

Minutes of the teleconference held on Tuesday February 12, 2013

Swiss Commission for Astronomy
(SCFA)

1) Call to Order

The chair, G. Meylan, calls the teleconference to order at 04:00 pm.

Attendance at the teleconference :

Present : W. Benz, G. Lake, M. Meyer, G. Meylan (chair), G. Meynet, and S. Udry.

Excused : A. Jäggi, P. Jetzer, D. Pfenniger, T. Schildknecht, W. Schmutz, M. Steinacher (guest from SERI), and F.-K. Thielemann.

2) A writing committee for the Update to the Roadmap

The teleconference starts with a discussion about establishing the **Update Writing Committee (UWC)**. An important piece of information is that, since the last SCFA teleconference, on Feb. 4, 2013, W. Benz has accepted to act as the chair of the UWC.

The membership of the UWC is the subject of a discussion that eventually converges on the following requirements: (i) the five main astronomical institutes in Switzerland, namely, EPFL, ETHZ, UniBE, UniGE, UniZH (in alphabetic order!), should be represented, (ii) the main research interests should be represented, (iii) the number of members of the UWC should be kept small, of the order of five.

The three constraints are not easy to fulfill, nevertheless the SCFA agrees to present the following names as a proposal for CHAPS approval: (i) W. Benz (UniBE) as chair, (ii) M. Meyer (ETHZ), (iii) F. Pepe (UniGE), (iv) B. Moore (UniZH), and (v) G. Meylan (EPFL). All have been contacted by the chair of the SCFA and have agreed to serve actively on this committee if approved by CHAPS.

The proposed team besides satisfying the constraints also offers the advantage of including two English speaking colleagues. The SCFA is perfectly aware that not all research fields are represented in this team (e.g. stellar evolution). However, SCFA believes that the process will guarantee that all areas will have the opportunities to provide feedback. Furthermore, CHAPS will oversee the content of the document.

3) The terms of reference of the UWC

The SCFA has received a draft of the “terms of reference” and, after the addition of a small correction, agrees on the current version, which is in the Annex 1 to this document. These terms of reference should be submitted to CHAPS for endorsement.

Once the UWC will have been approved by CHAPS, the UWC will be responsible for organizing the work in order to produce the draft of the update to the roadmap. Once this draft will have been accepted by CHAPS, the UWC will be responsible for the editing and printing process leading to the final printed version of this document, with the help of the SCFA.

4) A call for White papers

As already expressed during the last CHAPS meeting and the last SCFA teleconference, there are various opinions about the need and the strategy for a call for “White Papers”. A consensus is reached on the following points :

- (i) “White papers” should be allowed a maximum of 2 pages of text, plus figures.
- (ii) The content may be related to any projects already existing in Switzerland and/or to any new projects. The approach may be instrument and/or science related.
- (iii) A call for “White Papers” will be issued soon and advertised to all astronomers in Switzerland, through the SSAA and CHAPS email lists (some people are members of CHAPS, but not of the SSAA). All members of the SCFA will be asked to advertise this call in their own institutions, e.g., to scientific collaborators and postdocs not members of the SSAA.

5) The future CHAPS meetings

The chair of the SCFA recently sent doodles to all CHAPS members in order to organize, well in advance, the future CHAPS meetings, as requested by a few people during the last CHAPS meeting. Some members from CHAPS have expressed worries about such a large number (4) of meetings during the coming 6 months. A few SCFA members suggest CHAPS teleconferences. After some discussions, the SCFA converges on the following decision: we shall have a CHAPS meeting in Bern early March, called by the chair of the SCFA. The UWC will organize the subsequent CHAPS meetings as needed by the writing process.

6) Miscellaneous

None.

7) The teleconference is adjourned at 04:50 pm.

TERMS of REFERENCE

for the production of an

Update of the Roadmap for Astronomy in Switzerland 2007 – 2016

**by the
Update Writing Committee
(UWC)**

The Update Writing Committee (UWC) is nominated by the SCFA and appointed by CHAPS. The UWC has the task to draft an update to the document entitled **Roadmap for Astronomy in Switzerland 2007-2016**. The goal of this document is to provide an updated overview of astronomy in Switzerland and its place within the international context. This document should be available in its final form by the end of 2013.

- The Update to the Roadmap should include :
 - a) a review of the achievements of the astronomy community in Switzerland since the issuing the Roadmap in 2007 :
 - b) an assessment of the status of the recommendations issued in the Roadmap,
 - c) an updated overview of the major ongoing projects,
 - d) a forward look into the major new projects appearing in the future,
 - e) a set of clear recommendations about priorities for astronomy in Switzerland.

- The UWC is expected to elaborate the update document through a bottom-up process. It should ensure that each entity of the astronomical community at large, in Switzerland, has opportunities to provide inputs.

- During the drafting of the update document, the UWC will remain in close contact with CHAPS to whom it will reports, during regular ad hoc meetings.

- CHAPS has the final authority and responsibility on the content of the update document.