

Call for Public Surveys with VISTA

Following a recommendation by ESO's Scientific and Technical Committee (STC), ESO issues a call for Letters of Intent for Public Surveys with the wide-field near-infrared imager VIRCAM mounted on [VISTA](#).

A public survey is understood to be an observing programme in which the investigators commit to produce and make publicly available, within a defined time, a fully reduced and scientifically usable data set that is likely to answer one or more major scientific question, be of general use and of broad interest to the astronomical community. The raw data are public immediately. A survey is envisaged to be a massive observing programme to be allocated over several semesters. Please also consult the ESO Public Survey Policies at <http://www.eso.org/sci/observing/PublicSurveys/policies.html>.

This call covers the time of allocations starting during P98 (October 2016). The available time for the surveys is contingent on the completion of the on-going VISTA surveys and limited to approximately three years due to the arrival of 4MOST at VISTA. Observations will be carried out in service mode.

The letters of intent should include the following items:

1. Title and Abstract
2. Principal Investigator (PI) and co-investigators
3. Scientific rationale and immediate objectives (3 pages)
4. Description of competing surveys (1 page)
5. Observing strategy (1 page)
6. Estimated observing time, including the distribution of observing time over semesters and the expected distribution in right ascension, required observing conditions (lunar phase, image quality, sky transparency)
7. Data Management Plan including a description of the responsibilities within the proposing team, description of the data products and justification of their **legacy value** (3 page). Please note that the legacy value is an important aspect of public surveys, and is considered carefully by the review panel.

A LaTeX form is available at:

<http://www.eso.org/sci/observing/PublicSurveys/docs/PStemplate2015.tex>

The deadline for letters of intent for public surveys is

15 October 2015 12:00 CEST.

Letters should be submitted only in PDF format to opo@eso.org. The Public Survey Panel (PSP) will review the Letter of Intent. Some teams will then be invited to submit proposals for the P98 deadline for ESO observing proposals (expected to be end of March 2016) for evaluation by the PSP and the OPC.

The ESO Director General will select the successful public surveys based on the recommendations of the PSP and the OPC, which will evaluate their scientific excellence, and on their technical feasibility. The selected teams will be asked to prepare a survey management plan, whose approval by ESO is mandatory before final acceptance of a public survey.

Please consider the following conditions:

- No proprietary time will be granted; raw data will become available immediately via the ESO Science Archive Facility.
- The ESO Science Archive Facility will be the repository of the survey products and provide the primary access of these products to the ESO community. Survey data products are to be prepared according to the ESO science data product standard and submitted in agreement with the policies for ESO Phase 3. The teams will be responsible for processing and validating the data products. Survey data product releases are expected every year.
- Progress of the approved surveys will be reviewed regularly by ESO and the PSP. Corrective measures will be identified in cases where the survey execution is delayed, or the data product delivery schedule cannot be maintained.