

## **AGeS<sup>3</sup> - Advancing Geochronology Science, Spaces, and Systems**

<https://agesgeochronology.org/>

### **2024 AGeS-TRaCE (TRaining and Community Engagement) Application Review Context Statement**

#### **Overview**

There are strong needs for training and community collaboration on numerous topics across the discipline of geochronology. AGeS-TRaCE is a new funding mechanism that seeks and supports community-driven ideas for addressing geochronology needs, such as capturing, formalizing, and disseminating not-yet-standardized geochronology knowledge, and providing opportunities for collaborative discussion on key geochronology challenges related to human-, technical-, or cyber-infrastructure. For example, much informal knowledge about technical aspects of instruments, data collection, and data reduction that is critical to ongoing developments in geochronology resides in a handful of individual investigator programs and is accessible only to those directly trained in those facilities. One purpose of AGeS-TRaCE is to increase the accessibility of such knowledge to promote important advances in the field.

#### **2024 review activity**

Sixteen complete proposals were submitted to the AGeS-TRaCE funding opportunity. The AGeS<sup>3</sup> Program was able to fund 14 proposals at an average cost of \$8,944 this year. Several proposal budgets were cut to meet program budget constraints and to account for review committee input. The committee was unanimous in its support of the rankings and awards.

This year's review committee consisted of 6 highly accomplished and experienced geoscientist reviewers, with AGeS CoPI Arrowsmith and PI Flowers providing oversight. Priority was given to projects that were perceived to have the strongest likelihood of addressing the greatest community needs. Projects with the most clearly defined plans for implementation and for making project outcomes accessible were also considered more competitive.

The committee members met virtually three times in October and November 2024. All proposals were reviewed by all committee members according to the review criteria (see below), which were available in advance to the proponents. As an initial guide, each proposal was scored by all unconflicted reviewers in advance of its discussion. The proposal was then discussed in terms of strengths and weaknesses, with all reviewers contributing comments. The lead reviewer for each proposal prepared a review summary draft. The AGeS PI and CoPI reviewed all of the proposal review summaries, and all unconflicted committee members were able to provide input on the summaries. The committee also discussed refinements for the next AGeS-TRaCE opportunity, which will be held in fall 2026.

#### **Conflicts of interest**

Conflicts of interest are taken seriously by AGeS. We identified conflicts of interest between the review committee and the proposal personnel as well as with the collaborating laboratories at the start of the review process. The committee members as well as Flowers and Arrowsmith

recused themselves where conflicts were identified. That meant not providing comments or review, and leaving the virtual meeting room before discussion began about that proposal.

## **Review Criteria**

Reviewers used a point system that weights the relative importance of each category and allows for direct comparison of multiple proposals.

Proposals were evaluated based on **(100 points total)**:

### **1) Community Need (20 points)**

How compelling is the community need and how well is it aligned with the AGeS-TRaCE program?

### **2) Potential to successfully accomplish the proposed project (20 points)**

General likelihood that the project will accomplish the proposed activities.

### **3) Potential for the proposed project to positively change and impact the geochronology community (25 points)**

General likelihood that the project will successfully address the community need articulated by the project. Considerations can include the scope of the project, the distinct contribution that the project would make relative to other activities underway in the community, incorporation of BAJEDI principles in the planned activities, and the overall project impact.

### **4) Proposed project outcomes and plan to make the products accessible (20 points)**

Overall strength and specificity of the plan to make the project, its outcomes, or its products accessible to the broader community. The degree to which the project outcomes conform to [FAIR \(Findability, Accessibility, Interoperability, Reusability\)](#) principles.

### **5) Coordination, timeline, and budget (15 points)**

Evaluation of the proposed timeline and budget, specifically considering the time required for project implementation and completion. This criterion relies partially on good coordination between the proponent and any partners, evaluated based on the proposal and any support letters. Matching funds are welcome, but are not a requirement.