

**EUROPEAN SPACE AGENCY**  
**ASTRONOMY WORKING GROUP**

**Evaluation of the proposal for the Eddington Payload Consortium**

The AWG, at its 116<sup>th</sup> meeting held on 8-9 October 2003 at the Space Expo centre, Noordwijk (NL), heard the report of the ESA technical evaluation group and the reports of the designated AWG members. Taking into account the terms of the Eddington Science Management Plan and the evaluation criteria given in the Eddington Announcement of Opportunity (AO), the AWG arrived at the conclusions summarized below.

In line with the AO, the Eddington Payload Consortium is asked to provide support to ESA in the development of the Eddington mission in the following areas:

- 1) Support in the technical definition and in the monitoring of the development of the Eddington mission, in particular of the payload;
- 2) provision of software for the on-board science data processing and for the ground-based data processing;
- 3) support to ESA for the payload calibration, both during the development and during the operations of the mission;
- 4) detailed characterization of the Eddington detectors (response, aging, radiation effects, etc.).

In addition, a number of minor tasks (e.g. software verification, instrument software simulator) were included in the AO.

With the exception of the flight science software, none of the items supplied by the payload consortium are schedule- or budget-critical for the Eddington project.

A single response to the AO was received, with a relatively large consortium led by Dr. M. Mas Hesse of INTA (Madrid). The consortium comprises 41 institutions in 11 member countries.

The expertise present in the consortium is considered adequate to fulfil the tasks described in the AO, however, the organization and management structure of the proposal needs significant revision before it can be accepted, with the proposed management structure appearing needlessly complex for the proposed activities. It is also suggested that the consortium could be more efficient if reduced in size.

Also, the proposal is quite heterogeneous in its level of detail, depending on the work-packages and on the involved teams. Before acceptance, it needs revising to bring all its parts to an adequate and common level of quality. The proposed work-plan and organization for some of the work packages need to be made more specific and detailed.

Finally, the proposed funding in each country and manpower for each team and work package must be made more explicit.

In conclusion, the AWG requests that the proposal, revised along the lines identified above, be presented at the next AWG meeting before a final recommendation for approval can be formulated.