



Dear AbSciCon 2017 Participants,

We are excited to announce that the program for the 2017 Astrobiology Science Conference in Mesa, Arizona, has now been posted! We encourage everyone to register before the March 27 early registration deadline.

As you've probably noticed, the registration fees for AbSciCon this year are higher than in the past: \$395 for early student registration, and \$550 for early professional registration. There are a number of factors for this increase, including current government fiscal restrictions, coupled with the desire to maintain the meeting format that has been successful with our community in the past.

We regret the financial burden this may place on attendees, particularly students. We have worked diligently to minimize the impact, and always strive to keep registration fees as low as possible while maintaining a high-quality, productive conference that we hope will exceed your expectations, and will continue to do so for future meetings.

And AbSciCon 2017 is going to be a productive, vibrant meeting:

* For students and postdocs attending the conference, we are offering free pre-conference [Early Career Scientist Classes](#) at ASU with science talks and career development activities. We encourage early career scientists to sign up using the question provided on the conference registration form, or by contacting Elizabeth Mchugh at elizabeth.mchugh@asu.edu.

* On Tuesday evening, a public event will be held at the conference venue, featuring a panel discussion of where we might first find life outside Earth. This event is free, and all conference attendees are welcome to attend.

* On Thursday evening, another public event will be held at the conference venue, featuring a panel discussion of how astrobiology and planetary science inform planetary stewardship. This event is also free, and all conference attendees are welcome to attend.

* On Sunday, a Europa Lander Workshop will be held at the conference venue, and many other peripheral meetings and town halls are planned throughout the week.



* Post-conference excursions to the Grand Canyon, Meteor Crater, and/or Biosphere II are being planned. Stay tuned for an e-mail with further information!

Besides that, flights in and out of Phoenix are generally direct and reasonably priced, the hotels are reasonably priced, and the conference site and several hotels are directly on the light rail line connecting to ASU and the airport, meaning most of you will not need to rent a car. Visit valleymetro.org for more information.

And of course, the conference will feature the exciting astrobiology science of 750+ talks and posters, plus wonderful colleagues you will want to see.

We can't wait to see YOU in Arizona!

Dr. Steven Desch
AbSciCon 2017 Conference Chair

Dr. Louise Prockter
Director, Lunar and Planetary Institute