



**2023 Heliophysics Space Weather Vigil Focused
Mission of Opportunity (Vigil FMO)**

Questions & Answers

05 September 2023

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Please submit your questions regarding the 2023 Heliophysics Space Weather Vigil Focused Mission of Opportunity (Vigil FMO) to Dr. Jim Spann by email at: jim.spann@nasa.gov.

We will work to develop answers to your questions, and post those answers to this document. Please check back for the latest version, as you may not be notified that your question has been answered.

Change Log		
Rev.	Date	Description of Changes
01	08 FEB 2023	Added Q&A 1
02	15 MAR 2023	Added Q&A 2 that superseded Q&A 1
03	16 JUN 2023	Added Q&As 3 to 8
04	08 AUG 2023	Added Q&As 9 and 10
05	25 AUG 2023	Added Q&As 11 to 17
06	05 SEP 2023	Amended Q&A 9 and added Q&As 18 to 24

Q1: Why is the Draft Announcement of Opportunity (AO) structured more like a Request for Proposal (RFP) than a typical open science AO?

A1: This AO is for an investigation to support an operational space weather mission, as well as to conduct research. Therefore, it has aspects of both an RFP and an open science AO. The table listing operational requirements addresses the performance characteristics for operations and is not expected to constrain what science can be proposed for the specified instrument. **[Superseded by Q&A 2 on 15 March 2023.]**

Q2: Why does the solicitation appear to be driven by instrument requirements in the Level 1 Operational Parameters and Targets Table that seem to emphasize specific space weather operations over a focused, but open science investigation?

A2: This FMO solicitation is for a science investigation that uses/includes a remote sensing instrument—a NASA Instrument of Opportunity (NIO)—whose observations complement the operational observations of the Vigil space weather mission on which the instrument is hosted.

The science investigation is expected to:

- advance understanding of solar variability manifested as “the sudden release of magnetic energy that enables both flares and coronal mass ejections (CME) to accelerate particles to high energy efficiently”;
- enable the development “of advanced methods for forecasting and nowcasting of solar eruptive events and space Weather”; and
- make effective use of ESA instrument data in the proposed investigation.

The investigation is also expected to support objectives of the Vigil mission with the provision of low-latency observations for operational space weather applications, particularly observations of the solar atmosphere necessary to monitor and predict conditions determining space weather in the region of Earth. In the context of the Vigil mission objectives, the solar atmosphere consists of the region between the photosphere and the near-radial corona. Thus, the FMO should fill in the observational gap between the Vigil mission’s Photospheric Magnetic Field Imager (PMI) and the Compact Coronagraph (CCOR). Latency and cadence of FMO observations must be compatible with that of the baseline Vigil instruments.

The priority Vigil-complementary observational objectives for the NIO will be

- Identify the morphology of inner coronal structures including active regions, coronal holes, and quiet Sun. The observational cadence, resolution, field of view and temperature coverage should be sufficient to:
 - Determine connection between PMI observations of photospheric magnetic field by the PMI and observations of extended coronal structures by the CCOR.
 - Evaluate the magnetic complexity and connection of coronal structures.
 - Define the structure of coronal holes sufficient to project the boundaries of high-speed solar wind streams.
 - Establish the temperature of these structures sufficient to characterize their evolution.
- Identify transient coronal activity including flares, prominence eruptions and markers of coronal mass ejections (CME) such as EUV dimming. The observational cadence, resolution, field of view and temperature coverage should be sufficient to:
 - Identify the active region associated with any X-ray flare of Class-C or greater.
 - Establish the magnetic connectivity of a prominence prior to eruption.
 - Determine the direction and speed of CME markers such as prominence eruptions, coronal dimmings and coronal streamer displacement.
 - Track the markers of Earth-directed CME to at least 1.8 solar radii.

The requirements in the Level 1 Operational Parameters and Targets table were applicable for the strawman instrument generated as the mission was being developed and represented but one example of how the Vigil-complementary operational objectives could be met. The strawman instrument was also necessary for establishing appropriate mass and volume resource allocations for payload planning. The table was not meant to define a/the specific instrument for the solicited investigation and will be removed in the final AO in favor of the objectives above.

- Q3:** Given that this FMO is for an instrument, Requirements 15–17 in the DRAFT AO’s Section 5.1.8 *Planetary Protection* and Requirement B-54 in the DRAFT AO’s Appendix J.6. Planetary Protection Plan do not seem applicable, as the FMO Team will not have any control over the spacecraft.
- A3:** The referenced requirements, section, and appendix will not be levied on proposals in the final AO.
- Q4:** Given that this FMO is for an instrument, Requirement 28 in the DRAFT AO’s Section 5.2.4 *Orbital Debris Assessment and End-of-Mission Spacecraft Disposal Requirement* and Requirement B-55 in the DRAFT AO’s Appendix J.8. Discussion of Limiting the Generation of Orbital Debris and End of Mission Spacecraft Disposal Requirements do not seem applicable, as the FMO Team will not have any control over the spacecraft.
- A4:** The referenced requirements, section, and appendix will not be levied on proposals in the final AO.
- Q5:** Given that this FMO is for an instrument, Requirement 30 in the DRAFT AO’s Section 5.2.6 *Project Protection Plan* does not seem applicable, as the FMO Team will not have any control over spacecraft commanding.
- A5:** NASA-STD-1006A provides suggested tailoring regarding instrument command stack protection and interference reporting guidance for hosted instruments that must be considered in addressing DRAFT AO Requirement 30. Other aspects of NASA-STD-1006A, such as the necessity of protecting the confidentiality of Command Link Critical Program/Project Information (CPI) as controlled unclassified information (CUI), must also be addressed.
- Q6:** The DRAFT AO does not specify the length of Phase E. Is it 7.5 years as shown in the ESA document VGL-IRD-ESA-NIO-0037 Issue 1.0 *VIGIL MISSION NASA INSTRUMENT OF OPPORTUNITY (NIO) INTERFACE REQUIREMENTS DOCUMENT*, page 16?
- A6:** No. Proposers should assume a three (3) year Phase-E duration comprising one (1) year between 32.3 degrees separation from Earth with respect to the Sun and the 5th Sun-Earth Lagrangian point (SEL5), followed by two (2) years at SEL5. Checkout should be assumed to be for one (1) month, between 30 and 32.3 degrees separation from Earth with respect to the Sun.
- Q7:** Is additional instrumentation permitted, as long as the overall package meets the Payload IRD and AO Cost Cap?

- A7:** Yes. The instruments must, however, be integrated into a package that constitutes a single interface to Vigil.
- Q8:** Please clarify the nature of requirement VGL-NIO-IF-0290 “[t]he instrument latency of the data shall be less of equal to 5 minutes” in ESA document VGL-IRD-ESA-NIO-0037 Issue 1.0 *VIGIL MISSION NASA INSTRUMENT OF OPPORTUNITY (NIO) INTERFACE REQUIREMENTS DOCUMENT*.
- A8:** This is a requirement for the instrument latency onboard the spacecraft, i.e., the operations data should be passed to the spacecraft data bus by the instrument within 5 minutes of the observation.
- Q9:** Please clarify the nature of the Priority 1 and Priority 2 NIO averaged data rate allocations. Can the Priority 1 allocation be used for science closure?
- A9:** The Priority 1 and housekeeping averaged data rate allocation of 20 kbps is reserved for addressing the Vigil-Complementary (VC) observational objectives. If the Priority 1 data also contributes to science closure, it may be used for that purpose. Please note that because NIO IRD Issue/Revision 1.1 posted to the Program Library is part of ESA’s Satellite Request from Quotation, it will not be updated to reflect the Priority 2 averaged data rate allocation of 33 kbps as documented in the second ESA presentation at the Pre-Proposal Conference, posted to the Acquisition Website. **Priority 1 Level 0 data will be made available to the NIO investigation after a TBD hold period. [Amended on 05 September 2023.]**
- Q10:** What dates should be used for launch and ESA life-cycle reviews?
- A10:** Proposers should use the Nov-29 launch date in the *VIGIL NIO REQUIREMENTS DOCUMENT*. The associated dates in the “main spacecraft milestone and key events” table should be used for ESA life-cycle reviews.
- Q11:** Please clarify the requirement to fully encumber reserves to directly develop contributions that are essential to the success of the proposed investigation or on the critical path. In previous AOs, these reserves would be some fraction of the total value of the contribution determined based on, among other things, the confidence in the contribution funding source. Is 100% of the value of the contribution required to be encumbered as part of the PI-Managed Mission Cost?
- A11:** In short, yes. This is a change specific to the Vigil FMO AO. It excludes contributions that are considered not essential to the success of the proposed investigation or not on the critical path, such as Collaborator effort.

- Q12:** Does the Priority 2 averaged data rate allocation of 33 kbps for science data represent a maximum possible throughput?
- A12:** Baseline and Threshold Investigations are limited to the Priority 2 averaged data rate allocation of 33 kbps for science data. Additional Priority 2 bandwidth may be made available as the Vigil concept of operations mature. SEOs that would benefit from one or more assumed higher throughput levels may be proposed.
- Q13:** How long is Vigil expected to remain in its geostationary transfer orbit?
- A13:** Due to the harshness of the total dose environment, the duration will be at most three days.
- Q14:** AO Requirements 13 and 14 require that the proposers provide Level 1 and 2 requirements respectively, but the AO does not indicate where these requirements should be reported.
- A14:** Level 1 science and VC operations requirements should be addressed in the body of the proposal. The 30-page allocation for proposal Sections D and E will accordingly be increased to 35 pages in the forthcoming AO amendment. A proposal appendix entitled Draft Mission Definition Requirements Agreement will be added in the AO amendment for Level 2 project requirements.
- Q15:** Where is the table on non-U.S. participation in AO Requirement 67 to be provided? For previous AOs, analogous material was provided in Appendix J.4 Summary of Proposed Program Cooperative Contributions, but the appendix has been deleted.
- A15:** AO Appendix B Section J.4 Summary of Proposed Program Cooperative Contributions will be reinstated in the forthcoming AO amendment. The section will contain a requirement that provides further guidance on the content of the table.
- Q16:** The AO refers to both NPR7123.1C and NPR 7123.1B. The Program Library has NPR 7123.1C. Which is correct?
- A16:** References to NASA Procedural Requirement (NPR) 7123.1B will be changed, in the forthcoming AO amendment, to 7123.1C in Requirement B-29 to be consistent with balance of the AO and the Program Library.
- Q17:** The ESA *Vigil NIO Requirements Document* requires delivery of the Instrument Traceability and Verification Database as DOORS modules, but DOORS isn't typically used on Class-D projects. Can the requirement be waived?

- A17:** The requirement to utilize DOORS is waived for the purpose of proposals. If subsequently deemed to be necessary, implementation costs will not be under the PI-Managed Mission Cost.
- Q18:** Please address an inconsistency in the AO regarding Letters of Commitment for contributions. Requirement B-49 states, “Letters of commitment signed by an institutional official shall be provided from all organizations offering contributions of goods and/or services on a no-exchange-of-funds basis...”. It also references Section 5.8.1 *Institutional Letters of Commitment*, which has consistent language. However, Requirement 66 states, “Proposals from U.S. entities that include non-U.S. participation shall be formally endorsed, through Letters of Commitment, by the responsible funding agency in the country of origin.” Requirement 66 is also listed in the COMPLIANCE CHECKLIST.
- A18:** For international contributions, collaborators excepted, both requirements apply, as Section 5.8.1.1 *Institutional Letters of Commitment for Contributions* states, “Additional requirements for Institutional Letters of Commitment from non-U.S. organizations offering contributions are given in Section 5.7.2 and Requirement 66.”
- Q19:** Regarding the requirement to encumber cost reserves for 100% of the value of any contribution that is essential to the success of the proposed investigation or on the critical path, is the encumbrance to be included in the basis of the unencumbered cost reserve percentage calculation?
- A19:** Yes.
- Q20:** Please clarify AO Section 4.6.2 *Earned Value Management Plan*. Is the deviation mentioned in the last sentence for EVM in its entirety, or is it that EVM compliance reviews will not be required?
- A20:** Section 6 Rationale of the deviation—available at https://soma.larc.nasa.gov/StandardAO/pdf_files/6.Approved_SMD_EVMS_Deviation.pdf—states, “Although EVM is not required, SMD expects that performance measurement basic best practices are necessary as defined per the performance measurement referenced in the NASA Associate Administrator memo dated Sept 26, 2014 found at https://soma.larc.nasa.gov/standardao/pdf_files/CAT3-ClassD-Letter.pdf.”
- Q21:** When will the Non-Disclosure Agreement (NDA), needed by Airbus UK for Vigil Airbus Applicable and Reference documents as indicated in Juha-Pekka Luntama’s PPC presentation, be released?

- A21:** The NDA has been deferred to after Selection. Proposal evaluation will be based on the material provided in the Program Library, including the *Addendum to the NIO IRD* that includes releasable excerpts from Vigil Airbus Applicable and Reference documents.
- Q22:** Will the Vigil On-Board Computer (OBC) provide random data access?
- A22:** No. Specific operational procedures, such as whether data will be overridden when the buffer allocation is exceeded, will need to be discussed with the selected NIO project. Note that Priority 1, housekeeping, and Priority 2 data will be stored in different logical addresses.
- Q23:** Are the NIO dimension limits in Section 4.2 of the IRD only applicable to launch?
- A23:** Articulation of instrument doors outside of the specified limits may be proposed, but will be subject to change after Selection if any is found to interfere with other instruments (e.g., limit FOV, generate straylight, or release particles or contaminants) or the spacecraft in general.
- Q24:** Is there a practical limit to the separate NIO CDPU volume, given future “verification and approval by Spacecraft Prime” in Section 4.2 of the IRD?
- A24:** Proposed volumes of up to 242 x 231 x 88 mm will be considered acceptable.