

The NASA Lunar Science Institute, International Efforts

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Abstract

The NASA Lunar Science Institute (NLSI) has been aggressively pursuing international partnerships since it was founded, in order to both leverage the science being done by its domestic member institutions as well as to help lunar science become a greater global endeavour. The international partners of NLSI have pursued a broad program of lunar science stimulated by scientific partnerships enabled by the NLSI community. Furthermore, regional partnerships have been formed such as the new pan-European lunar science consortium, which promises both new scientific approaches and mission concepts.

1. Introduction

Founded in April 2008, the NASA Lunar Science Institute (NLSI) is a virtual institute that connects domestic and international teams through commercial and academic web-based tools into a cohesive institute “without walls.” NLSI has a program of partnerships with international lunar science organizations to provide collaborative research opportunities for all members of the international science community.

International partner membership requires long-term commitment from both the partner and the NLSI, together with tangible and specific plans for scientific interaction that will produce results of mutual benefit to both the NLSI U.S. Teams and the international partner. Although the focus of this program is research in lunar science, it also includes collaborative activities that address any of the objectives defined in the NLSI Mission Statement. It is preferred that organizations proposing partnership represent a broad range of academic or research groups, able to represent the lunar science activity within a country.

International partners are invited to participate in all aspects of the Institute’s activities and programs, on a basis of no exchange of funds. Through these activities, NLSI researchers and international partners participate in sharing ideas, information, and

data arising from their respective research efforts, and contribute to the training of young scientists.

Non-U.S. lunar science organizations can propose to become either Associate or Affiliate Members of the NLSI. **Affiliate:** with non-government institutions; the majority of agreements will be Affiliate.

Associate: a government-to-government agreement; this includes space agencies.

Countries with whom the NLSI have partnerships with as of the submission of this abstract are Canada, South Korea, the United Kingdom, Saudi Arabia, Israel, The Netherlands, and Germany.

1.1 Mission Statement

The NLSI fosters collaborations within and among competitively selected domestic teams, the broader lunar science community, and multiple international partners in order to:

- I. Conduct collaborative, cross-disciplinary research in all areas of lunar science and enhance innovative communication between geographically disparate researchers through the use of information technology,
- II. Provide scientific and technical perspectives to NASA on its lunar research programs and missions,
- III. Support the broader lunar science community through in-person conferences, virtual seminars, and community-driven focus groups,
- IV. Encourage Education and Public Outreach (EPO) through formal education content development, informal student programs and participatory public events,
- V. Train the next generation of lunar scientists with research opportunities at the undergraduate, graduate, and post doctoral level while supporting early career scientists with conferences focused on their needs.

2. Future Plans for Engagement

Both space-faring nations and non-traditional partners are sought for NLSI partnership to further the development of lunar science around the world as well as provide benefits to the public through outreach and education.

International partnership requires a long-term commitment from both the partner and the NLSI, tangible and specific plans for scientific interaction that will produce results of mutual benefit, and a broad range of research groups that are able to represent the lunar science activity within a country.

3. Summary and Conclusions

NLSI is continuously developing its international partnership program and is actively supporting a new pan-European lunar science consortium. Parties interested in partnering with the NLSI are encouraged to contact the authors of this abstract.