



NFOLD
NETWORK FOR LIFE DETECTION

The Network for Life Detection

is a NASA Astrobiology RCN dedicated to advancing the science and technology required to search for evidence of life beyond Earth

Our goal is to build a cohesive life detection community whose research and expertise becomes integral to all stages of astrobiology-themed interplanetary and exoplanet mission activity, from inception to operations.

NfoLD is . . .

- An open membership community of 153 people spanning 12 nations and 19 time zones (and counting...).
- A blend of scientists and technologists who span a broad range of disciplines. *We aspire to expand this breadth and realize the potential synergy within it.*
- A means of putting the weight of an entire community behind good ideas, wherever they may originate.
- An organization whose specific objectives and activities will be determined primarily by its still-growing membership.

NfoLD Core Goals

Advance Life Detection Strategy and Capability

Identify priorities for, and carry out, research and technology development that informs strategies and enhances capabilities for detecting evidence of life beyond Earth.

Catalyze Collaboration

Identify research and technology objectives that may be best or only achieved through interdisciplinary collaborations; create an environment and develop activities that promote and enable new collaborations.

NfoLD Core Goals (cont'd)

Support NASA Programs and Missions

In keeping with the recommendations of the 2018 NASEM report on Astrobiology Strategy, improve the integration of life detection science and technology into all stages of planetary and astrophysical missions, from Decadal Survey and program planning to mission science definition, implementation, and interpretation.

Foster Community Development

Increase scientific and demographic diversity in the life detection community, engage international participation, and facilitate the involvement of students and early career researchers in all aspects of NfoLD activities.

Some Early Priorities & Initiatives

Open the doors to the broader community and begin establishing connectivity among our members

Impact the planetary sciences decadal survey

Coordinate community involvement in the Life Detection Forum project

Establish a “Grayness of Life” workshop series

Develop a resource sharing program (expertise, samples, analytical capability)

Explore concepts for ‘life detection standards’ and associated WG

Organizational Structure

Astrobiology Program Representatives (Lindsay Hays)

RCN Co-Leads (Sarah Johnson, Britney Schmidt, Tori Hoehler)

Steering Committee (PI's of life detection-themed NASA R&A Awards)

Responsible for overall strategic direction and oversight of network activities.

Structure is common to all RCN's.

Early Career and "Action" Groups

A way to:

- source ideas and distribute activity across the full network
- ensure parallel progress on all NfoLD goals

“Action Groups”

- Work independently to develop and implement initiatives that contribute to the NfoLD goals of (1) catalyzing collaboration (“Catalyze”), (2) impacting NASA programs and missions (“Impact”), (3) fostering community development (“Engage”). Develop and track metrics for success of these initiatives and periodically apprise Steering Committee of activities and progress.
- Must include at least one steering committee member and one early career council member but can be led or participated in by any NfoLD member or affiliate. Individuals requesting affiliate membership are asked to elect at least one action group to which they will contribute.

Early Career

Graham Lau
Joey Pasterski

“Catalyze”

Heather Graham
Alexandra Pontefract

“Engage”

Sanjoy Som
Wes Swingley

“Impact”

Laurie Barge
Britney Schmidt

Relationship to the AGs

NfoLD is thematically cross-cutting (OPAG, MEPAG, ExoPAG; others?), with associated potential for fostering connectivity among the AGs

OPAG: Potential to tap expertise beyond the traditional planetary sciences community

NfoLD: Potential for clearer understanding of, and better connectivity to, the 'mission world'

Multiple NfoLD initiatives envisioned in which OPAG expertise and representation would be valuable

Website (membership): www.nfold.org

General questions: contact.nfold@gmail.com

Decadal/white papers: <https://tinyurl.com/u3udp72>

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Please consider joining NfoLD!