

In memoriam Nichi D'Amico

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Nicolò (Nichi) D'Amico, President of the Italian National Institute for Astrophysics, passed away on 14 September 2020 at his home in Sardinia. Appointed as president of INAF in 2015, he was confirmed for a second term on December 2019, the first president to be reconfirmed in the history of this prestigious Italian institution.

Nichi was a radio-astronomer with a passion, more than an interest, for pulsars. Following a career as INAF staff, he was appointed full Professor of Astrophysics at the University of Cagliari. He directed the construction and the early operation of the Sardinia Radio Telescope (SRT), one of the largest single-dish radio telescopes in the world. He received the CSIRO Medal certificate in 1993 and the European Cartesio Prize in 2005 for the first discovery of a “double pulsar”.

In his role as INAF President he boosted research in astrophysics in Italy, paying



INAF

special attention to international collaborations and common research infrastructures. He represented Italy on the ESO Council during a key phase in its history, providing decisive national support to the construction of ESO's Extremely Large Telescope (ELT) and its instrumentation.

He was the head of the Italian delegation in the negotiations that led to the Square

Figure 1. Nichi D'Amico during the second SKA Intergovernmental Organisation Negotiations meeting in January 2016 at the Accademia dei Lincei in Rome, Italy.

Kilometre Array (SKA) becoming an Intergovernmental Organisation and his fundamental interest in the Cherenkov Telescope Array brought the Headquarters of CTA to the INAF premises in Bologna.



CTAO

A rendering of several telescopes of the Cherenkov Telescope Array, at the southern site at ESO's Paranal Observatory in Chile. With its large collecting area and wide sky coverage, the CTA will be the largest and most sensitive array of gamma-ray telescopes in the world.