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**To: SPC, SSAC, AWG, SSEWG  
and Scientific Community**

**Our ref. D/SRE/ake/28468  
Paris, 24 Sep. 2012**

**Subject: Announcement of Opportunity for the provision of scientific  
payload including SGS elements for the M3 mission candidates**

Dear Colleagues,

Hereby I invite the scientific community to submit proposals for the provision of the scientific payload, including Science Ground Segment (SGS) elements, for the EChO, LOFT, MarcoPolo-R, and STE-QUEST missions that are candidates for the M3 launch opportunity.

These missions were selected in February 2011, as candidates for a "Medium-class Mission" launch opportunity, with a foreseen launch date in either 2022 or 2024 (depending on the evolution of the Science Programme, including the confirmation for launch in 2022 of the L1 mission JUICE).

The documentation contained in the AO contains all the necessary guidelines and supporting scientific and technical information necessary for the preparation of the instrument proposals.

Full details are reported in the AO and its annexes.

**Deadline for the submission of the proposal to ESA is November 30, 2012.**

Submission of a letter of intent is mandatory, with a deadline of October 5, 2012. A briefing meeting intended to clarify technical and/or programmatic issues is planned at ESTEC, Noordwijk, on October 15, 2012.

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

Alvaro Giménez  
Director of the ESA Science and Robotic Exploration Programme  
European Space Agency