

September 2nd, 2011

Information Letter to the Community

From

Integrated Ocean Drilling Program Management International (IODP-MI)

Proposal Submissions and Science Planning for the Remaining part of IODP and for the Start of the New Drilling Program post 2013

Dear IODP Community Member:

IODP-MI recently invited submission of drilling proposals (EOS August 16; www.iodp.org) for the October 1st 2011 proposal submission deadline. However, following an August 19 letter from the NSF to the entire community, referring to a new program structure, and a Science Advisory Structure (SAS) specifically serving JOIDES Resolution (JR), community members have asked questions about this deadline, and about the role of the new SAS in science planning beyond the current program (new SAS: www.iodp.org/new-program). In this communication we clarify the situation regarding these matters.

It is IODP-MI's contractual obligation to maintain science planning seamlessly from the current IODP to the International Ocean Discovery Program expected to replace IODP by October 1, 2013. Despite the ongoing discussions for an optimum program structure triggered by the letter from NSF, the recently completed New Science Plan (www.iodp.org/Science-Plan-for-2013-2023) and the new SAS (www.iodp.org/new-program) are the entities that will direct the planning for the future. This will take place under the management of IODP-MI representing the international community by virtue of its 31 member institutions (www.iodp.org/members-and-representatives), and as per contract with NSF (in consultation with MEXT) running to end of IODP.

The important information for you as a community member therefore is that the proposal submission deadline, proposal guideline, and SAS review process will be implemented as planned, and are documented at www.iodp.org/drilling-proposals. To emphasize, there will be no change within the current program, and any new program will need build on science planning conducted during the last phase of the previous program. This was also the case during the ODP to IODP transition. Furthermore, is not anticipated that the new program will make any principal changes to the SAS structure and process as the new SAS to start October 1st 2011 was prepared for the new program.

A similarly important, if not even more important, message from IODP-MI to the community is that the letter from NSF and subsequent position letters from MEXT and EMA (all posted at www.iodp.org/weblinks/News-Highlights-HOME-PAGE/Messages-to-IODP-

[Community/](#)), plus bilateral communication between IODP-MI and these funding agencies suggests that all three platform providing agencies strongly favor a new program that will honor and promote the following unique values of scientific ocean drilling:

- 1) A coordinated international scientific community addressing the New Science Plan (NSP)
- 2) A single framework for science evaluation and planning
- 3) A program framework that offers the three existing platforms to all scientists and projects that effectively will address and advance the New Science Plan

The optimal program structure that effectively can embrace these fundamental principles, and at the same time meet the tight fiscal condition that the three platform providers face is yet to be defined.

One important aspect of the fiscal constraints is that transit times need be minimized (JR in particular). Current ship scheduling has the JR expected to be in the Western Pacific to Indian Ocean region by end of IODP. Proposals for JR drilling that can be readied for 2014-15 drilling in these areas are therefore likely to have a scheduling advantage. Post 2015 the JR track will be directed by proposal pressure as it exists by 2014.

On behalf of the program, IODP-MI therefore looks forward to receive your drilling proposal and your continued support of scientific ocean drilling. Your support is more important than ever. Please refer to the www.iodp.org/active-proposals for proposal statistics that illustrate the distribution of proposals according to ocean basins and geographic distribution.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Hans Christian Larsen". The script is cursive and fluid, with the first name "Hans" being the most prominent.

Hans Christian Larsen

Vice President, IODP-MI