

\*Europa Initiative workshops in Toulouse (Feb. 22- Feb. 24) and Madrid (Feb. 29-Mar. 01)

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NASA's Europa Multiple-flyby Mission is scheduled to launch in the 2020s to explore the habitability of Europa by passing over the moon 45 times while in orbit around Jupiter. Last year NASA officially invited ESA to provide a 250-kg class flight element (TBD) to contribute to the mission. This opens an opportunity for ESA to directly participate in the unique Europa exploration mission of the coming decades.

Three possible spacecraft elements that could constitute an ESA contribution to NASA have been identified. The spacecraft elements concerned are a free-flyer released from the main craft and staying in Jupiter's orbit, a small autonomous spacecraft injected into Europa orbit, and a penetrator of Europa's surface. The possibility of providing scientific investigations to the Europa Mission main spacecraft itself, or to the soft lander if developed by NASA in an increased Europa Mission scenario, are also considered.

The contributions from the different spacecraft option studies will be discussed with the Europa Initiative team and the larger scientific community in a series of initial Europa workshops :

Workshop #2 hosted by IRAP, Toulouse, France on 22-24 February 2016

<http://europa.sciencesconf.org/>

(presentations and discussions on the free-flyer, orbiter and soft lander options)

Workshop #3 hosted by CAB, Madrid, Spain on 29 February-01 March

<http://auditore.cab.inta-csic.es/europa-m5initiative/>

(summary of the five options and of their strengths and weaknesses in the light of 6 science themes covering all thematic areas of Europa science; synthesis and preparation of recommendations).

We invite the scientific community to contribute to these two workshops that will produce directions for the preparation of the Europa proposal to the ESA Cosmic Vision M5 call.