Roman Early-Definition Astrophysics Survey Opportunity
Galactic Roman Infrared Plane Survey (GRIPS)

Roberta Paladini (Caltech-IPAC) on behalf of:

Catherine Zucker (STScI), Robert Benjamin (Wisconsin), David Nataf (JHU), Dante Minniti (Univ Andres Bello), Gail Zasowski (Univ. of Utah), Joshua Peek (STScI), Sean Carey (Caltech-IPAC), Lori Allen (NOIRLab), Javier Alonso-García (U. Antofagasta), João Alves (University of Vienna), Friedrich Anders (Universitat de Barcelona), E. Athanassoula (LAM), Timothy C. Beers (Notre Dame), Jonathan Bird (Vanderbilt), Joss Bland-Hawthorn (USyd), Anthony Brown (Leiden), Sven Buder (ANU), Sebastiano Calchi-Novati (Caltech-IPAC), Luca Casagrande (ANU), Andrew Casey (Monash), Santi Cassisi (INAF), Marcio Catelan (PUC), Ranga-Ram Chary (Caltech-IPAC), Andre-Nicolas Chene (Gemini), David Ciardi (Caltech-IPAC), Fernando Comeron (ESO), Roger Cohen (STScI), Thomas Dame (SAO), Ronald Drimmel (INAF), Jose Fernandez-Trincado (UCN), Douglas Finkbeiner (Harvard), Douglas Geisler (Universidad de Concepción), Mario Gennaro (STScI), Alyssa Goodman (Harvard), Gregory Green (MPIA), Gergely Hajdu (CAMK), Calen Henderson (Caltech-IPAC), Joseph Hora (CfA), Valentin D. Ivanov (ESO), Davy Kirkpatrick (Caltech-IPAC), Michael Kuhn (Caltech), Andreas Kunder (Saint Martin's University), Jessica Lu (UC Berkeley), Philip W. Lucas (Hertfordshire), Daniel Majaess (MSVU), S. Thomas Megeath (U. Toledo), Aaron Meisner (NOIRLab), Sergio Molinari (INAF), Patrick Morris (Caltech-IPAC), Przemek Mroz (Warsaw), Melissa Ness (Columbia), Nadine Neumayer (MPIA), Francisco Nogueras-Lara (MPIA), Alberto Noriega-Crespo (STScI), Radek Poleski (Warsaw), Hans-Walter Rix (MPIA), Luisa Rebull (Caltech-IPAC), Henrique Reggiani (Carnegie), Marina Rejkuba (ESO), Roberto K. Saito (UFSC), Ralph Schoenrich (University College London), Andrew Saydjari (Harvard), Eugenio Schisano (INAF), Edward Schlafly (LLNL), Kevin Schlaufman (JHU), Leigh Smith (Cambridge), Joshua Speagle (U. Toronto), Dan Weisz (UC Berkeley), Rosemary Wyse (JHU), Nadia Zakamska (JHU)

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Motivation

Roman will be uniquely positioned to perform a survey of the Galactic Plane:

High angular resolution: of the inner Galactic Plane, only 2.8 deg² have been covered by HST. Roman will allow for the **identification of 120 billion sources,** a significant fraction of the Milky Way's stars. For comparison, this area contains only 0.38 billion sources in Gaia eDR3.

Sensitivity: With a K-band sensitivity limit of 22.85 (Vega) mags and assuming no extinction/source confusion, Roman/GRIPS can reach M_{Ks}=8.25 (M5V) for sources at the distance of the Galactic Center and M_{Ks}=12.5 (mid L dwarfs) for sources in M8 and M20. A solar type star could be detected on the far side of the Galactic disk, even with 2-3 magnitudes of absorption.

Mapping Speed: will allow for a significant fraction of the stars in the Galaxy to be covered in a uniform way, a crucial requirement for studies of Galactic structure.
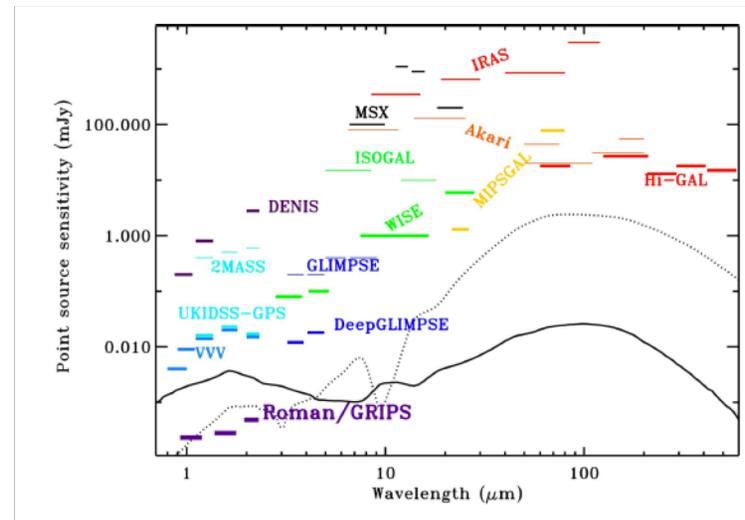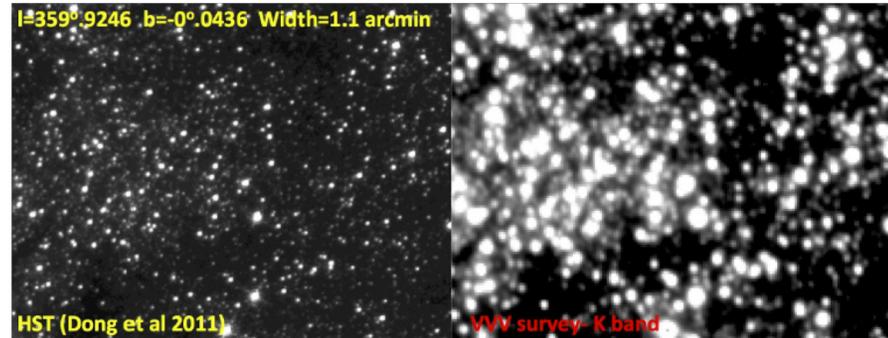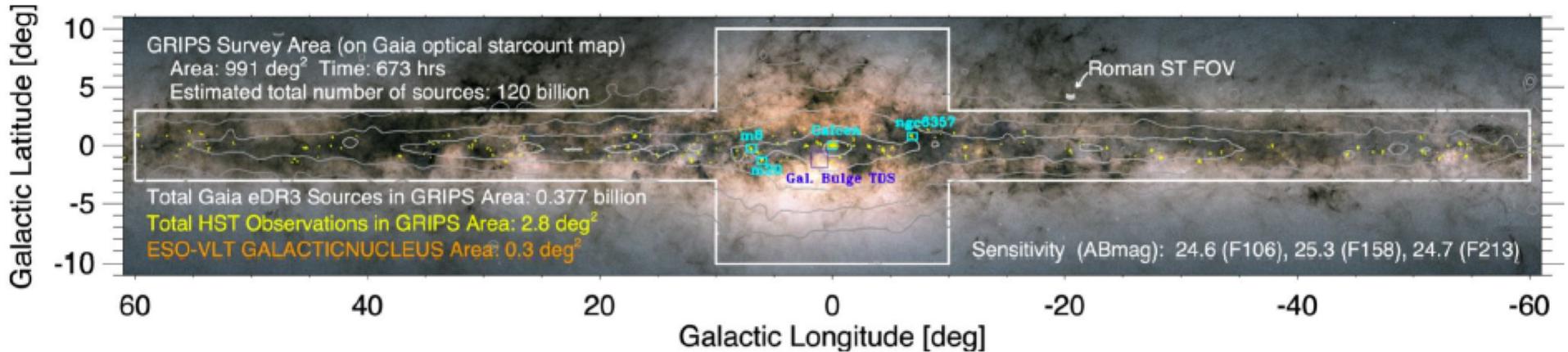
Scientific Rationale

Roman is uniquely suited to deal with the confusion and extinction prevalent in the plane of the Galaxy. **A Galactic Plane survey was one of five programs specifically endorsed by the Science Definition Team (SDT) in the WFIRST Interim Report (Green et al 2012).**

- **Unresolved Stellar populations:** GRIPS will enable studies of previously unresolved stellar populations (stellar clusters in star-forming regions, globular clusters).

- **Structure of the Galaxy – bulge / spiral arms:** Red clumps and YSOs can be surveyed out to a greater volume of the disk allowing the rewriting of Galactic structure, particularly the spiral arms and the central Galaxy where source confusion has blocked progress.

- **Stellar Initial Mass Function & 3D dust maps:** GRIPS will enable studies of the stellar initial mass function down to lower mass limits in sites across the Galaxy, and provide significantly more "background" sources for the construction of 3D dust maps.
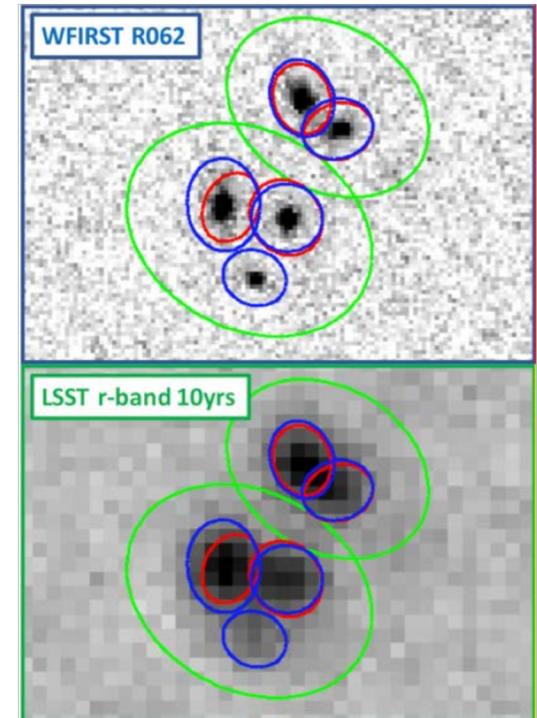
Possible Observational Outline

GRIPS Survey Area (on Gaia optical starcount map)
Area: 991 deg² Time: 673 hrs
Estimated total number of sources: 120 billion

Roman ST FOV

Total Gaia eDR3 Sources in GRIPS Area: 0.377 billion
Total HST Observations in GRIPS Area: 2.8 deg²
ESO-VLT GALACTICNUCLEUS Area: 0.3 deg²

Sensitivity (ABmag): 24.6 (F106), 25.3 (F158), 24.7 (F213)

- **Coverage:** $-60^0 < l < +60^0$, $|b| < 3^0$ (inner Galaxy + bulge) - ~1000 deg² total
- **Filters:** F106, F158, F213 (roughly, JHK)
- **Integration Time:** 55 sec / filter → minimum depth: 25.5 mag, 25.3 mag, 24.7 mag (F106, F158, F213, respectively)
- **Dithers:** one primary dither (filling detectors gaps + cosmic-ray removal) and two secondary dithers (F213, accurate astrometry)

Total: 673 hrs

Why an early survey ?

- **Setting the Stage:** Defining the survey early will allow us to build not only the most powerful survey to address different science cases on its own, but also a well-crafted initial design to enable optimal expansions in epochs, spatial coverage, wavelength coverage by subsequent guest investigators.

- **Proper Motion Studies:** A single-pass survey of the Galactic Plane early in the mission would enable subsequent passes later on, largely surpassing what can be obtained by simply combining Roman and, e.g., 2MASS, with a 25-year baseline, therefore bolstering the characterization of stellar proper motions in regions inaccessible to Gaia, notably in the complex orbital structure of the Galactic bar(s) and nucleus.

- **Development of a Crowded-Field Forced Photometry Pipeline:** The development of PSF forced photometry pipelines able to operate in heavily crowded fields is required given the resolution of ground-based observations. This activity will complement efforts such as the Joint Survey Processing (Chary et al. 2020), which is focused on lower source-density regions.

Lee & Chary, MNRAS, 2020