

ING Workshop on Adaptive-Optics Assisted Integral Field Spectroscopy

In May 2005 a three-day workshop took place on the above subject. The main reason for organising this workshop was the commissioning of the OASIS integral field spectrograph on the WHT and the latest project to augment the use of AO on the WHT with a laser beacon system. Both these developments imply major new possibilities for the use of the telescope. Moreover, the advent of the laser will allow large science programmes to be carried out and the workshop served as a forum to discuss what type of programmes would be most suitable. For these reasons it was timely to get knowledgeable people around the table to discuss the science opportunities (and difficulties) of using such complex instruments.

About sixty participants shared their ideas and experience in this area. Many exciting results and developments were highlighted from other observatories,



Group photograph of workshop participants.

including Gemini, ESO-VLT, Keck, CFHT and Calar Alto. Also several ideas for large science programmes emerged at the workshop, ranging from surveys of star-forming regions, studies of stellar populations in dense clusters, through a statistical survey of the kinematics in the cores of galaxies. The ideas that were generated indicate that there is indeed much science potential to be exploited. The plan is that once the laser project on the WHT comes to fruition an announcement of opportunity for large key science programmes for the use of adaptive optics will be issued.

The proceedings of this workshop are being printed by Elsevier Publishers as a special issue of *New Astronomy Reviews*. These proceedings contain several extensive review articles as well as shorter papers on the subject. For anyone interested in this field and in understanding recent achievements as well as future prospects in AO-assisted integral field spectroscopy these proceedings will be an excellent starting point. □

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Visits to ING

A total of 2349 visitors split in 117 tours were shown round the WHT and occasionally the INT in 2005. Visitors included Dr. Jan A. C. van de Donk, the Dutch Ministry of Education, Culture and Science and ESO Council member.

Conciding with the fiesta of La Bajada de la Virgen de Las Nieves, a new model for organising tours on Open Days to reduce the impact on the observatory operations was attempted. This time visitors had to book online their tours. The number of tours per day was reduced from 28 to 6 while increasing the total number of Open Days from 2 to 5.

Every year the people from Garafía, the municipality the observatory belongs to, are invited to visit the observatory and get together with the observatory staff for a barbecue. On 19th August another Garafía Open Day took place and 90 Garafians visited the WHT.

The participants to the astronomy course “Taller aplicado de investigación y observación astronómica en La Palma”, organised by La Laguna University and the Spanish Distance Learning University (UNED), and with the collaboration of ING among others, and to the European Science and Technology Week (see accompanying photos by Luis Cuesta, IAC), also had the opportunity of visiting the WHT. Both visits received the financial support of OPTICON Public Outreach. □

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