

Mars Exploration Science Monthly Newsletter

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

March 2016

Mars Science News

New MEPAG Leadership and Goal Committee openings

Dr. Jeffrey R. Johnson, a planetary geologist at the John Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory, has been selected as the new MEPAG Chair. Dr. Johnson, who previously served as the MEPAG Goals Committee Chair, uses remote sensing in visible through radar wavelengths to understand the compositional, mineralogical, and morphological variability of planetary surfaces. He has participated in several Mars missions, and is currently a Participating Scientist on the Mars Exploration Rover and Mars Science Laboratory missions and a Co-Investigator on the Mastcam-Z and SuperCam instruments on the Mars 2020 rover. Professor Lisa Pratt, who served as the MEPAG Chair since 2013, introduced the new MEPAG Chair at the 31st MEPAG Meeting. She will remain on the MEPAG Executive Committee, replacing Dr. Dave des Marais in the “Past Chair” position. The MEPAG Executive Committee membership is shown at <http://mepag.nasa.gov/about.cfm>.

Dr. Victoria Hamilton, the MEPAG Goals Committee Chair, is requesting nominations for the MEPAG Goals Committee. Candidates should volunteer under a particular Goal (I. Life, II. Climate, III. Geology, IV. Prep. Human Exploration) and be willing to commit to 2-3 years (1-2 Goal revisions). Committee members are expected to be familiar with the MEPAG Goals Document and the state of Mars science within their portion of the Mars community, and to serve as a representative of their portion of the Mars community. Current openings are for Goals I, II, IV. Self-nominations are welcome. Nominations can be submitted via <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1DooOOABf9pDsYnAZBsoxr0p8MswuLZVYiv3PEOfrJOU/viewform>.

Mars Biosignatures Workshop (and student travel grant)

Conference: May 16-19, 2016 in Lake Tahoe, NV, USA

Deadline: March 15, 2016

The Biosignature Preservation and Detection in Mars Analog Environments conference will be held May 16–19, 2016 at the Hyatt Regency Lake Tahoe (<http://www.hou.usra.edu/meetings/biosignature2016/>). The objective is to focus strategies to detect a range of possible biosignatures on Mars in different categories of geologic settings by assessing the attributes and preservation potential of various biosignatures in different Mars-analog habitable environments on Earth. The deadline for abstracts is March 15. Questions about the workshop should be directed to Dr. Lindsay Hays (lindsay.e.hays@jpl.nasa.gov).

The student travel grant opportunity is open to undergraduate and graduate students with Mars-related research interests, who are US citizens or legal residents. The student application is also due March 15, and is posted on the MEPAG site: <http://mepag.nasa.gov/student.cfm?expand=student>. Send grant questions to Dr. Serina Diniega, (serina.diniega@jpl.nasa.gov).

Pre-LPSC: 3rd Annual Workshop on Potential Mars Returned Sample Science

March 20, 2016; College Park room @ The Woodlands Waterway Marriott Hotel

The Third Annual Workshop on Potential Mars Returned Sample Science will take place on Sunday March 20, in the College Park room at The Woodlands Waterway Marriott Hotel. This workshop will be an opportunity for scientists interested in the investigation of geological samples from Mars to stay up-to-date on current planning related to the possibility of returning samples from Mars. This year’s workshop will focus primarily on information regarding the newly formed Mars 2020 Returned Sample Science Board (RSSB), including feed forward of some of the issues that have already been considered and recommendations that have been made to the project. Discussion will also include information from the other missions of the proposed MSR campaign. An RSVP is not required. Questions should be directed to Dr. Lindsay Hays (lindsay.e.hays@jpl.nasa.gov).

NASA RFI: Assessing the Community's Use of the PSD Facilities

Deadline: April 30, 2016

The Planetary Science Division (PSD) is interested in maximizing the scientific productivity of its Facilities Program. To assess its Facilities Program, PSD initiated a review of its existing funded facilities, organized a special session at the upcoming Lunar and Planetary Science Conference (LPSC) in Houston, Texas, and is now soliciting comments from the planetary science community through this RFI. Inputs received in response to this RFI will be considered by NASA, which will establish a PSD internal team to create a strategic plan for the Facilities Program. PSD will assess the needs of the community for existing facilities through past use, define an implementation approach to answer future needs of the Facilities Program, and provide programmatic direction. Input should be in a PDF file format, not to exceed two pages, attached to an E-mail and sent to Doris Daou at Doris.Daou@nasa.gov with subject line: REPONSE to Facilities RFI.

Summer School: Biosignatures and the Search for Life on Mars

July 4-16, 2016; Reykjavik, ICELAND

This summer school aims to cover the subject of the search for life in different environments, both on early Earth, below Earth's surface and on Mars. It will bring together students and researchers from a multitude of different fields. Field studies on the colonisation of lava fields and Mars analogue landscapes will complement the lectures. For further information about the summer school please check the website at: <http://www.nordicastrobiology.net/Iceland2016/>. The application deadline 31 March 2016.

2016 NASA Planetary Science Summer School Applications Open

July 25-29, 2016; JPL, Pasadena, CA

NASA is accepting applications from science and engineering post-docs, recent PhDs, and doctoral students for its 28th Annual Planetary Science Summer School. During the program and pre-session webinars, student teams will carry out the equivalent of an early mission concept study, prepare a proposal authorization presentation, present it to a review board, and receive feedback. By the end of the session, students will have a clearer understanding of the life cycle of a space mission; relationships between mission design, cost, and schedule; and the tradeoffs necessary to stay within cost and schedule while preserving the quality of science. Applications are due April 6, 2016. Further information is available at <http://pscischool.jpl.nasa.gov>. Partial financial support is available for a limited number of individuals.

Near-term Due Dates (next three months)

Due	Project
March 1	68th Annual Meeting of the Rocky Mountain GSA , Abstract deadline 53rd Annual Meeting of the Clay Minerals Society , Abstract deadline
March 17	European Geosciences Union General Assembly 2016 , Registration deadline
April 1	iCubeSat 2016, the 5th Interplanetary CubeSat Workshop , Abstract deadline 53rd Annual Meeting of the Clay Minerals Society , Abstract deadline
April 6	NASA's 28th Annual Planetary Science Summer School , Application deadline
April 7	New Views of the Moon 2 workshop , Indication of Interest deadline
April 8	Water in the Universe: From Clouds to Oceans , Registration deadline
April 11	68th Annual Meeting of the Rocky Mountain GSA , Early registration deadline
April 15	Biosignature Preservation and Detection in Mars Analog Environments , Early registration deadline
April 26	26th Goldschmidt Conference , Early registration deadline
May 10	Japan Geoscience Union Meeting , Early registration deadline.
May 15	Biosignature Preservation and Detection in Mars Analog Environments , Abstract deadline

Upcoming Conferences and Workshops

A note about “conferences” and this calendar of events

- Missing NCTS#s (and forecasting deadline, if anomalous) can be sent to Meredith Cosby (Meredith.A.Cosby@jpl.nasa.gov).
- If no deadline is noted: it is usually 90days in advance — sometimes further in advance if the conference is “Heavily Attended.”
- Please do not assume our noting of NCTS# is complete. If you are unsure if an event is a conference or not, or when the forecasting deadline may be, please consult with your NASA Center conference forecasting/travel unit.

First Quarter, 2016

	March 2-3, 2016 Silver Spring, MD, USA	MEPAG Meeting #31 http://mepag.jpl.nasa.gov/meetings.cfm , NCTS# 24324-16
	March 5-12, 2016 Big Sky, MT, USA	IEEE Aerospace Conference http://www.aeroconf.org/ , NCTS# 22854-16
	March 14, 2016	20-Day 2016 ExoMars Launch Period Opens
	March 21-25, 2016 The Woodlands, TX, USA	Lunar and Planetary Science Conference (LPSC) http://www.hou.usra.edu/meetings/lpsc2016/ , NCTS# 23351-16
	March 29-31, 2016 Washington DC, USA	NRC's Committee on Astrobiology and Planetary Science (CAPS)

Second Quarter, 2016

	April 4-8, 2016 Oxford, UK	International Venus Conference http://venus2016.uk/
	April 11-15, 2016 Orlando, FL, USA	ASCE Earth and Space 2016 Conference: 15th Biennial ASCE International Conference on Engineering, Science, Construction, and Operations in Challenging Environments http://earthspaceconf.mst.edu/ , NCTS# 23397-16 <i>Symp. 1: Granular Materials in Space Explorat., Symp. 2: Explorat. & Utilizat. of ET Bodies</i>
	April 12-15, 2016 Noordwijk, NETHERLANDS	Water in the Universe: From Clouds to Oceans http://www.congrexprojects.com/2016-events/16a06
	April 17-22, 2016 Vienna, AUSTRIA	European Geosciences Union General Assembly 2016 http://egu2016.eu/home.html , NCTS# 23760-16 <i>Session PS2.3: Mars Science and Exploration</i>
	May 16-19, 2016 Lake Tahoe, NV, USA	Biosignature Preservation and Detection in Mars Analog Environments http://www.hou.usra.edu/meetings/biosignature2016/ , NCTS# 24667-16 (forecast by Feb 12)
	May 17-19, 2016 Washington, DC, USA	Humans to Mars Summit http://h2m.exploremars.org/ , NCTS# 24381-16
	May 18-19, 2016 Amsterdam, NETHERLANDS	4th European Lunar Symposium http://sservi.nasa.gov/els2016/
	May 18-19, 2016 Moscow, ID, USA	68th Annual Meeting of the Rocky Mountain GSA http://www.geosociety.org/sections/rm/2016mtg/index.htm <i>Sessions: (1) Planetary Science - Insights from Remote Sensing, Field, and the Laboratory; (2) Megafloods, Paleohydrology, and Fluvial Processes on Earth and Beyond - In Recognition of the Scientific Contributions of Victor R. Baker; (3) Volcanic Hazards - Products, Processes, and Perspectives</i>

Second Quarter, 2016 — cont.


	May 22-26, 2016 Chiba, JAPAN	Japan Geoscience Union Meeting http://www.jpгу.org/meeting_e2016/index.htm Session P-PS02: Mars
	May 24-25, 2016 Oxford, UK	iCubeSat 2016, the 5th Interplanetary CubeSat Workshop http://icubesat.org/
New!	May 24-26, 2016 Houston, TX, USA	New Views of the Moon 2 Workshop http://www.hou.usra.edu/meetings/newviews2016/
New!	June 5-8, 2016 Atlanta, GA, USA	53rd Annual Meeting of the Clay Minerals Society http://conferences.illinois.edu/CMS2016/index.html Session: Clay Minerals on Mars and Other Planetary Bodies
New!	June 7-9, 2016 Golden, CO, USA	7th Joint Meeting of Space Resources Roundtable and Planetary & Terrestrial Mining Sciences Symposium http://www.isruinfo.com/
Updated!	June 13-17, 2016 Laurel, MD, USA	International Planetary Probe Workshop (IPPW-13) http://ippw2016.jhuapl.edu/index.php , NCTS #24380-16 additional short course offered June 11-12, 2016
	June 20-21, 2016 London, UK	Martian Gullies and their Earth Analogues https://www.geolsoc.org.uk/martiangullies
	June 20-24, 2016 Potsdam, GERMANY	11th International Conference on Permafrost (ICOP) 2016 http://icop2016.org/index.php/program Session #16 "Planetary Permafrost and Earth Analogues"
New!	June 28-30, 2016 Laurel, MD, USA	14th Meeting of the NASA Small Bodies Assessment Group (SBAG) http://www.lpi.usra.edu/sbag/
	June 26-July 1, 2016 Yokohama, JAPAN	26th Goldschmidt Conference http://goldschmidt.info/2016/index Session 02h: Geochemical Evolution of the Martian Surface and Interior

Third Quarter, 2016

New!	July 25-29, 2016 Pasadena, CA, USA	NASA's 28th Annual Planetary Science Summer School https://pscischool.jpl.nasa.gov/index.cfm
	July 30-August 7, 2016 Istanbul, TURKEY	41st Scientific Assembly of the Committee on Space Research (COSPAR 2016) and Associated Events http://www.cospar-assembly.org
	August 7-12, 2016 Berlin, GERMANY	Annual Meetings of the Meteoritical Society http://www.metsoc-berlin.de/
	September 5-9, 2016 Reykjavik, ICELAND	6th International Conference on Mars Polar Science and Exploration http://www.hou.usra.edu/meetings/marspolar2016/ , NCTS# 23841-16
	September 14-15, 2016 Irvine, CA, USA	NRC's Committee on Astrobiology and Planetary Science (CAPS)
New!	September 25-28, 2016 Denver, CO, USA	GSA Meeting http://community.geosociety.org/gsa2016/home , NCTS # 24946-16
	September 26-30, 2016 Guadalajara, MEXICO	67th International Astronautical Congress http://www.iafastro.org/events/iac/iac2016/

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Fourth Quarter, 2016

	October 16-21, 2016 Pasadena, CA, USA	Joint DPS-EPSC Meeting
	October 19, 2016	2016 ExoMars (TGO and EDM) Arrival at Mars

2017

	March 28-30, 2017 Washington, DC, USA	NRC's Committee on Astrobiology and Planetary Science (CAPS)
	September 13-14, 2017 Washington, DC, USA	NRC's Committee on Astrobiology and Planetary Science (CAPS)

Seasons on Mars

	MY33	MY34	MY35
Start of Northern Spring / L _s 0	6/18/2015	5/05/2017	3/23/2019
Start of Northern Summer / L _s 90	1/03/2016	11/20/2017	10/08/2019
Start of Northern Autumn / L _s 180	7/04/2016	5/22/2018	4/08/2020
Start of Northern Winter / L _s 270	11/28/2016	10/16/2018	9/02/2020

Special holidays to consider when scheduling conferences/workshops/meetings

Good Friday	3/25/2016	4/14/2017	3/30/2018	4/19/2019
Rosh Hashanah	10/03/2016	9/21/2017	9/10/2018	9/30/2019
Yom Kippur	10/12/2016	9/30/2017	9/19/2018	10/09/2019
(Note that Jewish holidays start at sundown the previous evening)				
Thanksgiving Day, Canada	10/10/2016	10/09/2017	10/08/2018	10/14/2019
Thanksgiving Day, U.S.	11/24/2016	11/23/2017	11/22/2018	11/28/2019
Christmas Day	12/25/2016	12/25/2017	12/25/2018	12/25/2019

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

Meredith Cosby at Meredith.A.Cosby@jpl.nasa.gov.

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

- If you wish to withdraw from the electronic mailing list this newsletter is sent out to, please send an email from your email account to mepag-removesignup@jpl.nasa.gov.
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