COSPAR

Panel on Exploration (PEX)

15 April 2026

Chair:

Michel Blanc (France), 2023 – 2027

Vice-Chairs:

Bernard Foing (ESA/ESTEC), 2024 – 2028*
Chris McKay (USA), 2022 – 2026
Frances Westall (France), 2022 – 2026

Intercommission/Panel/Task Group/Committee Liaisons:

SC B: Heather Smith (USA), 2022 – 2026 (heather.d.smith – at – nasa.gov)
SC E: Brigitte Schmieder (France), 2025 – 2029
SC F: Guenther Reitz (Germany), 2018 – 2024*
PPP: TBD
PCB: Frances Westall (France), 2022 – 2026
PIDEA: Bernard Foing (Netherlands), 2022 – 2026
CIR: Hélène Boithias (Airbus), 2023 – 2027

Terms of Reference:

The objective of the COSPAR Panel on Exploration (PEX) is to provide independent scientific advice to support the development of exploration programs and to safeguard present and potential scientific assets of solar system objects, and to understand the consequences of proposed and ongoing research, exploration, and utilization activities. This advice will be drawn from expertise provided via the contacts maintained by COSPAR's various bodies with the international community and scientific entities with the aim of representing a consensus view of the international scientific community in order to provide guidance for future exploration activity and cooperative efforts.

PEX will function by providing its advice and analyses to the COSPAR Bureau and Council, as well as to concerned governmental and space agencies, private entities, and the public. PEX will work to promote science objectives by incorporating the multitude of relevant activities within COSPAR's own scientific

structure, as well as scientific advice from national scientific institutions and international scientific unions including, where appropriate, recommendations from groups such as the International Lunar Exploration Working Group (ILEWG) and the International Mars Exploration Working Group (IMEWG).

Ex-officio members will include the chairs or representatives of interested COSPAR Scientific Commissions and Panels and a delegate member of ILEWG. The Panel may also call on experts in the various other domains relevant to the exploration and use of outer space.

PEX report: **Toward a Global Space Exploration Program: A Stepping Stone Approach**

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