

Friends of IXPE Forum

20 August 2026



All participants in Friends of IXPE Forums are expected to engage in a respectful and professional manner that supports open scientific dialogue. Participants should communicate constructively. Disagreements should be expressed courteously and focused on scientific ideas rather than individuals. Participation indicates agreement with this code of conduct.

IXPE Cycle 4 proposals will be due on 17 September 2026.

- Proposals and Tools - Cycle 4, https://heasarc.gsfc.nasa.gov/docs/ixpe/proposals/ixpe_prop.html
- **The work plan previously included in the anonymized scientific justification Section of Phase-1 proposals must now be provided in the Expertise and Resources Not Anonymized document.**
- The policy on C targets has changed. If observations of a category C target are begun, then the target will be automatically carried over to future cycles, if necessary, until at least 80% of the requested exposure is completed. Category C targets that are not observed during a cycle will be dropped, but may be re-proposed.
- Our joint program with NRAO is undersubscribed.
- We now have a joint program with XMM-Newton.
- **There will be no joint program with Swift.** “Due to an ongoing commercial spacecraft attitude control issue, NASA and Katalyst Space announced Wednesday the LINK spacecraft will not capture or boost an agency satellite to a higher altitude to extend its science mission as planned.”
<https://www.nasa.gov/news-release/nasa-updates-next-steps-for-commercial-swift-boost-mission/>

- XMM-Newton AO-26 observing proposals are now being solicited, due Friday 9 October 2026, 12:00 UT
<https://www.cosmos.esa.int/web/xmm-newton/ao26>
- We're trying to figure out what help the community needs for IXPE data analysis
- Please send specific data analysis questions to the help desk
<https://heasarc.gsfc.nasa.gov/cgi-bin/Feedback?selected=ixpe>
- Two new documents have been posted to the analysis site: <https://heasarc.gsfc.nasa.gov/docs/ixpe/analysis/>
 - Software analysis guide including a description of the pipeline as well as help for each tool
 - Comprehensive IXPE detector description, onboard data handling and processing workbook
- Advanced analysis software developed at Stanford has been posted to the user contributed software page: <https://heasarc.gsfc.nasa.gov/docs/ixpe/analysis/contributed.html>
 - LeakageLib uses maximum-likelihood based “advanced weights”.
 - ixpenn reconstructs IXPE data with a neural net.

Notes

- The next forum will be on the **second Thursday** of September, **10 September 2026**, to avoid conflict with the proposal due date.
- Rachael Stewart (George Washington University) will speak on “Vacuum birefringence and the polarized X-ray emission from a radio magnetar”.

Agenda

- IXPE mission and data processing status – Chien-Ting Chen (IXPE SOC, MSFC/USRA)
- Polarized emission from X-ray pulsars probed by IXPE – Sofia Forsblom (Turku).
- Any questions about proposal preparation or data analysis?