



January 07, 2015

Dr Matt Mountain, Director
Space Telescope Science Institute
3700 San Martin Drive
Baltimore, MD 21218

Re: JSTAC recommendations on parallel observations with JWST

Dear Director Mountain:

Parallel observations on Hubble have demonstrated their scientific value to the Hubble mission. They have enhanced the immediate scientific productivity as well as enhancing the scientific output from archival research. It has long been recognized that similar gains would accrue to JWST's scientific productivity from the implementation of parallel modes of operation of the instruments.

The JSTAC has for some time expressed its interest in, and support for, the implementation of parallel capabilities for JWST. The most extensive discussion occurred at a meeting earlier this year when the JSTAC received its most detailed presentation to date covering parallel modes and their impact. Since STScI was still developing its proposal to the JWST Project, the JSTAC decided to wait before submitting a formal recommendation to the Director. The recent submission to the JWST Project of a proposal from STScI to implement some of the most scientifically-productive capabilities led to a further discussion in the JSTAC in its most recent meeting. The JSTAC decided that it was time to express a recommendation regarding Parallel observations.

JSTAC recommendation regarding parallel observations:

The JSTAC recommends implementation of parallel observing capability on JWST for Cycle 1 for GOs and GTOs, including capabilities for both pure parallel and coordinated parallel modes.

The JSTAC recognizes:

- i) that the decision to implement parallel observing capabilities will depend on the cost and impact on other required deliverables, and on available funding;
- ii) that not all combinations of instruments and modes may be practical initially given technical constraints and/or cost constraints.

Implementing parallel observations on JWST raises a number of policy issues including the appropriate criteria for justifying coordinated observations, constraints for pure parallel programs and the appropriate proprietary/exclusive access period for those datasets. The original Announcement of Opportunity AO 01-OSS-05 from 2001 for the Next Generation Space

Telescope (NGST) Flight Investigations did not establish guidelines for parallel observations. Consideration should be given to defining the most appropriate implementation process based on past experience with NASA's Great Observatories and with JWST's operational and observational characteristics. The JSTAC plans to discuss these issues further at its next meeting.

The JSTAC considered the submission of the proposal for development of parallel observing for JWST to be an important step. Parallel observing capabilities would provide a substantial gain in the scientific productivity of JWST. The JSTAC is happy to iterate further with STScI regarding parallel observations at future meetings.

Sincerely yours, on behalf of the Committee,



Garth Illingworth
Chair, JSTAC

JSTAC members:

Roberto Abraham	University of Toronto
Neta Bahcall	Princeton University
Stefi Baum	Rochester Institute of Technology
Roger Brissenden	Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory
Timothy Heckman	Johns Hopkins University
Malcolm Longair	Cavendish Laboratory, University of Cambridge
Christopher McKee	University of California, Berkeley
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Joseph Rothenberg	JHR Consulting
Sara Seager	Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Lisa Storrie-Lombardi	Spitzer Science Center, Caltech
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JSTAC Ex-officio observers from the Agencies:

(whose contributions to this letter were limited to factual input)

Hashima Hasan	NASA HQ
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