

THE ISAAC NEWTON GROUP OF TELESCOPES

The Isaac Newton Group of Telescopes (ING) consists of the 4.2m William Herschel Telescope (WHT), the 2.5m Isaac Newton Telescope (INT) and the 1.0m Jacobus Kapteyn Telescope (JKT), and is located 2,350m above sea level at the Roque de Los Muchachos Observatory (ORM) on the island of La Palma, Canary Islands, Spain. The WHT is the largest telescope of its kind in Western Europe.

The construction, operation, and development of the ING Telescopes is the result of a collaboration between the United Kingdom and the Netherlands. The site is provided by Spain, and in return Spanish astronomers receive 20 per cent of the observing time on the telescopes. The operation of the site is overseen by an International Scientific Committee, or Comité Científico Internacional (CCI).

A further 75 per cent of the observing time is shared by the United Kingdom, the Netherlands and the Instituto de Astrofísica de Canarias (IAC). The remaining 5 per cent is reserved for large scientific projects to promote international collaboration between institutions of the CCI member countries.

The ING operates the telescopes on behalf of the Particle Physics and Astronomy Research Council (PPARC) of the United Kingdom, the Nederlandse Organisatie voor Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek (NWO) of the Netherlands and the IAC in Spain. The Roque de Los Muchachos Observatory, which is the principal European Northern hemisphere observatory, is operated by the IAC.



(Continued from front cover)

With this agreement ING has found a new balance with its three partners that will bring scientific benefits for all astronomers as well as a positive outlook towards a strong collaboration with our Spanish colleagues. The article in this Newsletter by the Director of the IAC, Prof Francisco Sánchez, sets out the clear vision on this new collaboration from the Spanish perspective.

A second important result of international collaboration in recent months has been the development of a very large proposal requesting funds to the European Community under the

Framework-6 programme. Many areas of observational astronomy are combined within this proposal, named OPTICON. The ING telescopes play a prominent role in the part of the proposal that aims to foster access to the various telescopes on a truly European scale.

This Newsletter again highlights a number of scientific successes through excellent articles. Also progress on various projects is reported here. I trust you will enjoy this issue.

René G. M. Rutten

The ING Board

The ING Board oversees the operation, maintenance and development of the Isaac Newton Group of Telescopes, and fosters collaboration between the international partners. It approves annual budgets and determines the arrangements for the allocation of observing time on the telescopes. ING Board members are:

Prof J Drew, *Chairperson* – ICL
 Prof T van der Hulst, *Vice Chairperson* – Univ. of Groningen
 Dr G Dalton – Univ. of Oxford
 Dr R García López – IAC
 Prof T Marsh – Univ. of Warwick
 Dr R Stark – NWO
 Dr C Vincent – PPARC
 Dr S Berry, *Secretary* – PPARC

The ING Director's Advisory Group

The Director's Advisory Group (DAG) assists the observatory in defining the strategic direction for operation and development of the telescopes. It also provides an international perspective and act as an independent contact point for the community to present its ideas. DAG members are:

Dr M McCaughrean, *Chairperson* – Astrophysikalisches Institut Potsdam
 Dr M Balcells – IAC
 Dr P A James – Liverpool John Moores Univ.
 Dr N Tanvir – Univ. of Hertfordshire
 Dr E Tolstoy – Univ. of Groningen

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The ING Newsletter is published twice a year in March and September. If you wish to submit a contribution, please contact Javier Méndez (jma@ing.iac.es). Submission deadlines are 15 July and 15 January.