Phase II, and Beyond

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A Brief History of Phase II

• 2000 AASC gave full EVLA 4th highest recommendation amongst major initiatives.

• Phase I proposal submitted May 2000. High resolution, ‘E-config.’, and low frequency components removed for technical, budget, and timescale reasons.

• Phase II proposal development process lengthy. About 6 person-years utilized to prepare proposal.

• Proposal submitted April 2004, following considerable internal (NRAO and AUI) review.

• Review process lengthy. Reviewers’ reports were not received until May 2005, and were mixed:
  – Of ~ 12 reviews, 5 ‘excellent’, 5 ‘very good’, 1 ‘good’, and 1 ‘poor’.
A Brief History of Phase II

• ‘Reverse Site Visit’ held at NSF in June, 2005.
  – Reviewers were B. Balick, E. Feigelson, C. Heiles, M. Elvis, K. Bartos, K. Weiler.
• NSF informed AUI in December 2005 the proposal would not be funded – without explanation or suggestions.
• The RSV panel’s report praised the technical aspects of the proposal, but faulted us for not selling the unique science.
• The RSV panel recommended that we revise, rewrap, and re-submit the proposal within ~1 year, along with an intensive campaign to advertise the scientific capabilities of the expanded array to the US astronomical community.
• Also recommended E-configuration be funded separately.
• Should we do these?
Arguments For and Against Resubmission

• For:
  – High resolution, high sensitivity astronomy is important. Full EVLA’s capabilities truly unique.
  – The science case is very strong.
  – EVLA Phase II remains the stepping-stone to the SKA
    – which is not close to construction.

• Against:
  – It’s too late in the decade for any chance of funding.
    Planning for the next Decadal Committee about to start.
  – We would have to re-direct major scientific staff resources to follow the RSV Committee’s advice.
Decision

• We have decided to not follow the RSV recommendations.
• The Observatory is opening internal and external discussion on the best strategy for developing high sensitivity, high resolution cm-wave astronomy.
• As for E-configuration -- ~$6M needed to do this.