feasible to consider the proposal. When this final stage is reached, the investigator must

be promptly notified.

4. If the intent is to hold proposals for possible later consideration, as discussed in subparagraph 3, the AO should specifically indicate this intent and the procedure to be used. Proposing investigators not desiring their proposals be held for later consideration should be given the opportunity to so indicate in their original submissions.

304 Guidelines for Announcement of Opportunity

- The preparation of the AO should be a multi-functional effort. It involves program and project management and usually involves other offices of NASA.
- 2. The AO should be tailored to the particular needs of the contemplated investigations and be complete in itself. Each AO will be identified as (Program Office) originated and numbered consecutively each calendar year, e.g., OA-1-95, OA-2-95; OLMSA-1-95; OSS-1-95; etc. The required format and detailed instructions regarding the contents of the AO are contained in Appendix A.
- 3. The General Instructions and Provisions (Appendix B) are necessary to accommodate the unique aspects of the AO process. Therefore, they must be appended to each
- At the time of issuance, copies of the AO must be furnished to the Office of Procurement and to the Office of General Counsel.
- 5. Proposers should be informed of significant departures from scheduled dates for activities related in the AO.

305 Announcement of Opportunity Soliciting Foreign Participation

Proposals for participation by individuals outside the U.S. should be submitted in the same format (excluding cost plans) as U.S. proposals; they should be typewritten and be in English; the proposals should be reviewed and endorsed by the appropriate foreign governmental agency. If letters of "Notice of Intent" are required, the AO should indicate that they be sent to NASA's International Affairs Division, Office of External Relations. Should a foreign proposal be selected, NASA will arrange with the sponsoring foreign agency for the proposed participation on a no-exchange-of-funds basis, in which NASA and the sponsoring agency will each bear the cost of discharging its respective responsibilities. Note that additional guidelines applicable to foreign proposers are contained in the Management Plan Section of Appendix C (see Section II) and must be included in any Guidelines for Proposal Preparation or otherwise furnished to foreign proposers.

306 Guidelines for Proposal Preparation

While not all of the guidelines outlined in Appendix C will be applicable in response to every AO, the investigator should be informed of the relevant information required. The proposal may be submitted on a form supplied by the Program Office. However, the proposal should be submitted in at least two sections: (1) Investigation and

Technical Section; and (2) Management and Cost Section as described in Appendix C.

Chapter 4—Evaluation of Proposals

400 General

The evaluation process assures consideration of the aspects of each proposal and constitutes progressive sorting of the proposals. A review resulting in a categorization is performed by using one of the methods or combination of the methods outlined in paragraph 402. The purpose of this initial review is to determine the scientific and/or technological merit of the proposals in the context of the AO objectives. Those proposals which are considered to have the greatest scientific or technological merit are then reviewed in detail for the engineering, management, and cost aspects, usually by the Project Office at the installation responsible for the project. Final reviews are performed by the Program Office and the Steering Committee and are aimed at developing a group of investigations which represent an integrated payload or a wellbalanced program of investigation which has the best possibility for meeting the announced objectives within programmatic constraints. The importance of considering the interrelationship of the several aspects of the proposals to be reviewed in the process and the need for carefully planning their treatment should not be overlooked. An evaluation plan has been found helpful to the evaluators, program management officials, and the selection official. The evaluation plan should be developed before issuance of the AO. It should cover the recommended staffing for any subcommittee or contractor support, review guidelines as well as the procedural flow and schedule of the evaluation. While not mandatory, such a plan should be considered for each AO. A fuller discussion of the evaluation and selection process is included in the following paragraphs.

401 Criteria for Evaluation

- 1. Each AO must indicate those criteria which the evaluators will apply in evaluating a proposal. The relative importance of each criterion must also be stated. This information will allow investigators to make informed judgments in formulating proposals that best meet the stated objectives.
- 2. Following is a list of general evaluation criteria appropriate for inclusion in most AOs:
- a. The scientific, applications, and/or technological merit of the investigation.
- b. The relevance of the proposed investigation to the AO's stated scientific, applications, and/or technological objectives.

c. The competence and experience of the investigator and any investigative team.

- d. Adequacy of whatever apparatus may be proposed with particular regard to its ability to supply the data needed for the investigation.
- e. The reputation and interest of the investigator's institution, as measured by the willingness of the institution to provide the support necessary to ensure that the investigation can be completed satisfactorily.

In addition to or in lieu of the criteria listed herein, additional criteria may be

- utilized. In all cases, the evaluation criteria must be germane to the accomplishment of the stated objectives.
- 3. Cost and management aspects will be considered in all selections.
- 4. Once the AO is issued, it is essential that the evaluation criteria be applied in a uniform manner. If it becomes apparent, before the date set for receipt of proposals, that the criteria or their relative importance should be changed, the AO will be amended, and all known recipients will be informed of the change and given an adequate opportunity to consider it in submission of their proposals. Evaluation criteria and/or their relative importance will not be changed after the date set for receipt of proposals.

402 Methods of Evaluation

Alternative methods are available to initiate the evaluation of proposals received in response to an AO. These are referred to as the Advisory Subcommittee Evaluation Process, the Contractor Evaluation Process, and the Government Evaluation Process. In all processes, a subcommittee of the appropriate Program Office Steering Committee will be formed to categorize the proposals. The various approaches, described in detail in paragraph 403. Following categorization, those proposals still in consideration will be processed to the selection official as prescribed hereafter.

403 Advisory Subcommittee Evaluation Process

- 1. Evaluation of scientific and/or technological merit of proposed investigations is the responsibility of an advisory subcommittee of the Steering Committee. It is of prime importance that the appointment of members to the subcommittee be weighed carefully as these individuals may exercise significant influence on the selection of investigations and hence achievement of program goals and objectives.
- 2. The subcommittee constitutes a peer group qualified to judge the scientific and technological aspects of all investigation proposals. One or more subcommittees may be established depending on the breadth of the technical or scientific disciplines inherent in the AO's objectives. Each subcommittee represents a discipline or grouping of closely related disciplines. To maximize the quality of the subcommittee evaluation and categorization, the following conditions of selection and appointment should be considered.
- a. The subcommittee normally should be established on an ad hoc basis.
- b. Qualifications and acknowledgment of the professional abilities of the subcommittee members are of primary importance. Institutional affiliations are not sufficient qualifications.
- c. The executive secretary of the subcommittee must be a full-time NASA employee.
- d. Subcommittee members should normally be appointed as early as possible and prior to receipt of proposals.
- e. Care must be taken to avoid conflicts of interest. These include financial interests, institutional affiliations, professional biases