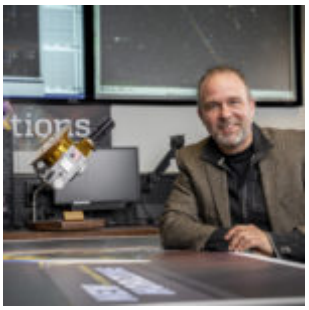
COSPAR

Panel on Interstellar Research (PIR)

15 April 2026

Chair:

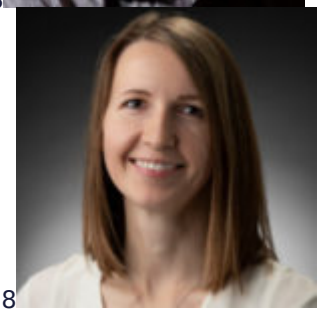


Pontus Brandt (USA), 2024 – 2028

Vice-Chairs:



Stas Barabash (Sweden), 2024 – 2028



Elena Provornikova (USA), 2024 – 2028

Intercommission/Panel/Task Group Liaisons:

Panel on Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility (PIDEA): Michael V. Paul (USA), 2022 – 2026

Terms of Reference:

The objective of the COSPAR Panel on Interstellar Research (PIR) is to draw upon international expertise in heliospheric research to formulate the scientific hypotheses and required instrumentation for a near-term,

dedicated, interstellar precursor mission. Such an Interstellar Probe has been under discussion for almost half a century. In order to understand the nature of our home in space, we must understand the nature of the heliospheric boundary region, and the interactions between the solar wind and the local interstellar medium. With the 40-year old Voyagers nearing the end of their operational lifetimes as their power supplies continue to decay, further progress requires a new initiative. Such a mission should extend our reach past the Voyagers to at least 200 AU from the Sun with modern instrumentation, optimized to build upon our current knowledge base.

The PIR will draw upon recent and ongoing studies of the requisite science and miniaturized instrumentation technologies to lead to an international consensus on approach and implementation of such a near-term mission from the Earth in our scientific journey toward the stars.

For additional information please visit the PIR website at: **http://interstellarprobe.jhuapl.edu/COSPAR/**

* (after officer term) = second and final term in the office indicated