

Opportunity Title: Modeling of Planetary Thermospheres and Exospheres

Opportunity Reference Code: 0247-NPP-MAR26-GSFC-PlanetSci

Organization National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)

Reference Code 0247-NPP-MAR26-GSFC-PlanetSci

How to Apply All applications must be submitted in [Zintellect](#)

Please visit the NASA Postdoctoral Program website for application instructions and requirements: [How to Apply | NASA Postdoctoral Program \(oua.org\)](#).

A complete application to the NASA Postdoctoral Program includes:

1. Research proposal
2. Three letters of recommendation
3. Official doctoral transcript documents

Application Deadline 3/1/2026 6:00:59 PM Eastern Time Zone

Description About the [NASA Postdoctoral Program](#)

The [NASA Postdoctoral Program \(NPP\)](#) offers unique research opportunities to highly-talented scientists to engage in ongoing NASA research projects at a NASA Center, NASA Headquarters, or at a NASA-affiliated research institute. These one- to three-year fellowships are competitive and are designed to advance NASA's missions in space science, Earth science, aeronautics, space operations, exploration systems, and astrobiology.

Description:

The thermal structure and atmospheric escape within the transition region of planetary thermospheres and exospheres are being modeled for bodies such as Titan, Callisto, Mars, Pluto and early Moon. Theoretical models that employ principles of rarefied gas dynamics using techniques such as the Direct Simulation Monte Carlo DSMC method are used to simulate the atmospheres to compare with data of the upper atmosphere from missions such as MAVEN, Cassini, Clipper and New Horizons. Analyses of current mission data will be used to provide a basis for examining the early atmospheres such as the Moon's early volcanic atmosphere. An existing DSMC model will be updated to carry out multi-dimensional studies and to include photochemistry in the rarefied region of atmospheres. The DSMC model will be coupled with hydrodynamic, diffusion or photochemical models to consistently model the effect of non-equilibrium conditions and escape occurring in the transition region of the broader atmosphere.

Location:

Goddard Space Flight Center
Greenbelt, Maryland



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Field of Science: Planetary Science

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Applications with citizens from Designated Countries will not be accepted at this time, unless they are Legal Permanent Residents of the United States. A complete list of Designated Countries can be found at: <https://www.nasa.gov/oiiir/export-control>.

Eligibility is currently open to:

- U.S. Citizens;
- U.S. Lawful Permanent Residents (LPR);
- Foreign Nationals eligible for an Exchange Visitor J-1 visa status; and,
- Applicants for LPR, asylees, or refugees in the U.S. at the time of application with 1) a valid EAD card and 2) I-485 or I-589 forms in pending status

Questions about this opportunity? Please email npp@orau.org

Point of Contact [Mikeala](#)

Eligibility Requirements • **Degree:** Doctoral Degree.