



Completing a Directed Task Procurement

A Guide for Elements and their Principal Investigators



In certain situations, constraints on necessary research are incompatible with the use of an NRA (NASA Research Announcements)—and HRP may employ a single-source proposal mechanism to accomplish the directed task.



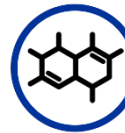
- Directed Tasks must satisfy at least one of the following criteria:
 - Insufficient Time for Solicitation:** Time-sensitive opportunities (e.g., space exploration activities).
 - Highly Constrained Research:** HRP requires constrained data gathering and analysis that is more appropriately obtained through a non-competitively developed proposal.



Types of Directed Tasks

- Scientific Investigations:** Formal research projects.
- Technology Development:** Hardware/software innovations or modifications.
- Flight Demonstrations:** Feasibility studies, safety assessments, or certifications.
- Internal Scientist Support:** ≤\$175K/year, max \$350K over 2 years, for research competency.
- Discretionary “Just-Go-Do-It” Tasks:** Small-scale projects <\$250K requiring minimal oversight.
- Uses Internal Stakeholders:**
 - Element Scientist:** Identifies need and ensures alignment with Element objectives and oversees accuracy.
 - PI:** Develops proposals, completes tasks, and reports progress.
 - HRP Chief Scientist/Deputy Chief Scientist:** Reviews, approves, and monitors progress.
 - SIO (Science Integration Office):** Oversees the process and documentation.

Directed tasks are ideal for time-sensitive or highly constrained research.



Submission Process

Phase 1: Task Synopsis Submission

- Purpose:** Provide the rationale, justification, and scope of the directed task.
- Required Details:** Research justification, associated risks/gaps, problem description, proposed work, timeline, and cost.
- Submission:** The HRP Element completes the Task Synopsis Justification Form (TSJF) and submits to SIO via JSC-HRP-Directed-Tasks@mail.nasa.gov.
- Review:**
 - Science Procurement Lead (SPL) reviews and forwards to the HRP Deputy Chief Scientist.
 - Decision communicated within 1 week of submission:
 - Approved:** PI invited to submit a full proposal.
 - Rejected:** Returned for revision with feedback. Element revises and resubmits.

A strong TSJF clearly outlines why the task is time-sensitive or constrained, addressing NASA's strategic needs.

Phase 2: Full Proposal Submission

- Purpose:** Develop a complete, detailed proposal. Provide the rationale, justification, and scope of the directed task including technical and budget details.
- Requirements:**
 - The PI submits the full proposal in [NSPIRES](#).
 - Element Scientist listed as “Other Professionals” in [NSPIRES](#) for monitoring purposes.
- Deadlines:**
 - Proposal due ~3 months after invitation.
 - If delayed beyond 6 months, TSJF must be resubmitted to confirm scope and budget.

HRP does not accept unsolicited proposals; all directed tasks are by invitation only.

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- **Approval Steps:**
 - Element reviews for alignment with expectations and approves before PI finalizes the submission in [NSPIRES](#).
- **Guidance:**
 - Proposal requirements and guidance will be provided by SIO.
 - **Submission and Inquiries:** JSC-HRP-Directed-Tasks@mail.nasa.gov.

Phase 3. Review Processes

External Review (NRESS Mediated)

- **Criteria:**
 - Tasks $\geq$ \$500K, and/or involving flight resources or astronaut time.
- **Process:**
 - Managed by NRESS in coordination with SIO.
 - A review panel evaluates the proposal, request clarifications from the PI, and provide feedback.
 - Final report submitted to HRP Deputy Chief Scientist for approval.
- **Timeline:** ~1 month for review.

Internal Review (SIO Mediated)

- **Criteria:**
 - Ground-based tasks \$250K–\$500K or technology development tasks $>$ \$250K.
- **Process:**
 - Reviewers appointed by SIO under HRP Chief Scientist direction.
 - Feedback provided to PI for necessary revisions.
 - Final approval by HRP Deputy Chief Scientist.
- **Timeline:** ~2 weeks for review.

Element Discretion Review

- **Criteria:**
 - Tasks $\leq$ \$250K, including “Just-Go-Do-It.”
- **Process:**
 - Element Scientist manages the review and submits TSJF to HRP Chief Scientist.
 - Minimal oversight, with results archived by SIO.

The Element is responsible for ensuring a Discretionary Task is entered in Task Book. [HRP SMP, Section 7.1.3.]

Phase 4. Approval Process

- **Steps:**
 1. Review results shared with HRP Chief Scientist and Element Scientist.
 2. PI collaborates with Element and HRP management to address feedback, if needed.
 3. Final approval by HRP Deputy Chief Scientist.
 4. **Notice of Intent to Award (NOIA)** issued and signed by HRP Chief Scientist.
- **NOIA Distribution:**
 - Sent to PI, HRP Director, Element Scientist, Element Manager, NRESS, NSSC, DMIO, PP&C, and SOMD/HQ.
 - NASA Division Chief included for internal PIs.



Documenting Directed Tasks in Task Book

- **Annual & Final Reports:**
 - The HRP Chief Scientist requires that HRP funded PIs submit annual status reports, and a final report for all solicited and directed research to the **Task Book** (<https://taskbook.nasaprs.com/>).
 - NRESS is notified by the NSSC after the award has been made and initiates a Task Book entry for the project.
 - The PI is reminded annually through NRESS (taskbook@nasaprs.com) to update the Task Book. This submission fulfills the HRP Chief Scientist’s responsibility to maintain review of a task over the lifetime of that task. [HRP-47053, HRP Science Management Plan (SMP), Section 8.1.].
 - The Element is responsible for ensuring that the task is documented in Task Book. [HRP Science Management Plan, Section 7.1.3].