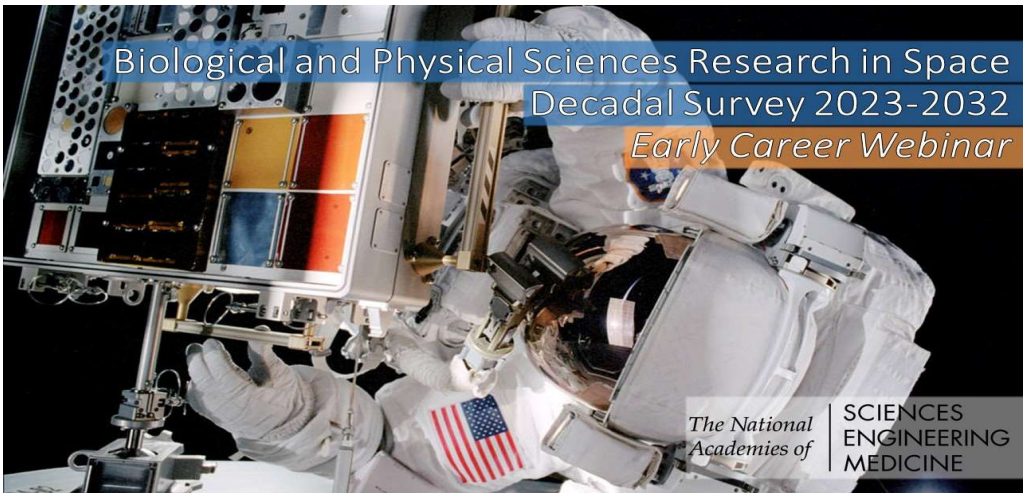

Event 2: Writing Effective White Papers

September 14, 2021

Speaker Bios

- **Krystyn J. Van Vliet**, is a co-chair for the Decadal on Biological and Physical Sciences Research in Space. She is also the Koerner Professor of materials science & engineering and biological engineering at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). Her research focuses on material chemomechanics: the material behavior at the interface of mechanics, chemistry, physics, and biology, and in particular, thermodynamically metastable surfaces and interfaces. Dr. Van Vliet joined the faculty of the MIT Department of Materials Science & Engineering in 2004, and leads the Laboratory for Material Chemomechanics. She also serves MIT as Associate Provost, overseeing campus space management, technology licensing, and corporate relations. She directed the DMSE Nanomechanical Technology Laboratory, a multiuser research facility that includes training of student and staff researchers with approximately 60 new users each year, and co-directs the MIT Biomedical Engineering Minor Program. Dr. Van Vliet also conducts research in Singapore, where her interdisciplinary team invents and develops new technology platforms for diagnostics and treatment of cell & tissue disease, as well as cell therapy manufacturing solutions.

- **Robert C. Kennicutt, Jr.** is a co-chair for the Astro2020 Decadal and professor at the Steward Observatory at the University of Arizona, and in the Department of Physics and Astronomy at Texas A&M University. His research interests are primarily in observational extragalactic astronomy and cosmology. Dr. Kennicutt has over forty years of experience in various capacities including: Plumian Professor of Astronomy & Experimental Philosophy, Director of the Institute of Astronomy, and Head of the School of Physical Sciences at the University of Cambridge, Editor-in-Chief of The Astrophysical Journal, and Professor/Astronomer and Deputy Head of the Department of Astronomy at the University of Arizona. He has won numerous awards such as the Gruber Cosmology Prize, and the Dannie Heinman Prize in Astrophysics at the American Institute of Physics. He was elected to the National Academy of Sciences in 2006 and to the

American Academy of Arts and Sciences in 2001, and was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society of London (FRS) in 2011.

- **Jamie Foster** is President of the American Society for Gravitational and Space Research (ASGSR) and a Professor in the Department of Microbiology and Cell Science at the University of Florida. The overall objective of Dr. Foster's research program is dedicated to examining the interactions between microbial communities and their surrounding environments to improve our understanding of the molecular mechanisms that microbes use to adapt and respond to changes in the environment.