National Aeronautics and Space Administration

Mary W. Jackson NASA Headquarters
Washington, DC 20546-0001

Reply to Attn of: SMD/Earth Science Division

Dan Matsapola
CEOS WGCapD Chair
Science Engagement Manager
Building 10, CSIR Campus
Meiring Naude Road
Brummeria
Pretoria 0184
South Africa

Dear Mr. Matsapola,

The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) proudly nominates Dr. Melanie Follette-Cook to serve as the Vice Chair of the CEOS Working Group on Capacity Building and Data Democracy (WGCapD) for the 2027–2028 term, with the intention that she will subsequently advance to the role of Chair for the 2029–2030 term.

We are advancing Dr. Follette-Cook for this leadership track because her daily professional focus strongly aligns with the core objectives of WGCapD, and we are eager to build upon the exceptional foundation that you and SANSA have established during your tenure.

Dr. Follette-Cook currently serves as Project Scientist of the NASA Applied Remote Sensing Training (ARSET) Program, which is part of the NASA Earth Science Division Earth Action Element, and as a research scientist in the Mesoscale Atmospheric Processes Laboratory at NASA Goddard Space Flight Center. In her role as ARSET Project Scientist, Dr. Follette-Cook leads the development of training strategies and initiatives designed to enhance the skills of individuals and organizations to use Earth observation data and tools for effective, data-driven decision-making.

Beyond her leadership of the ARSET team—where she has personally led training sessions both across the United States and internationally—she brings an extensive scientific background in the integration of Earth system models with satellite and field observations to study fire dynamics, atmospheric chemistry, and biosphere-climate interactions. Furthermore, she leads aerosol and fire-related applications for several cross-disciplinary projects across the agency and possesses a deep understanding of the needs of EO users across various sectors.

This nomination represents a four-year commitment to WGCapD leadership. NASA commits to fully supporting Dr. Follette-Cook's contributions and participation at WGCapD meetings, and the three major annual CEOS meetings throughout her leadership tenure.

We understand that this nomination will be presented first to the WGCapD for approval at the next WGCapD meeting and, if approved, to the CEOS Principals for final decision at the 40th CEOS Plenary in November 2026.

Thank you again for your continued dedication to CEOS and the global Earth observation community. We look forward to continuing our active engagement with you, with ESA as current Vice Chair, and with all our WGCapD colleagues.

Sincerely,

Dr. Karen St Germain
Director, Earth Science Division
Science Mission Directorate
NASA Headquarters
Washington, D.C. 20546