



esa



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Paris, 1 March 2007

Subject: Release of Announcement of Opportunity for membership of the Gaia Science Team

Dear Colleague,

The Science Directorate of ESA is releasing today the Announcement of Opportunity for membership of the Science Team of the Gaia mission. The Gaia mission, a global astrometric survey mission, is an element of ESA's Scientific Programme, which is foreseen to be launched in December 2011.

Proposals are solicited for individual membership in the Gaia Science Team, whose mandate is to advise ESA on all scientific matters regarding the Gaia mission. As described in the Science Management Plan, the Gaia Science Team is due to be renewed at the time when the mission moves from design to development phase, with the Preliminary Design Review marking this transition foreseen for June 2007. A total of seven scientists will be selected, for a renewable period of three years, as members in the Gaia Science Team: two astrometry scientists, two photometry scientists, two radial velocity spectrometer scientists and one data analysis scientist.

Successful applicants are expected to have a keen interest and proven track record in at least one of the scientific fields to which Gaia will make a significant contribution. The key science goal of Gaia is the understanding of the structure and history of the Milky Way, with extra-solar planets, minor solar system bodies, stellar astrophysics, general relativity (and more) also figuring prominently in Gaia's science case, as described extensively in

[http://www.rssd.esa.int/SA/GAIA/docs/info\\_sheets/IN\\_science\\_topics\\_section.pdf](http://www.rssd.esa.int/SA/GAIA/docs/info_sheets/IN_science_topics_section.pdf).

Applicants for the positions of astrometry, photometry and radial velocity scientists are expected to have a good understanding of the aspects of the Gaia instruments relevant to the position they are applying for and to their stated scientific interests, as well as of the impact of instrumental issues on the science return from the mission. Details of the current instrumental design of Gaia are available at [http://www.rssd.esa.int/SA/GAIA/docs/info\\_sheets/IN\\_spacecraft\\_and\\_payload\\_section.pdf](http://www.rssd.esa.int/SA/GAIA/docs/info_sheets/IN_spacecraft_and_payload_section.pdf). Applicants for the position of data analysis scientist are expected to have a good understanding of the data analysis approach being implemented for Gaia (see [http://www.rssd.esa.int/SA/GAIA/docs/info\\_sheets/IN\\_accuracy\\_section.pdf](http://www.rssd.esa.int/SA/GAIA/docs/info_sheets/IN_accuracy_section.pdf)) and of the impact of data analysis issues on the mission's science return.

Membership of the Gaia Science Team is on an individual basis, and is open to all scientists from institutions located in ESA Member States. The Gaia Science Team appointed as a result of the present Announcement of Opportunity is anticipated to first meet in September 2007.

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As described in the Announcement of Opportunity, the Gaia Science Team will be selected ensuring that they are to a reasonable degree independent from the management activities of the Gaia Data Analysis and Processing Consortium (DPAC). The Announcement of Opportunity for the DPAC closed on December 11, 2006, and a single proposal has been received. Selection of the proposing consortium by the Science Programme Committee is currently planned to take place in May 2007. The selection of the Gaia Science Team members in response to the present Announcement of Opportunity is currently planned to take place at the same time. Should the selection of the DPAC consortium for whatever reason be delayed, the Science Directorate reserves the right to delay the selection of the Gaia Science Team, to ensure consistency between the two processes.

With the present letter I therefore invite interested members of the scientific community to respond to the Announcement of Opportunity, available on line at <http://sci.esa.int/GaiaGSTAO>. Responses to the Announcement of Opportunity are due by April 4, 2007 following the procedure described in detail at <http://sci.esa.int/GaiaGSTAO>.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D. Southwood", with a large, stylized flourish at the beginning.

David Southwood  
Director of Science