

# Agreement between SOCHIAS and NAOC on the establishment of a Joint China-Chile Committee

## 1. Responsibilities

This document is signed with the full participation of:

- SOCHIAS, acting in representation of the Chilean Astronomical community and coordinating the execution of this agreement from the Chilean side.
- The Chinese Astronomical Society, the coordinator among Chinese astronomers.
- CONICYT, as a governmental agency for Chilean institutions.
- NAOC, acting on behalf of Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS) and, through its representatives at CASSACA, responsible of the execution of this agreement.

## 2. Charter

This Joint China-Chile Committee (JCCC) has been established, on XX March 2015, to guide collaborative programs in astronomy and related sciences between China and Chile, and it is the formal body that advises the allocation of funds for major projects supported by CASSACA (the CAS South America Center for Astronomy, also known in Chile as CCJCA: the China-Chile Joint Center for Astronomy). The JCCC is consisted of Chinese and Chilean astronomers named by the mechanisms detailed below. Chinese astronomers associated with CASSACA and hosted at a Chilean institution are eligible to apply for Chilean telescope time based on the same telescope time allocation committee (TAC) requirements for all international visiting scholars.

The JCCC has the mission to foster scientific and technical co-operation between China and Chile in astronomy/astrophysics and closely related fields. CASSACA will obtain and manage funds from CAS and other sources to support such activities in Chile. The JCCC is responsible for defining the framework of the co-operation and evaluating proposals to be financed by these funds. CASSACA, with the help of SOCHIAS and its counterpart in China, will issue Announcements of Opportunities on an annual basis to solicit collaborative projects from both countries. These projects will be executed on timescales of one or two years.

**Overheads:** The projects will consider an overhead, of up to 10% of the total amount spent at each host institution, to be charged by the said institution to cover the management costs.

## 3. Membership

The Joint Committee will be formed by a total of ten members, of which five are representatives of Chilean astronomers to be selected by SOCHIAS, and five representatives from China to be selected by CAS, all designated on a two-year and renewable basis.

The current members are, on behalf of the Chilean astronomy community, a representative from the SOCHIAS board, a representative of the Department of Astronomy of the University of Chile, one astronomer assigned by CONICYT and two astronomers from the Chilean community chosen by the SOCHIAS board. There could be no more than two members from any Chilean institution in the JCCC. On behalf of the Chinese astronomy community will be the CASSACA Chief Scientist, two astronomers from NAOC and two astronomers from other Chinese astronomical institutions chosen by the Astronomical Society of China.

#### **4. Calendar of the Announcements of Opportunities and the Evaluation Process**

The targeted date for the Announcements of Opportunities (AO) is April 15th. The deadline for receipt of the proposed projects should be one and a half month after the AO. The logistics of the evaluation process and project selection will be managed by CASSACA with the help of SOCHIAS, and should take place within two months following the deadline.

#### **5. Funding Guidelines**

Within the budget allocated to China-Chile co-operation programs, a majority of the funds will be used on projects proposed by academic institutions and individual scientists and be evaluated by the Joint Committee. The total available funds may fluctuate depending on the level of support received from CAS each year, and the Director of CASSACA has the ultimate responsibility of deciding on the projects that actually receive funding, based on the rankings and recommendations of the JCCC as well as other considerations. In addition to funding these projects, CASSACA itself may, in consultation with the JCCC, reach independent agreements with other Chilean or international research entities in order to accomplish its scientific mission. CASSACA will provide an annual report detailing the use of the available funds, which will also be reviewed by the Joint Committee. Additional funds may be complemented by CONICYT for China-Chile co-operation projects jointly managed by CASSACA and CONICYT, which will be allocated according to the CONICYT rules.

For 2015, the program areas identified by the Joint Committee for the Announcement of Opportunities of April YY, 2015 are (without excluding others to be included in potential applications):

- Creation of new collaborative astronomical research groups.
- Research activities of already established groups.
- Visiting Scholars and students.
- Development of systems and instruments for astronomical observations.
- Research infrastructure necessary to accomplish the above goals.

#### **6. Evaluation Guidelines**

In the evaluation process, the JCCC will examine the proposals using, in particular, a written ranking according to the three merit criteria exposed below. In addition, the Committee may use other relevant criteria that should be made explicit in the evaluation review, and/or the consideration of written reports by external referees.

**Criterion 1** Merit of the project.

- Scientific impact of the collaborative efforts between Chilean and Chinese astronomers, especially with regard to the effective use of available telescope times.
- Scientific projects: importance of the proposed project to building productive, long-term co-operations between scientists of the two countries.
- Technical project: originality of the technical solutions proposed, potential of innovation and upgrade of technology, and the opening of new fields.

**Criterion 2** Scientific/technical expertise of the team, and its qualifications to conduct the project.

- National/international recognition of the team leader and team members; academic/publication record.
- When applicable, assessment of the results obtained by the team in previously funded projects.

**Criterion 3** Feasibility and budget appropriateness, institutional commitment and endorsement.

- Adequacy and efficiency in the utilization of the resources for the project objectives.
- Institutional endorsement as appropriate for the proposed project.
- Experience and confidence in achieving the goals in the time foreseen.

The submitted proposals, the results of the evaluation process and the corresponding financial assessment shall be managed by CASSACA, which will make public the final results, including the recommendations by the JCCC. Subsequently, each proposer will receive notifications on the evaluation results and a (yes or no) decision on support. A summary of these will be posted on relevant web sites.

## **7. Results of previously funded projects.**

Detailed reports by the grantees describing the results of funded projects need to be transmitted to CASSACA no later than three months after completion of the funded projects. For projects lasting more than one year, a report shall be transmitted no later than two months after each 12-month period. Failure to comply with this obligation will be reported to JCCC in its next review and may prevent members of the supported team from receiving future funds.

The scientific publications, resulting from the activities of funded projects, are required to acknowledge the financial support received in the framework of the CAS China-Chile Cooperation Program, and report to CASSACA in a timely fashion.