.



The AAAC Report is Delivered to:

- NSF Director,
- NASA Administrator,
- Secretary of Energy,
- Committee on Science of the House of Representatives,
- Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate, and
- Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate



AAAC Documents

<https://www.nsf.gov/mps/ast/aaac.jsp>

- Charter
- Membership
- Subcommittees
- Annual Reports
- Agenda
- Minutes
- Presentations

The screenshot shows the NSF website for the Astronomy and Astrophysics Advisory Committee (AAAC). The navigation tabs at the top are Funding, Awards, Document Library, and News. The main content area is titled "Astronomy and Astrophysics Advisory Committee (AAAC)". Below the title, there is a brief description of the committee's role. The page is organized into sections: MEMBERSHIP, UPCOMING AAAC MEETINGS, REPORTS, and SUBCOMMITTEES. The REPORTS section lists several annual reports from 2017 to 2022, along with other reports from various task forces and assessment groups.

Home > Research Areas > Mathematical and Physical Sciences > Astronomical Sciences

Astronomy and Astrophysics Advisory Committee (AAAC)

The Astronomy and Astrophysics Advisory Committee (AAAC) advises the National Science Foundation (NSF), the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) and the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) on selected issues with respect to astronomy and astrophysics that are of mutual interest and concern to the agencies.

AAAC Principles of Access

MEMBERSHIP

- Current AAAC Membership
- Past AAAC Memberships

UPCOMING AAAC MEETINGS

- September 26-27, 2022 (Teleconference)
- Archived AAAC Meetings

REPORTS

- 2021-2022 Annual Report
- 2020-2021 Annual Report
- 2019-2020 Annual Report
- 2018-2019 Annual Report
- 2017-2018 Annual Report
- Archived Annual Reports

Other Reports:

- Report from the Gemini-Bianco-SOAR in the era of Multi-Messenger Astronomy Assessment Group (GEMINI-BIANCO-SOAR)
- Report from the Cosmic Microwave Background - Stage 4 (CMB-S4) Concept Definition Task Force (CMB-S4)
- Report from the ExoPlanet Task Force (ExoPTF)
 - ExoPTF Erratum
- Report from the Dark Matter Scientific Assessment Group (DMSAG)
- Report from the Dark Energy Task Force (DETF)
- Report from the Task Force on Cosmic Microwave Background Research (TFCR)
- Report on GSMT-JWST Synergy

SUBCOMMITTEES



AAAC Membership

- The Advisory Committee shall consist of 13 members, none of whom shall be a Federal employee, including—
 - 4 members selected by the NSF Director;
 - 4 members selected by the NASA Administrator;
 - 3 members selected by the Secretary of Energy; and
 - 2 members selected by the Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP).
- Committee members must electronically sign in at the beginning of each meeting.



Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP)

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/ostp>



- The White House's OSTP works to maximize the benefits of science and technology to advance health, prosperity, security, environmental quality, and justice for all Americans.
- OSTP provides advice to the President and the Executive Office on all matters related to science and technology.
- OSTP's Senate-confirmed Director may serve as Assistant to the President for Science and Technology, co-chairs the President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology (PCAST) and supports the Cabinet-level National Science and Technology Council (NSTC), which is chaired by the President.
- OSTP stewards the creation of policies and programs for science and technology, working with the Federal agencies and Congress.



Examples of Impactful AAAC Recommendations:


- Impact or change generally comes from ideas that germinate from within the community, agencies, or broader government and percolate between stakeholders over time.
- The AAAC reports are an incredibly powerful tool that are delivered directly to congressional committees, the White House, and agency administrators.
- Recommendation: look back through the series of AAAC reports online and see that the Committee, as part of a broader arsenal of advice, has strongly supported strategic ideas that have helped deliver change at
 - the *congressional* level: STEM investment, Webb and Roman earmarks, DE&I monitoring, SOFIA...
 - the *agencies* level: R&A program partnerships, facility divestment, dual anonymous review, data access...
- A 2023 example: Should the AAAC raise congressional awareness of the impact of satellite constellations?



Examples of Impactful AAAC Recommendations:

AGENDA

Tuesday, September 27, 2022 (all times EDT)

	11:00 – 11:30 James Webb Space Telescope 11:30 – 11:40 Questions/Discussion	Eric Smith
	11:40 – 12:00 Congressional Committees 12:00 – 12:10 Questions/Discussion	Ashlee Wilkins/Sara Barber
	12:10 – 12:50 Lab Astro Status and Study Charge 12:50 – 1:00 Questions/Discussion	Harshal Gupta/Bill Latter
	1:00 – 1:30 <i>Break</i>	
	1:30 – 2:00 US-ELT Program and Maunakea Environment Survey 2:00 – 2:10 Questions/Discussion	Dave Boboltz
	2:10 – 2:25 Satellite Constellations Update 2:25 – 2:35 Questions/Discussion	Ashley VanderLey
	2:35 – 3:05 NSF response to Climate Change 3:05 – 3:15 Questions/Discussion	Debra Fischer/Inger Jorgensen
	3:15 – 3:30 <i>Break</i>	
	3:30 – 4:00 State of the Profession 4:00 – 4:10 Questions/Discussion	Bethany John
	4:10 – 4:20 Public Comment Period	Kyle Dawson
	4:20 – 5:00 Committee Discussion	Kyle Dawson
	5:00 <i>Adjourn</i>	



