

# **INFORMATION ITEM:**

## **Notification of Coming NSB Action to Authorize Award in Competition for Management & Operation of National Optical Astronomy Observatory (NOAO)**

Vernon Pankonin, MPS/AST

Senior Advisor & NOAO Program Officer



# Competition for Management & Operation of NOAO

NOAO provides a national science and technology resource in optical & infrared (OIR) astronomy, and is operated by an independent managing organization under cooperative agreement with NSF.

Milestone	Date
Competition Solicitation Published	19 July 2013
Site visits by prospective proposers, AZ and Chile	Sept., Oct. 2013
Letters of intent from proposers	November 2013
Full proposals due	13 January 2014
Panel review, reverse site visits	May 2014
Information item to NSB	February 2015
Award recommendation to NSB (action item)	May 2015
New coop agreement award start	1 October 2015



# Management of Transformed NOAO

Management competition solicitation stipulates a transformation of mission and scope for NOAO

- NOAO-2013 base budget \$25.5 M to
- NOAO-2016 base budget \$17.5 M, plus special projects
- All budget reductions from Tucson and Kitt Peak Operations

Transformation Plan prepared in 2013 for implementation in 2014 and 2015, with NSF guidance





# NOAO-2016 Baseline Scope

- Tucson Operations (Hq)
  - Central Administration
  - Science, technical offices & labs
  - Community & system support
  - Data Science Center
- Kitt Peak Operations
  - Mountain infrastructure support
  - Above base, special projects
    - Mayall, WIYN telescopes
- Chilean Operations
  - La Serena – offices & labs
  - Cerro Tololo / Cerro Pachón
    - Mountain infrastructure support
    - Blanco, SOAR telescopes



# Competition Proposal Review

## Review Panel Charge

- Intellectual Merit & Broader Impacts, plus
- Additional Solicitation Specific Review Criteria emphasize assessment of management plans in following areas:
  - 1. Management: overall management and financial plans**
  - 2. Operations, maintenance, environmental, safety, health, and security**
  - 3. Budgeting, staffing, and workforce management**
  - 4. Science and facility planning**
  - 5. Education, public outreach, and open access**



# Panel Review of Proposals for Management and Operations

- Panel of outside experts with diverse expertise, including strong management and business experience
- Review emphasis on management and business plans
- Reverse site visits, with proposal team interviews with panel
- Issues identified in review are to be resolved through negotiation of new cooperative agreement

Review phase completed; next step

**Recommendation to May 2015 NSB meeting to authorize a new award and conclude cooperative agreement for October 2015 start.**

