



D/SCI/JC/val/22536

Paris, 1 February 2007

To the Science Community
SPC, SSAC and Working Groups (AWG, SSWG, FPAG)

Herschel Announcement of Opportunity for Key Programme Observations

Dear Colleague,

I am very pleased to invite you to respond to the first Announcement of Opportunity to submit proposals for observations to be performed with the Herschel Space Observatory.

Herschel is the fourth cornerstone of ESA's Horizon 2000 Science Programme, and is planned to be launched on 31 July 2008. It contains three instruments, the Photodetector Array Camera and Spectrometer (PACS) for the wavelengths shortward of 200 μm , the Spectral and Photometric Imaging REceiver (SPIRE) for the longer wavelengths, and the very high resolution spectrometer Heterodyne Instrument for the Far Infrared (HIFI).

This Announcement of Opportunity (AO) refers to Key Programme proposals only. The AO is divided into two parts, the first part is for the Guaranteed Time Key Programmes, these will be awarded first while the second part refers to Open Time Key Programmes. Proposers from the general astronomical community from all over the world are welcome to participate in the call for Open Time. All proposals will be subject to independent review by the Herschel Observing Time Allocation Committee (HOTAC).

In order to give Open Time proposers as much time and information for preparation as possible, an Open Time Key Programme workshop is being organised in ESTEC, Noordwijk on 20-21 February 2007. At the workshop, the expected Guaranteed Time proposals will be summarised. Workshop information is available on the internet at the URL below, where the presentations and/or proceedings will also be posted.

Potential proposers are required to prepare and submit observing time proposals in electronic form, by the deadlines given below, according to the rules and using the Herschel observing planning tool (HSpot) described in the AO documentation package which is available via the internet at:

<http://herschel.esac.esa.int/>

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The appendix to this announcement lists the relevant documentation with short explanations as to what they are and how to access them. I would appreciate if you would distribute this letter and the attached information widely.

The key milestones for this AO are:

- Issue of the AO for Key Programme observing proposals 1 February 2007
- Open Time Key Programme workshop at ESTEC 20-21 February 2007
- Due date for Guaranteed Time proposals 4 April 2007
- Announcement of the HOTAC approved GT KP programme 5 July 2007
- Due date for Open Time proposals 25 October 2007
- Announcement of the HOTAC approved OT KP programme 28 February 2008

I invite you to submit your proposals and wish you success using the Herschel observatory.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Southwood', with a stylized, cursive script.

Prof. D. Southwood
Director of the ESA Scientific Programme

Enclosure: List of AO documentation

Overview of Herschel Key Programme Announcement of Opportunity documentation

This appendix outlines the Key Programme Announcement of Opportunity document package and provides a brief description of each of the documents in the package.

Herschel Key Programme Announcement of Opportunity: This letter from the ESA Director of Scientific Programme is the formal Announcement of Opportunity to apply for the Herschel Key Programme observing time.

Executive Summary: Summarises the document package, providing the reader with an overview and help on where to find what information.

Policies and Procedures: This is the ‘administrative’ document of the Announcement of Opportunity, providing all necessary information about the policies adopted and the procedures to be followed.

Herschel Observers’ Manual: Provides information about Herschel pertinent to using the observatory from the perspective of an observer.

PACS/SPIRE/HIFI Observers’ Manual: Provides information about and how to use the PACS/SPIRE/HIFI instrument to perform observations. (Three manuals, one for each instrument).

HSpot Manual: Provides information about and how to use the HSpot tool to plan Herschel observations.

Reserved Observations List: Describes the Guaranteed Time Key Programme reserved observations, together they make up the GT Key Programme. (Available only as of 5 July 2007 after the completion of the GT HOTAC activities).

More information about Herschel, the AO, and the AO documentation package itself are available via the internet at:

<http://herschel.esac.esa.int/>

Except for this letter (PDF only) all documents are available both as PDF documents primarily intended for downloading and printing, and as a cross-referenced HTML package primarily intended for on-screen viewing.