

# APRIL



EARTH MONTH 2026  
NEWSLETTER

## Looking Back on Earth

A View of Earth from Orion during the Artemis II Mission



Image Credit: NASA - Artemis II

## 1. Message from Leadership

Congratulations Artemis II crew! Congratulations NASA and congratulations BPS! Our community of space science & exploration is a small one. Thus, we all rise together with each mission success.

This month, the [Artemis II mission](#) took humanity further from Earth than ever before (over 250,000 miles from home) and it brought humanity closer to the Moon than we've been in more than 50 years.



The groundbreaking success of Artemis II also provided an opportunity to demonstrate groundbreaking exploration science. Even with all the demands on crew and with barely a kilogram to spare on the manifest, NASA's Biological and Physical Sciences Division was able to include the [AVATAR](#) (A Virtual Astronaut Tissue Analog Response) experiment onboard—a set of individualized tissue chips with bone marrow models from blood drawn from the crew.

It has been exciting (and a bit exhilarating at times) to watch and follow the Artemis crew along on their journey; but it has also been a great boost to exploration science, for so many to have seen the AVATAR hardware, floating gently alongside the crew in the Orion capsule, as it arced around Moon and headed for home.

The success of Artemis II truly marks the beginning of a new era of human exploration into deep space; and we are excited to see exploration science taking part on center stage, with AVATAR. It truly shows how gravitational and space research can be an important part of every mission.

\* Image Credit: NASA/Joel Kowsky

## 2. Conference Planning

**Abstract Reviewer Call:** The call for proposals and proposal reviewers for the 2026 Annual Meeting is now open! Visit [here](#) for full details on how to volunteer to serve as a proposal reviewer.

**Conference Registration:** Early-bird registration and hotel block for the 2026 Annual Meeting will open on May 15th. Make sure to visit the [2026 ASGSR Conference page](#) for the latest details.



**Abstract Submissions:** Abstract submissions are now open for the 2026 ASGSR Annual Conference, taking place December 2–5, 2026 at the Crystal Gateway Marriott in Crystal City, Virginia. We invite members of the biological and physical space sciences community to submit their latest research and contribute to an engaging program of scientific exchange and collaboration.

The abstract submission deadline is May 31, 2026 at 11:59 PM EDT, and no edits will be permitted after the submission deadline. Student travel awards are available for undergraduate and graduate students to support participation, including travel, lodging, and registration costs. The call for Middle and High School abstracts will open on July 1, 2026. Notification of abstract acceptance and travel award decisions will be sent no earlier than August 1, 2026.

Complete submission guidelines, formatting instructions, and additional details are available on the ASGSR website [here](#).



### 3. News and Special Announcements

**AIP Affiliate Membership:** We are pleased to announce that ASGSR recently joined the American Institute of Physics (AIP) as an Affiliate Member. AIP brings together over 65 societies to collectively and more effectively pursue our common missions to

advance science and support the well-being of the physical science enterprise. ASGSR participated in the AIP Annual Forum on March 25, 2026 in Washington, DC, and looks forward to future collaborations between member societies. Learn more about AIP [here](#) and be on the lookout for upcoming opportunities to get involved.



**ASGSR Membership Renewal:** Early-bird membership renewal for 2026-2027 is open in [X-CD](#). Renew your existing membership or purchase a new membership before July 1, 2026 to lock in last year's rates. As a reminder, all memberships expire annually on June 30 and may be renewed up to 90 days in advance. Instructions on how to access X-CD are available [here](#).

### 4. Advocacy for Our Community

**FY27 Budget and Federal Advocacy Update:** Like many of you, we are actively monitoring the FY27 budget situation and are working in collaboration with many of our peer societies to advocate for healthy funding for NASA's Science Mission Directorate, and the Biological and Physical Sciences Division, in particular. Over the next several weeks, the ASGSR Executive Committee, Board, and members will have multiple opportunities to engage with lawmakers and their staff to discuss the importance of our research in meeting national needs.

**ASGSR Governing Board Spring Meeting:** ASGSR's Governing Board will hold its annual Spring Meeting in Washington, DC the week of May 18. As part of the program, we will be meeting with key Congressional stakeholders to talk about the importance of our research and how it directly enables commercial activity in low Earth orbit and human exploration of the Moon and Mars.



**Capitol Hill Science Showcase:** On April 21, Dr. Jamie Foster and Dr. Alvaro Romero-Calvo participated in a NASA Science Showcase on Capitol Hill. This event, organized by the Association of Public and Land Grant Universities and the Planetary Society, with support from several science societies, including ASGSR, highlighted some of the cutting-edge NASA-funded scientific research taking place at more than 20 institutions across the country. Researchers interacted with Congressional staff from dozens of offices to share their work and its relevance to future missions.



Please be on the lookout for more ways you can get involved in future events.

**Policy Response:** We have been actively tracking the NASA Ignition initiatives and are pleased to share that the ASGSR Executive Committee provided a response to the RFI on Commercial LEO Destinations. We also intend to submit responses to the Lunar Science and Technology Payloads RFI. These RFIs are opportunities for us to share the unique perspective and needs of the biological and physical science community to enable future research opportunities, in particular those highlighted by the 2023 Decadal Survey.

## 5. Upcoming Events and Calls to Action

**Abstract Reviewer Call:** The call for proposals and proposal reviewers for the 2026 Annual Meeting is now open! Visit [here](#) for full details on how to volunteer to serve as a proposal reviewer.



## 6. Student Corner

The next ASGSR Students Webinar is April 30th, 2026 at 6:00pm EDT. If you would like to join, you can RSVP [here](#).



**ASGSR Students Webinar Series**



**Dr. Sheyna Gifford**  
*Assistant Professor of Aerospace, Occupational,  
and Preventative Medicine  
Mayo Clinic*

**April 30, 2025  
6:00pm ET**



**ASGSR**  
Students

