

# Mars Exploration Science Monthly Newsletter

A publication of the Mars Program Office and the Mars Exploration Program Analysis Group (MEPAG)

January 2020

## Mars Science News

All MEPAG events are open to all members of the Mars science community including our international colleagues.

### 1) MEPAG Face-to-Face Meeting (#38) on April 15-17, 2020

The next face-to-face Mars Exploration Program Analysis Group (MEPAG) meeting is scheduled for Wednesday-Friday, April 15-17, 2020 at the Residence Inn Arlington Capital View. The first information circular, including hotel block information, is posted at <https://mepag.jpl.nasa.gov/meetings.cfm?expand=m38>.

MEPAG Hotel Block: [Book your group rate for MEPAG Meeting \(Mars Exploration Program Analysis Group\) April 2020](#)

The main foci of MEPAG Meeting 38 are preparation for the next Planetary Science Decadal Survey and the current state of Mars exploration plans within NASA and other space agencies. Agenda items are expected to include updates about:

- Recent MEPAG activities, including Decadal Survey preparations
- The Mars Exploration Program, including plans for Mars Sample Return
- Ongoing and planned Mars missions, domestic and international
- Human Exploration and Commercial Space future access to Mars
- The status report for the ongoing Mars Architecture Strategy Working Group

In addition to these reports, the agenda will include time for community interests and questions to be presented and discussed. In particular, time is allocated for:

- The presentation of community-generated white paper topics (potentially via lightning talks and/or posters)
- A community forum period for discussion of community concerns

More information about these agenda items, including instructions on how and when to request meeting time for the white paper lightning talks or for the community forum, will be provided in the 2nd Information Circular, along with a draft meeting agenda and remote connection information. The 2nd Information Circular will be sent out via announcement and posted to the MEPAG meeting website in advance of the next MEPAG virtual meeting.

### 2) Virtual meeting (VM #8) in February, 2020

The next MEPAG virtual meeting (#8) will be held in the latter half of February, 2020. The exact date and agenda for this VM are still being determined, and will be posted as information becomes available.

### 3) MEPAG informal discussion at LPSC

We have requested peripheral meeting space at the upcoming [Lunar and Planetary Science Conference \(LPSC\)](#) for informal MEPAG community discussion following anticipated announcements about the Decadal Survey committee and schedule; more details on this will also be shared after LPI schedules this event.

## MEPAG Goals Revisions – available soon for community comment

The MEPAG Goals Committee (<https://mepag.jpl.nasa.gov/about.cfm>) has been working hard to update the Goals Document, as part of the MEPAG preparations for the next Planetary Science Decadal Survey. Updates have been made to all four Goals (Life, Climate, Geology, and Preparation for Human Exploration), including additions and revisions within content, organization (at the Objective through Investigation levels), and prioritization. The Goals Committee plans to release the draft 2020 MEPAG Goals Document by mid-January for community review and comment. When ready, the Goals Document draft will be available at the MEPAG Reports site (<https://mepag.jpl.nasa.gov/reports.cfm?expand=science>) and an announcement will be sent out to the MEPAG mailing list (the one we use to distribute this newsletter). This announcement will include a deadline and instructions for sharing feedback with the Goals Committee. *This will be the major opportunity for community input.* The MEPAG committees are striving to generate the final and official 2020 MEPAG Goals Document before MEPAG Meeting 38.

**Planetary Science and Astrobiology Decadal Survey 2023-2032 Task Statement is out. Go to [the NASEM DS Website](#):**

Some Highlights:

- *Task:* The report should provide a clear exposition of “planetary science, astrobiology, and planetary defense” and of a “comprehensive research strategy to advance the frontiers” of that science. It should also cover “the state of the profession, including issues of diversity, inclusion, equity, and accessibility...”
- *Considerations:* The report should consider whether. (New Frontiers class) should continue to be specified or whether this mission class should be open in a manner similar to the Discovery program...”
- *Approach:* "... panels should support delivery of a report organized according to the significant, overarching questions in planetary science, astrobiology, and planetary defense. Individual panels may span multiple solar system target bodies, with specific panel structure determined by the National Academies and the committee’s chair(s)."
- *Approach:* “Potential opportunities for conducting planetary science investigations involving humans in situ” are to be discussed.
- Notional schedule: Website for submittals of White Papers opens in February, closes in July.

## LPI and MEPAG google spreadsheets to facilitate Decadal Survey white paper generation

A few forums are available to facilitate advertisement of white paper topics, so as to foster community collaboration within preparation for the next Planetary Science Decadal Survey. All members of the Mars community are encouraged to view or add information to any/all of these sites.

Note that no white paper request or deadlines have yet been confirmed by the National Academies (NASEM) but based on the information given on the [NASEM DS Website](#) (the Statement of Task), it is expected that the white papers can be officially submitted during the period from ~February to July, 2020. Further guidance from NASEM, once available, will be shared via the newsletter mailing list and added to the [MEPAG DS resource page](#), including this spreadsheet. In the meantime:

- LPI has a [centralized site](#) for advertisement of white paper ideas within all areas of planetary science. Posting a white paper topic idea to the LPI site enables one to reach the broader planetary community, and we recommend that Mars community members post white paper topics to that site and review that site regularly. On the LPI site, contact information for the main coordinator is shared for potential collaborators.
- MEPAG has kept their [google spreadsheet](#) open to facilitate collaboration and communication regarding community-generated white papers. Although superseded by the LPI site, this MEPAG-hosted site remains as an additional resource for collaboration and evolving ideas – with tabs to help people find additional authors for a white paper topic, volunteer to assist with a white paper topic, or share a relevant resource with the community. Additionally, the first tab includes links to other spreadsheets of this sort within the planetary community.

The AAS Division of Planetary Sciences (DPS) has set up a “Decadal Survey Information Hub” to help the DPS membership participate in, and navigate through, the Decadal Survey process. This site contains links to AG-specific sites, as well as a spreadsheet for advertising “State of the Profession”-related white paper topics: <https://dps.aas.org/decadal-2022-hub>.

## Improving Space Operations Workshop (ISOW 2020)

The Mars operations community may be interested in the annual Improving Space Operations Workshop (ISOW 2020), jointly sponsored by the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics (AIAA), AIAA’s Space Operations & Support Technical Committee (SOSTC) and the SpaceOps organization. As in past years, the emphasis will be on small groups working to advance the level of understanding in several technical areas relevant to space operations. Objectives of the workshop and other details, including tracks and past presentations from ISOW 2019, can be found at <https://isow.space.swri.edu/>.

## Near-term Due Dates (next three months)

Due	Conference
January 10	<a href="#">Access to Space Workshop – Abstract &amp; Registration Deadlines</a>
January 13	<a href="#">Exoplanets in Our Backyard – Early Registration Deadline</a>
January 15	<a href="#">EGU General Assembly – Abstract Deadline</a>
January 15	<a href="#">2020 In Situ Science and Instrumentation Workshop for Europa and Ocean Worlds – Registration Deadline</a>

January 17	<b>8th European Lunar Symposium (ELS) – Abstract Deadline</b>
January 21	<b>3<sup>rd</sup> International Planetary Caves Conference – Early Registration Deadline</b>
January 24	<b>OPAG Meeting – Early Registration Deadline</b>
January 26	<b>OPAG Meeting – Registration Deadline</b>
January 30	<b>Lunar Surface Science Workshop – Abstract Deadline</b>
January 31	<b>Human to Mars Summit – Early Registration Deadline</b>
February 1	<b>Biennial European Astrobiology Conference – Registration Deadline</b>
February 4	<b>3rd International Planetary Caves Conference – Registration Deadline</b>
February 12	<b>OPAG Meeting - Abstract Deadline</b>
February 14	<b>43rd COSPAR Scientific Assembly – Abstract Deadline</b>
February 27	<b>6<sup>th</sup> International Planetary Dunes Workshop – Abstract Deadline</b>
March 24	<b>Preventing Harassment in Science: Building a Community of Practice Toward Meaningful Change - Registration Deadline</b>
March 27	<b>7th Mars Atmosphere Modelling and Observations Conference – Abstract Deadline</b>

**Upcoming Conferences**

- Only foreign and NASA-sponsored conferences will have an NCTS#; missing NCTS#s can be sent to Barbara Saltzberg ([Barbara.A.Saltzberg@jpl.nasa.gov](mailto:Barbara.A.Saltzberg@jpl.nasa.gov)).
- Forecasting to NCTS is usually 60 days in advance for domestic meetings. If you are unsure whether an event is a conference or not, or when the forecasting deadline may be, please consult with your NASA Center conference forecasting/travel unit.

2020 First Quarter		
	January 13-17, 2020 Ushuaia, Tierra del Fuego, Argentina	<b>7<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Mars Polar Science and Exploration</b> NCTS 39128-20 <a href="https://www.hou.usra.edu/meetings/marspolar2020/">https://www.hou.usra.edu/meetings/marspolar2020/</a>
	January 14-16, 2020 Pasadena, CA, USA	<b>NASA Small Bodies Advisory Group (SBAG) meeting</b> <a href="https://www.lpi.usra.edu/sbag/meetings/">https://www.lpi.usra.edu/sbag/meetings/</a>
	January 20-22, 2020 London, England	<b>Ice Giants Systems 2020</b> NCTS 38573-20 <a href="https://ice-giants.github.io/">https://ice-giants.github.io/</a>
<b>UPDATED</b>	February 3-4, 2020 Houston, TX, USA	<b>Outer Planet Assessment Group (OPAG) Meeting</b> <i>The meeting includes a poster session for technology and mission concepts/studies. Posters should focus on ICEE-2 and similar Icy World in situ instruments and sampling systems. Posters that focus on science investigations will also be accommodated if space is available. If you wish to present a poster at OPAG, please send the title and first author to Morgan Cable, <a href="mailto:Morgan.L.Cable@jpl.nasa.gov">Morgan.L.Cable@jpl.nasa.gov</a>, by February 1 ('OPAG Poster Presentation' in the subject line). After the meeting, the presenters will be invited to electronically submit an abstract and the poster file to be archived on the OPAG website. <a href="https://www.lpi.usra.edu/opag/meetings/feb2020/">https://www.lpi.usra.edu/opag/meetings/feb2020/</a></i>
	February 5-7, 2020 Houston, TX, USA	<b>Exoplanets in Our Backyard</b> <a href="http://www.hou.usra.edu/meetings/exoplanets2020/">www.hou.usra.edu/meetings/exoplanets2020/</a>
	February 11-13, 2020 Houston, TX, USA	<b>LPI Workshop: The impact of lunar dust on human exploration</b> <a href="https://www.hou.usra.edu/meetings/lunardust2020/">https://www.hou.usra.edu/meetings/lunardust2020/</a>
	February 18-21, 2020 San Antonio, TX, USA	<b>3<sup>rd</sup> International Planetary Caves Conference</b> <a href="https://www.hou.usra.edu/meetings/3rdcaves2020/">https://www.hou.usra.edu/meetings/3rdcaves2020/</a>
	February 25-27, 2020 Laurel, MD, USA	<b>Access to Space Workshop</b> <a href="https://civspace.jhuapl.edu/News-and-Events/events/Access2Space/">https://civspace.jhuapl.edu/News-and-Events/events/Access2Space/</a>
	March 2-6, 2020 Santiago, Chile	<b>Ground and Space Observatories: a joint venture to planetary science workshop</b> NCTS 39529-20 <a href="https://conference.almaobservatory.org/planets2020/">https://conference.almaobservatory.org/planets2020/</a>
	March 2-8, 2020 Dehli, India	<b>36th International Geological Congress (IGC)</b> <a href="https://www.36igc.org/home">https://www.36igc.org/home</a>
	March 7-14, 2020 Big Sky, MT, USA	<b>IEEE Aerospace Conference</b> <a href="https://www.aeroconf.org/">https://www.aeroconf.org/</a>

	March 16-20, 2020 The Woodlands, TX, USA	<b>51<sup>st</sup> Lunar and Planetary Science Conference</b> <a href="https://www.hou.usra.edu/meetings/lpsc2020/">https://www.hou.usra.edu/meetings/lpsc2020/</a>
	Phoenix, AZ, USA March 31-April 2, 2020	<b>Preventing Harassment in Science: Building a community of Practice Toward Meaningful Change</b> <a href="https://www.hou.usra.edu/meetings/anti-harassment2020/organizers/">https://www.hou.usra.edu/meetings/anti-harassment2020/organizers/</a>

Second Quarter, 2020		
<b>UPDATED</b>	April 14-16, 2020 Boulder, CO, USA	<b>Titan Through Time Workshop V</b> <a href="https://astrobiology.nasa.gov/events/titan-through-time-workshop-v/">https://astrobiology.nasa.gov/events/titan-through-time-workshop-v/</a>
	April 15-17, 2020 [TBC] Washington, DC	<b>MEPAG Meeting #38 NCTS# 41124-20</b> <a href="https://mepag.jpl.nasa.gov/meetings.cfm">https://mepag.jpl.nasa.gov/meetings.cfm</a>
	April 20-23, 2020 Seattle, WA, USA	<b>ASCE Earth &amp; Space Conference Symposium 2: Exploration and Utilization of Extra-Terrestrial Bodies</b> <a href="https://www.earthspaceconference.org/symposium-2">https://www.earthspaceconference.org/symposium-2</a>
	April 20-24, 2020 Canary Islands, Spain	<b>Biennial European Astrobiology Conference (BEACON)</b> <a href="http://europeanastrobiology.eu/BEACON2020/index.html">http://europeanastrobiology.eu/BEACON2020/index.html</a>
<b>NEW</b>	April 21-22, 2020 Suitland, MD, USA	<b>Improving Space Operations Workshop (ISOW 2020)</b> <a href="https://isow.space.swri.edu/">https://isow.space.swri.edu/</a>
<b>NEW</b>	April 28-30, 2020 Pasadena, CA, USA	<b>2020 In Situ Science &amp; Instrumentation Workshop for Europa and Ocean Worlds</b> <a href="https://www.europa-insitu.caltech.edu">https://www.europa-insitu.caltech.edu</a>
<b>NEW</b>	April 28-30, 2020 Denver, CO, USA	<b>Lunar Surface Science Workshop</b> <a href="http://www.hou.usra.edu/meetings/lunarsurface2020">http://www.hou.usra.edu/meetings/lunarsurface2020</a>
	May 3-8, 2020 Les Houches, France	<b>Workshop Mars V</b> <a href="https://www.cosmos.esa.int/web/planet-mars-5/home">https://www.cosmos.esa.int/web/planet-mars-5/home</a>
	May 3-8, 2020 Vienna, Austrian	<b>EGU General Assembly</b> <a href="https://www.egu2020.eu/">https://www.egu2020.eu/</a>
	May 6-8, 2020 Saint-Hubert, Quebec	<b>Women in Space 2020</b> <a href="http://www.womeninspacecon.com/">http://www.womeninspacecon.com/</a>
	May 12-15, 2020 Alamosa, CO, USA	<b>6<sup>th</sup> International Planetary Dunes Workshop</b> <a href="https://www.hou.usra.edu/meetings/dunes2020/">https://www.hou.usra.edu/meetings/dunes2020/</a>
<b>NEW</b>	May 12-14, 2020 Washington, DC, USA	<b>Human to Mars Summit</b> <a href="https://www.exploremars.org/">https://www.exploremars.org/</a>
<b>NEW</b>	May 12-14, 2020 Padua, Italy	<b>8th European Lunar Symposium (ELS)</b> <a href="https://els2020.arc.nasa.gov/">https://els2020.arc.nasa.gov/</a>
	June 2-4, 2020 Orleans, France	<b>Mercury 2020, Current and future science of the innermost planet</b> <a href="https://mercury2020.ias.u-psud.fr/main_1st.php">https://mercury2020.ias.u-psud.fr/main_1st.php</a>
	June 8-11, 2020 Paris, France	<b>7<sup>th</sup> Mars Atmosphere Modelling and Observations</b> <a href="http://www-mars.lmd.jussieu.fr/paris2020/">http://www-mars.lmd.jussieu.fr/paris2020/</a>
<b>NEW</b>	June 16-18, 2020 Washington, DC, USA	<b>2020 Annual Meeting of Planetary Geologic Mappers</b> <a href="https://www.hou.usra.edu/meetings/pgm2020/">https://www.hou.usra.edu/meetings/pgm2020/</a>
	June 22-24, 2020 Villanueva de la Cañada, Spain	<b>Planetary Science Informatics and Data Analytics 2020 Conference</b> <a href="https://www.cosmos.esa.int/web/psida-2020">https://www.cosmos.esa.int/web/psida-2020</a>

Third-Fourth Quarter, 2020		
	July, 2020	<b>Launch window for the UAE EMM orbiter (Hope)</b>
	July 26-August 11, 2020	<b>Launch window for the ESA-Russia ExoMars rover (Rosalind Franklin)</b>
	July 17-August 5, 2020	<b>Launch window for the NASA Mars 2020 rover</b>
	August 15-22, 2020 Sydney, Australia	<b>43<sup>rd</sup> COSPAR Scientific Assembly NCTS 35724-20</b> <a href="https://www.cospar-assembly.org/">https://www.cospar-assembly.org/</a>



October 5-8, 2020  
Houston, TX, USA

**Martian Enigmas 2020**

<https://www.hou.usra.edu/meetings/martianenigmas2020/>

## Seasons on Mars

	MY35	MY36	MY37
Start of Northern Spring / L <sub>s</sub> 0	03/23/2019	02/07/2021	12/26/2022
Start of Northern Summer / L <sub>s</sub> 90	10/08/2019	08/25/2021	07/13/2023
Start of Northern Autumn / L <sub>s</sub> 180	04/08/2020	02/24/2022	01/24/2024
Start of Northern Winter / L <sub>s</sub> 270	09/02/2020	07/21/2022	06/07/2024

## Special holidays to consider when scheduling conferences/workshops/meetings

Good Friday	4/10/20	4/2/2021	04/15/2022	4/7/2023
Rosh Hashanah	9/19/20	9/7/2021	09/26/2022	9/16/2023
Yom Kippur	9/28/20	9/16/2021	10/05/2022	9/25/2023
(Note that Jewish holidays start at sundown the previous evening)				
Thanksgiving Day, Canada	10/12/20	10/11/2021	10/10/2022	10/9/2023
Thanksgiving Day, U.S.	11/26/20	11/25/2021	11/24/2022	11/24/2023
Christmas Day	12/25/20	12/25/2021	12/25/2022	12/25/2023

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Please send Mars Community Announcements and calendar items for inclusion in next month's newsletter to:

Barbara Saltzberg at [Barbara.a.Saltzberg@jpl.nasa.gov](mailto:Barbara.a.Saltzberg@jpl.nasa.gov)

This newsletter (and all previous months') is also posted on the MEPAG website: <http://mepag.jpl.nasa.gov>

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