

ISSI/ISSI-BJ Joint Call for Proposals 2023 for International Teams in Space and Earth Sciences

This call is jointly released by ISSI (International Space Science Institute) in Bern and ISSI-Beijing (ISSI-BJ). ISSI & ISSI-BJ organise the same range of activities and share the same Science Committee. Applicants should indicate clearly whether they are applying for ISSI, ISSI-BJ, or a joint ISSI/ISSI-BJ project. Note that as of this year ISSI is implementing an anonymous peer-review of the science justification section of Team proposals. ISSI expects applicants to fully anonymise their proposals according to [our guidelines](#), esp. when updating resubmissions.

1. Purpose

ISSI and ISSI-BJ invite scientists to submit proposals for International Team projects. International Teams are small groups of scientists involved in space science research, working together on data analysis, theory and models. This call is open to all scientists, regardless of nationality or institutional affiliation, who are actively involved in any of the following research fields:

1. Space Sciences: Astrobiology, Astrophysics and Cosmology, Fundamental Physics in Space, Magnetospheric and Space Plasma Physics, Planetary Sciences, Solar and Heliospheric Physics, and Solar-Terrestrial Sciences.
2. Earth Sciences using space data. This includes understanding and modelling Earth system processes, as well as climate change projections.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to visit the ISSI and/or ISSI-BJ websites (www.issibern.ch, www.issibj.ac.cn) prior to submitting their proposal.

2. Modus Operandi

International Teams typically consist of 8-12 members from different institutions, to visit ISSI and/or ISSI-BJ for two (maximum three) one-week meetings. The first Team meeting should preferably be organized no more than 6 months after approval of the proposal, and the overall project duration not exceed a period of 2 years.

Team members must commit to contributing to the project, and Team leaders shall secure this commitment prior to proposal submission. Team members are expected to attend all meetings in person, but virtual participation can be arranged in exceptional circumstances. Team leaders are responsible for overseeing Team activities throughout the project, and they must liaise with ISSI and/or ISSI-BJ for all aspects related to coordination and planning.

International Team activities should lead to peer-reviewed publications. All publications must include an appropriate acknowledgement of ISSI and/or ISSI-BJ for support received. Teams are required to maintain a website on the ISSI server (on an external server in the case of ISSI-BJ), which provides general information on the project and Team, as well as an up-to-date list of Team publications.

3. Composition of an Eligible International Team

An International Team consists of 8–12 scientists, representing a minimum of 4 different countries, and among these at least one ESA member state. Funding is available for up to 24 person-weeks, e.g. 8 members for a maximum of 3 one-week meetings, or 12 members for 2 one-week meetings. Teams should aim to achieve a good gender balance and a good mix of seniority levels. Inter-disciplinary expertise is strongly encouraged.

4. Selection Criteria

The main requirements for the acceptance of International Team proposals will be (i) the significance of the research proposed; (ii) the ability of Team members to successfully complete the project within 2 years' time; the diversity of Team members in terms of multi-disciplinary expertise, geographic distribution, career stage, and gender balance; and (iii) the added value of ISSI and/or ISSI-BJ, and the appropriate use of ISSI/ISSI-BJ resources.

The ISSI Science Committee will assess Team proposals via a 2-stage process, of which the first involves an anonymous review of the underlying science case. When evaluating proposals, the Science Committee will assess to what extent the following criteria are met:

Science:

- **Scientific impact** – *Is this an important question in the field? Will the outcome of the project address long-standing questions or influence the future direction of the field in a multi-disciplinary context? Will the project result in an incremental improvement to existing work, or could it lead to a step change in the relevant field?*
- **Timeliness** – *Is there a good reason for doing this work now? (E.g. new data coming from a space mission, new developments in a rapidly evolving field.)*
- **Innovation** – *Does the International Team address a novel topic, or propose to synthesise existing knowledge in a new way, e.g. through multi-disciplinary expertise? Will it develop a new approach?*
- **Feasibility** – *Is a work plan included and can all associated tasks be completed in the time available?*
- **Scientific legacy** – *Will the project develop and provide to the community, e.g., techniques, codes, and datasets with long-lasting impact? Is there any overlap with currently active teams (see www.issibern.ch/program/teams.html)?*
- **Science related to space data** – *Are Team activities aligned with the ISSI remit of supporting (a) research that directly uses existing space data, and/or (b) theory with direct application to existing data? Projects involving both ground- and space-based data are also eligible for support.*

Team & ISSI Resources:

- **Resources requested** – *Are the demands on ISSI and/or ISSI-BJ realistic and compatible with the guidelines in this proposal call?*
- **Geographic diversity** – *Do the International Team members come from a minimum of 4 different countries, and include Team members from at least one ESA member state?*
- **Community representation** – *Is Team membership balanced, or is it at least representative of the relevant community, in terms of gender, minorities/underrepresented groups, career stage, etc. ...*
- **Added value of ISSI** – *What are the unique attributes of ISSI and/or ISSI-BJ that enable the International Team to achieve their science goals?*
- **Competence** – *Does the International Team combine sufficient subject-specific expertise, and if relevant multi-disciplinary expertise, to carry out the proposed research effectively?*
- **Range of expertise** – *Does the International Team combine the right breadth of skills and knowledge to address the main science questions and implement the work plan? Do the Team members have a sufficiently broad knowledge and expertise to be able to have a productive discussion?*
- **Team member roles & responsibilities** – *Is the contribution of each Team member outlined clearly in the proposal? Have all Team members committed to attending Team meetings?*

5. Content of the Proposal

Applicants are expected to anonymize the science justification component of their proposals in preparation for the blind review by the ISSI Science Committee. Guidelines and examples to help with this are provided [here](#).

The science justification should include (“Part A”; max. 4 sides=2 pages of A4 paper):

- Concise abstract summarizing all key aspects of the proposal
- Scientific rationale
- Project workplan incl. number, duration and timing of the meetings planned
- List of the expected outputs e.g., scientific papers, reviews, books, software, etc.
- Financial support requested from ISSI and/or ISSI-BJ (see Section 6)
- Facilities required (only for special requests, see Section 6)

Applicants should also prepare (“Part B”; length not to exceed 2 sides=1 page of A4 paper):

- Statement re. the added value of ISSI/ISSI-BJ for achieving the science goals of the Team
- List of confirmed Team members, including their affiliations and e-mail addresses, plus a phone number for the Team leader(s)
- Description of the expertise of each Team member and their contribution to the project

To this part B of the proposal, applicants should then append (i) a 2-page CV for the Team leader(s) and (ii) a 1-page CV for all further Team members, using [this template CV](#).

The proposal must be submitted by the International Team leader(s) via the [on-line submission interface](#). As part of the submission process, applicants will be asked to complete a separate form with some basic information re. the geographical distribution, career stage distribution and gender balance for their Team.

6. ISSI/ISSI-BJ support

Financial support:

ISSI or ISSI-BJ will support living expenses through a per diem and accommodation for the 8-12 *core* members of the International Team, for the duration of Team meetings in Bern and/or Beijing.

Once the proposal is approved, *early-career researchers* (ECR, max. +2 years after the PhD) may be included in the International Team. As a guideline, ISSI support for ECR Team members is expected to constitute of order 20% of the person-weeks allocated to the International Team. ECS are nominated after approval of the proposal and receive financial support equivalent to that of core members, i.e. accommodation and a per diem.

ISSI will cover travel expenses for (one of) the Team leader(s). Team leaders may renounce their right to the travel reimbursement in favour of another member of their Team.

Meeting infrastructure and logistic support:

ISSI and ISSI-BJ provide: meeting rooms including professional *audio and video systems for hybrid meetings* using, e.g., Zoom/Skype; white boards; Wi-Fi internet access; printers and spare computers; electrical plug adaptors; and the ISSI/ISSI-BJ coffee machine. ISSI Teams can make use of the ISSI [On-Line Collaboration Apps](#) throughout the duration of their project.

Team members with childcare needs, reduced mobility or other special needs can contact ISSI and ISSI-BJ to discuss which arrangements might be made during meetings.

Core membership management:

Any change to the core membership should be avoided. In the exceptional case where replacing a core member is justified, Team leaders must send ISSI/ISSI-BJ a CV of the new candidate and a short description of their anticipated contribution to the Team.

Additional experts invited by the team leader are expected to contribute to the work of the team at no cost to ISSI/ISSI-BJ.

International Team publications:

As a rule, ISSI/ISSI-BJ does not fund page charges for journal papers submitted by International Teams. However, ISSI and ISSI-BJ require that papers published as a result of Team activities include an acknowledgement of ISSI's and/or ISSI-BJ's support.

7. Duties of the International Team Leader

After selection, the successful International Team leader shall:

- Finalise the schedule of team meetings in collaboration with ISSI or ISSI-BJ
- Establish the list of attendees ahead of each meeting so that appropriate hotel block bookings can be made, and facilities allocated at ISSI or ISSI-BJ

- Set up and maintain a website on the ISSI server, and add content describing the aims of the project, the membership of the International Team and its schedule of activities
- Acknowledge ISSI/ISSI-BJ support in papers published in the framework of the project
- Provide to ISSI/ISSI-BJ, on an annual basis, the list of papers (which shall include an acknowledgement to ISSI and/or ISSI-BJ) published in the framework of the project. This list will be part of ISSI and/or ISSI-BJ's annual report and is used to provide metrics to the institutional partners and funding agencies
- Commit to contributing to ISSI and/or ISSI-BJ's outreach activities as related to the outcomes of the International Team's activities
- After completion of Team activities, compile a final report describing the achievements of the project (see Section 8)

8. Final Report

ISSI/ISSI-BJ (and their institutional partners and funding agencies) consider the final report to be of major importance for assessing the quality and potential impact of International Team results. It constitutes a key element in the evaluation of the standard of ISSI and ISSI-BJ's performance and scientific output.

The report should be brief (one to two pages) and highlight the main scientific accomplishments. It should include a list of published articles with acknowledgement to ISSI and/or ISSI-BJ. The report should be addressed to non-specialists.

The final report should be sent to ISSI and/or ISSI-BJ no later than 3 months after completion of the International Team's activities, and should be uploaded to the International Team's website.

9. Schedule and Decision

- **January 16, 2023:** Release of proposal call
- **March 16, 2023: Proposal submission deadline**
Proposals must be submitted via the on-line submission form
<http://www.issibern.ch/submitproposal/>
Please submit your proposal by midnight in your local time zone.
- **End of May 2023:** Announcement of the outcome of the proposal review process

For further information and questions please contact:

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