

TESS Mission Publication Policy

January 29, 2025

1. Introduction

This document describes the policies and guidelines governing the publication of scientific and technical results from the NASA Transiting Exoplanet Survey Satellite (TESS). The TESS Mission Publication Policy is designed to promote the scientific and technical accuracy of TESS publications and to ensure that fair credit is given to the authors and other individuals who have contributed to the TESS mission. Even though the TESS data have no proprietary period, TESS Participants are expected to adhere to this publication policy.

This policy applies to publications using TESS data and products from the Prime Mission and subsequent Extended Missions, primarily to TESS Mission Papers and TESS Contributed Papers submitted to electronic archives and refereed journals. Communications that are not directly covered by this document, but should be generally consistent with it, are articles in non-refereed journals and conference proceedings; presentations to scientific conferences, workshops, seminars, and public meetings; and popular articles, books, circulars, telegrams, electronic announcements, press releases, and press conferences.

Responsibility for this document and oversight of TESS publications rest with the TESS Science Council (TSC). The TSC serves as an advisory body to the TESS PI and is composed of the TESS Scientific leadership (the PI, Deputy PI, Director of Science, and one or two additional members from the TESS Science Team).

2. Participants

“Participants” refers to the TESS Co-Is, TESS Collaborators, TESS Architects, TESS Contributors, and TESS Staff, including those at NASA Goddard Space Flight Center, NASA Ames Research Center, NASA Exoplanet Science Institute, and Space Telescope Science Institute. Members of the TESS Working Groups are also subject to this publication policy, in addition to any publication policies of the individual working groups to which they belong. Students and postdocs are also considered Participants if they are being advised by anyone from the above groups. Their compliance with this policy is the responsibility of the person with whom they are working. Anyone who has access to the Publications page on the TESS Wiki website is expected to comply with this document

TESS Co-Investigators and TESS Collaborators

The formal list of official TESS Co-Is and TESS Collaborators can be found on the TESS Wiki at <https://tessbook.mit.edu/display/TESS/Science+Team+Members>

TESS Architects

The TESS Architects are an important category of several individuals who played a lead role in making the TESS mission possible. The list of TESS Architects is defined by the TESS PI in consultation with the TSC. The current Architects are George R. Ricker, Roland Vanderspek, David W. Latham, Sara Seeger, Joshua N. Winn, and Jon M. Jenkins. To request Architect status, an individual should contact the TESS PI.

TESS Contributors

The TESS Contributors are individuals who are directly involved with detecting transiting planet candidates in the TESS data. This includes, but is not limited to, the NASA SPOC team, the MIT QLP team, and transiting planet candidate vetters¹.

The List of TESS Contributors is defined by the PI in consultation with the TESS Science Council. Nominations for persons to be added to the Contributor list may be submitted at any time to the PI, including self-nominations. The current list of TESS Contributors is maintained on the TESS Wiki Publications page: <https://tessbook.mit.edu/display/TESS/Publications>.

3. TESS Mission Papers

In consultation with the TESS Science Council, the PI will identify a set of Mission Papers that are fundamental to the success of the TESS Mission. A list of the published Mission Papers and those that are in preparation or planned is maintained on the TESS Wiki Publications page: <https://tessbook.mit.edu/display/TESS/Publications>.

Any TESS Co-Investigator or Collaborator may submit a proposal to the PI for the topic of a Mission Paper, including a list of key authors. The final author list on any paper designated as a Mission Paper must be approved by the PI in consultation with the TESS Science Council.

4. TESS Contributed papers

For papers that have not been identified as Mission Papers, anyone with access to the TESS Wiki who is working on a TESS related project and would like to lead a publication is encouraged to post on the Wiki Publications page a tentative abstract and list of core authors, in order to foster communication and coordination between people who have similar interests or have been working on related projects or even the same TESS Object(s) of Interest.

If the lead author is a member of a TESS Working Group, the submission should normally go through the Steering Committee or Lead of that Working Group. Members of groups such as

¹ Vetting is a step that takes place before TOIs are publically released.

POC and SPOC should go through their Group Lead. In ambiguous cases the submission can go to the TESS Science Council. As soon as a proposed Contributed Paper has received tentative approval as outlined in the previous paragraph, the Director of Science should be notified to provide approval to the lead author to post an abstract on the Publications page of the TESS Wiki, specifying the tentative title, list of key authors, summary of the main results, and optionally the status of data collection and analysis. This step should not be viewed as a claim of ownership, but rather an announcement of intention to everyone who has access to the TESS wiki. Posting an abstract may reveal additional Participants or teams who wish to contribute to the paper.

When there is a mature draft of a Contributed Paper, the lead author should follow the instructions on the TESS Publications Wiki page to add Contributing Authors to their authors list. As of February 2025, it is not required to invite the TESS Architects to coauthor Contributed Papers.

We encourage lead authors of contributed papers to adopt a grouping system for the order of coauthors. The first group of authors will normally consist of those who were heavily involved in the work and specific analysis described in the paper and in the writing of the paper. Subsequent groupings of authors can be organized by the lead author to recognize other categories of authors, such as Contributors and members of teams that supported the research.

5. Manuscript Submission

When a draft of a paper is ready for final review before submission or posting on the arXiv, the lead author should provide a copy to all the authors, either as an attachment to an email or via an accessible link. Recipients will then have two calendar weeks (but quicker response may be requested in special cases if approved by the TESS Science Council) to provide feedback to the lead author and confirm that they wish to be included as a co-author. A requirement for co-authorship is an email confirmation sent to the lead author with this statement (or equivalent):

“I have reviewed the manuscript entitled “Title”, and I agree with the methods and conclusions. I wish to be included as a co-author.”

The lead author is responsible for collecting these emails from all co-authors. If the lead author is not familiar with the contribution by someone requesting co-authorship, it is appropriate for the lead author to ask for clarification on this point. There must not be passive co-authors who have not sent such an email, and any such co-authors should be removed from the author list before submission. Individuals who wish to be co-authors but who aren't ready to sign off on the paper should simply email the lead author to that effect, but those

individuals must ultimately send the statement above before final submission if they wish to be a co-author.

The lead author is then responsible for revising the paper, taking into account the feedback received from the coauthors. At the end of the response period, or at the end of the revision process (whichever is longer), the revised version should again be provided to the full list of authors, who will then have no less than 72 hours to provide feedback before submission to the journal, and before posting to the arXiv, which can be at the same time at the discretion of the lead author.

When the paper has been revised in response to the referee report(s), the lead author will distribute the revised version and the reply letter to all the authors. In that notification, the lead author should specify the date by which he or she anticipates submitting the revised manuscript, and should allow at least 48 hours for co-authors to review the final version.

The TESS Science Council is the body responsible for resolving disputes about credit, authorship, and scientific results. In particular, if an individual disagrees with the content of a paper and this disagreement cannot be resolved through discussion between the authors on the paper, the lead author or the dissenting party should inform the TESS Science Council, and the paper may not be submitted until the dispute is resolved.

6. TESS Wiki Publications Page

To facilitate communication, coordination, and collaboration concerning TESS Mission and Contributed Papers, TESS team members may request access to the TESS Wiki Publications page, but they must agree to keep information on that Publications page confidential. In other words, by accessing that page they have implicitly agreed not to share information about papers in preparation with those who do not have access.

TESS team members may involve more junior scientists in publications as part of their research group. In this scenario, the TESS team member is responsible for the conduct and behavior of their junior members, who are bound by the same conduct and behavior rules as the member.

Concerns about collaboration or coordination can be brought to the TESS Science Council, who can mediate any disputes if necessary.

7. Presentations

Scientific results that will be reported for the first time in Mission Papers normally should not be presented to scientific conferences, workshops, seminars, or public meetings before the Mission Paper has been submitted for publication and the author list has been finalized. Exceptions to this guideline may be approved by the PI in consultation with the TESS Science Council..

For high profile papers, it will usually be necessary to consult with NASA and MIT about organizing a press release (with or without a press conference), as well as with the various partner institutions. In particular, working with the NASA public outreach team will usually result in much wider notice in the media and by the public, often with custom graphics produced by NASA. When there is a press release and/or press conference, it is normally necessary to post the paper on the archive at the same time, so that media representatives and experts that they consult with have access to the paper.

Information on how to contact NASA concerning media coverage is provided on the TESS Wiki Publications page.