

Science from the Next Generation Imaging and Spectroscopic Surveys

15–18 October 2012, ESO Headquarters, Garching, Germany

With the addition of the VISTA and VST imaging survey facilities to the La Silla-Paranal Observatory and the start of the selected spectroscopic public surveys, European astronomy has firmly entered the era of large public surveys. The aim of the workshop is to present scientific results from the first two years of science operations of the VISTA public surveys, the first year of the VST public surveys, and an overview of spectroscopic public survey projects at ESO. The first results from the nine ongoing imaging public surveys from VISTA and VST will be featured through invited talks by the survey PIs, as well as contributed talks from survey team members. The scientific usage of public survey data products, including the fulfillment of the science goals of the community based on public survey archive data, will be discussed.

Another goal of the workshop is to put the ESO public survey projects in the context of other ongoing or planned large optical and near-infrared (NIR) imaging surveys, such as SDSS III projects, PANSTARRs, LSST, SkyMapper, UKIDSS and Gaia, and within the context of spectroscopic surveys carried out at other telescope facilities and/or as follow-up of imaging surveys.

As ESO public surveys cover such a wide range of topics in observational astronomy, this workshop will not concentrate on specific scientific areas, but rather show the exciting new results coming from large surveys and how overall astronomical knowledge can be advanced



Figure 1. The two ESO survey telescopes: left, the Visible and Infrared Survey Telescope for Astronomy (VISTA) and, right, the VLT Survey Telescope (VST).

using public survey data. To this end, contributed talks from scientists who have used public survey data for their own science, but do not necessarily belong to any of the specific groups that have led or executed the surveys, will be encouraged. The topic of data mining and the availability of data products for wide science use by the community will also be discussed. Contributions from open time and guaranteed time observing (GTO) projects on the ESO survey telescopes VISTA and VST will also be welcome. The workshop will include a panel discussion with a forward look on how large collaborations and big projects are organised in other communities.

The main science topics include:

- VISTA public survey science;
- First results from the VST public survey observations;
- Overview of spectroscopic public surveys at ESO;
- Ongoing and planned large survey projects;
- Synergies between ground-based and space-based surveys;
- Data mining and the availability of survey products for wide science use by the community.

The deadline for registration and abstract submission deadline is 2 July 2012.

Further details are available at: <http://www.eso.org/sci/meetings/2012/surveys2012.html> or by email to: surveys2012@eso.org

ALMA Community Days: Early Science in Cycle 1

25–26/27 June 2012, ESO Headquarters, Garching, Germany

ALMA, the Atacama Large Millimeter/submillimeter Array, a global collaboration involving Europe, North America, East Asia and the host country Chile, is currently carrying out first scientific observations for the astronomical community,

while construction and commissioning activities continue. The interface between ALMA and its potential users is provided by the local ARC (ALMA Regional Centre). In Europe, the ARC consists of a network of regional ARC nodes coordinated

by the central European ARC hosted at ESO Headquarters in Garching, Germany.

ALMA Early Science Operations started with Cycle 0 in September 2011. Nearly 1000 proposals were received from



Figure 1. Panoramic view of the Chajnantor plateau by night, showing many antennas of the Atacama Large Millimeter/submillimeter Array (ALMA).

scientists around the world, around one tenth of which were scheduled for observation. Although the technical capabilities offered in Cycle 0 are limited compared to those envisaged for Full Science Operations, the data obtained are already of remarkable accuracy and quality. In Cycle 1, an enhanced set of ALMA technical capabilities and a larger array of antennas will be offered to the astronomical community. While the building and commissioning of the full array will continue throughout this observing

cycle, the fraction of time available for Early Science observations is expected to increase as the array nears completion. Additionally, the higher sensitivity and technical capacity of ALMA in Cycle 1 has the potential to yield ground-breaking scientific results largely surpassing those achievable using existing facilities.

The aim of the 2012 Community Days is to prepare the European astronomical community for Cycle 1 of ALMA Early Science Operations. The first day will fea-

ture a series of technical and scientific presentations related to ALMA, the European ARC and capabilities in Cycle 1. The remainder of the workshop will be dedicated to hands-on tutorials focusing on the preparation of Cycle 1 observing proposals using the ALMA Observing Tool (OT). Depending on their level of expertise, the workshop participants will be given the choice of attending either a compact one-day tutorial or a more exhaustive two-day session. This should enable novice and advanced ALMA users alike to create observing projects making full use of the unique capabilities of ALMA during Cycle 1.

Further information can be found at: www.eso.org/sci/meetings/2012/alma_es_2012.html

Announcement of the

NEON Observing School 2012

10–22 September 2012, Asiago Observatory, Italy



The Network of European Observatories in the North (NEON: Asiago Observatory [Italy], Calar Alto Observatory [Germany, Spain], European Southern Observatory, Haute Provence Observatory [France], and La Palma Observatory [ING and NOT: UK, the Netherlands, Spain and the Nordic Countries]) is holding the 10th NEON Observing Summer School this year at the Asiago Observatory in the Veneto region of northern Italy.

The purpose of the school is to provide an opportunity to gain practical experience in observation and data reduction in astrophysics. The observing runs will take place at the 1.82-metre Cima Ekar and 1.22-metre Galileo telescopes focusing on modern astrophysical topics. The observations, data reduction and analysis

will be conducted under the supervision of experienced astronomers. The hands-on sessions are complemented by lectures on observational techniques.

The school is open preferentially to PhD students and postdocs in astrophysics who are nationals of a Member State or an Associate State of the European Union, but some places will also be available for nationals of surrounding countries.

The application deadline is 20 April 2012.

More details can be found at: <http://www.iap.fr/neon/> or by email to: neon2012@iap.fr