Opportunities for Education and Public Outreach (E/PO) Support Through NASA’s Office of Space Science (OSS)

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NASA’s Office of Space Science has made strong commitment to education, with an increased emphasis in recent years that is keyed around the participation of the space science research community in K-14 education and public outreach activities. The strategy includes funding of E/PO activities embedded into each mission, as well as opportunities for direct funding and participation for space scientists awarded research grants through OSS and for special independent E/PO program opportunities. This paper will emphasize the funding and participation opportunities available to the individual research scientist, outside of flight project missions.

Recognition has recently been given to the need for space scientists to have a variety of ways to participate in E/PO activities, both in the depth (level of involvement) and the type of activity (review of material, museum exhibit development, classroom visits, etc.).

This paper focuses on the specific NASA OSS opportunities for funding as well as volunteer activities for the individual space science researcher or a group of researchers at a single institution. In particular, we will discuss the NASA IDEAS program (Initiative to Develop Education Through Astronomy and Space Science) and the recently revised NASA OSS NRA E/PO funding process and the associated menu of participation opportunities.

Our emphasis here will be on immediate ways to participate and propose for funding for these programs. We will present guidelines for the types of programs generally supported through these funding sources, summarize the administrative requirements for proposing and participating (including deadlines), and introduce a menu of opportunities for researchers who wish to participate through existing E/PO programs.