

Notes from Steve Schwartz (leader of Cross-Scale)

Although there are a variety of factors involved in such decisions, it would seem that the following considerations played some part in Cross-Scale's fate. They are recorded here in case they prove useful for future planning and related proposals, e.g., to M3 or to national/bilateral programmes. These are not official feedback or notes, but rather the web author's (SJS) personal reflections.

Science: the overall science case was well-rehearsed and made. What was less clear, perhaps, to someone outside the field was the way the number of spacecraft influenced (or not) the ability to meet the science objectives. Additionally, more demonstrations based on existing data and/or simulations to convince the reviewers that Cross-Scale could provide definitive answers would have been helpful.

Costs: ESA put the mission costs at over 600 M Euros. If there is a lesson here, it is that ESA as an organisation simply cannot find cost-efficient ways of procuring spacecraft and operating a mission compared with, for example, NASA PI-led missions.

ESA Science Politics: The federal nature of ESA and the many disciplines chasing a small number of launch opportunities was bound to put Cross-Scale in direct competition, for example, with Solar Orbiter.

International Science Politics: It would seem that the possibility of an ESA-only option provided by Cross-Scale did not feature prominently in the decision process. This is probably in part due to the (inflated) costs noted above.