



INDIAN INSTITUTE OF ASTROPHYSICS

Bengaluru 560 034

Dr P. Sreekumar
Director

Phone: 080 2553 0583
Fax: 080 2553 4019
Email: diriaa@iiap.res.in

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Office Order

Preamble: The Institute has been operating the 2.34 m Vainu Bappu Telescope at Vainu Bappu Observatory, Kavalur and the 2 m Himalayan Chandra Telescope at the Indian Astronomical Observatory, Hanle as National Facilities. In addition, other telescopes viz. the 1 m Zeiss and the 1.3 m J.C.Bhattacharyya Telescopes at Kavalur are also available to the astronomical community. With a view to maximize the use of these facilities at optimum level, the observing time slots on National Facilities are allotted through a Time Allocation Committee (TAC) constituted from time to time. The following guidelines will be followed:

Guidelines for HCT & VBT Time Allocation and Data Policy

Time allocation on the HCT & VBT will be based on documents submitted in response to a call for proposals and its review by a Time Allocation Committee (TAC) constituted by the Director of IIA. The IIA-TAC, common to both HCT and VBT, will consist of five scientists. They will be: three experts from outside IIA, one scientist from IIA who is associated with the HCT, and one scientist from IIA who is associated with VBO.

I. Reviewing process

1. All proposals, in the prescribed format for each cycle duration of four months, submitted for HCT & VBT observations will be refereed. Referees' names and reports will be confidential. Excerpts of the referees' report will be sent to the proposer as applicable.
2. In case of long-term and ongoing proposals, the review is valid for three cycles.
3. TAC members will independently review all proposals.
4. TAC members will abstain from reviewing their proposals (PI/Co-PI/Co-I).
5. TAC will meet at least one month before the beginning of a new cycle to discuss the review reports, accept/reject proposals based on the reviews (referees' + TAC members' reports), and recommend allocation of nights.
6. Allocation of nights will be based on number of nights available and the subscription factor.
7. Allocation priority will be based on the following:

- a. Thesis proposals will be given preference, with IIA thesis proposal getting a higher priority.
 - b. Proposals identified by IIA as key science programmes.
 - c. Proposals that have good and feasible science goals.
 - d. Science cases that test the limit of the telescope/instrument.
 - e. In the case of long term / ongoing proposals, the ones with good publication record and/or good progress with data analyses will be given higher priority.
 - f. Proposals with low publication record are given lower priority.
8. Observing Schedule will be prepared by the TAC member familiar with HCT/VBT operations, as per TAC's recommendations for night allocation.
 9. Draft schedule will be circulated to all TAC members.
 10. The Observing Schedule will be finalised with the approval of all TAC members, at least 3 weeks before the beginning of the new cycle.
 11. The Observing Schedules for HCT/VBT will be published in the Institute's web site and allotment of the telescope time or otherwise along with review comments will be sent to proposers.
 12. The proposers need to state in the proposal clearly who will be present for observations and the person(s) be required to be present for observations.

II. Policy for Target of Opportunity (ToO) proposals

1. HCT & VBT accept ToO proposals that can be submitted during the call for proposals for a new cycle.
2. All such ToO proposals submitted will be reviewed by the TAC as per guidelines mentioned above.
3. Accepted ToO proposals will be allocated a certain number of hours during the entire cycle.
4. On any night a ToO observations request is made, the proposer(s) of the ToO proposal need to submit a written/email request to the observer to whom the night is allotted. ToO observations may be undertaken in consultation and with the concurrence of the observer for the night. While all observers are intimated, and expected to provide time for ToO requests, it is not mandatory for the observer of the night to provide time for ToO observations, if interruption is likely to affect the scientific programme adversely.
5. The time spent on ToO observations during any given night shall be limited to a maximum of 1.5hrs.
6. ToO proposals shall not exceed, in any cycle, the total time approved for the proposal during the cycle.
7. In the case of multiple ToO requests on the same night, for the same object and same type of observations, from competing proposals, the data rights will rest with the Observatory and will be shared with the requesting proposers.
8. ToO observation requests that are not part of a prior accepted proposal shall be sent to the Director-IIA with copies to the Chair-TAC and to the Observatory's Professor-in-charge.

III. Data archiving

For the present, the data archival procedure is described below:

1. The proposer(s)/observer(s) has/have the first right on the usage of data he/she/they has/have observed as a part of their accepted proposal.
2. Data are archived on storage media. A copy of the HCT data is maintained at IAO, Hanle, and one at the remote observing station at CREST, Hosakote-Bengaluru. A copy of the VBT data is maintained at VBO, Kavalur. A copy of the data will be provided to the Principal Investigator/Co-Investigator.
3. Currently, only unprocessed data are archived on IIA's data management system.

IV. Data policy

1. The data rights for usage rest with the PI of the proposal until the results are published (with due acknowledgment of the facility and IIA), and with IIA subsequently.
2. The PIs of the key science programmes have the first right on the usage of data for a fixed duration dependent on the nature of the programme. Subsequently, the data rights rest with the Observatory/IIA.

V. Data release policy

1. HCT & VBT data release policy is framed based upon the following constraints and aspirations:
 - a. The size of the telescopes is small compared to the current international standards, and similar facilities are used for limited goals by communities who also have access to larger facilities.
 - b. On the other hand, HCT is a major facility available to the country due to its reliability and exceptional site. Hence it is shared competitively by the students and astronomers across institutions. Generally this leads to long duration of data collection even for the proposals that are not for monitoring in time domain.
2. For the present, an interested party may contact the PI of the proposal for data and for collaborative research.
3. Infrastructure for public release is being established with the basis that the PI will make efforts to release data to the public at the earliest.

General:

1. Disputes, if any, on allocation of observation time, observation plan, use of the data etc. may be brought to the Director, IIA within one year from the date of its occurrence.
2. The above guidelines are effective from 25-3-2015 until further orders.



Director