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The New ESO Phase 1 System

ESO Phase 1 Project Team[1]

[1] ESO

ESO announces the forthcoming deployment of its new tool for the preparation and submission of observing proposals. This represents the first part of a broader overhaul of the ESO Phase 1 system (p1) that, in the near future, will also entail a significant modernisation of the Observing Programmes Committee (OPC) refereeing process and related tools.

The new p1 system is web-based, resembling the new p2 tool. This system includes many new features including: allowing the Principal Investigator and Co-Investigators (CoIs) to edit proposals in a collaborative way; graphically plotting target visibilities and the probability of realising the requested observing conditions; retrieving target information directly from Simbad[1]; and updating a submitted proposal (before the deadline). There are also some practical implications: each of the CoIs will need to have an ESO User Portal account[2], and it will no longer be possible to directly resubmit existing LaTeX proposals into the new system. Finally, the ESOFORM package — which served the community for decades — will be retired.

Please stay tuned, as there will be further announcements related to the new p1 system and its rollout via the usual ESO communication channels.

Links

[1] Simbad: simbad.u-strasbg.fr/simbad
[2] ESO User Portal: www.eso.org/UserPortal

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Fellows at ESO

Elyar Sedaghati

Growing up in 1980s Iran during the war, looking up at the night sky was the only thing that gave me some form of comfort and hope. You see, quite often electricity supplies of entire cities were cut for whole nights to give enemy bombers minimal visibility; a small win for my curious eyes during an otherwise desperate situation. Observing with my toy telescope, looking up at the Moon and the planets, served as a form of escapism from the ugliness of the reality unfolding around me. It is hence fair to say that I owe a lot to astronomy for carrying me through such difficult times. Fast forward a couple of decades, and fortunate enough to have escaped with my life, I found myself studying Natural Sciences at Cambridge University in the UK. While, by now, the figurative scars of war had been healed, fascination and curiosity with the heavens had very much made a permanent impression on me.

After obtaining my Bachelor's degree, with a specialisation in astronomy, I had to leave science and work in industry, both in order to deal with the financial burdens resulting from being a foreign student in the UK, and to handle the endless complications associated with staying in the UK with my passport. Fast forward a few years; having obtained enough pieces of paper to be allowed to live in the EU, I finally went back to university and obtained my Master's degree in physics from the Freie Universität Berlin, with a thesis on the detection of exoplanetary atmospheres using ground-based facilities. It was during this thesis that I had the chance to work on some Very Large Telescope (VLT) data using the FOcal Reducer/low dispersion Spectrograph (FORS2) instrument, and I got to know ESO and Paranal through my interactions with my then long-distance supervisor, Petr Kabath, who was working at Paranal.

After that, it was only natural to continue with doctoral studies in the same field of research, which I managed to start under the supervision of Heike Rauer, the Principal Investigator for the ESA mission PLAnetary Transits and Oscillations of stars (PLATO) at the German Space Agency (DLR), in Berlin. Having previously worked on FORS2 exoplanet transmission spectroscopy data — obtaining observations tracing minute variations in

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