



ANNOUNCEMENT OF OPPORTUNITY FOR OBSERVING TIME AT THE GRAN TELESCOPIO CANARIAS



SEMESTER 2009A: MARCH 1st - AUGUST 31st 2009

Submission deadline: **3 October 2008**

The GTC Project Office is pleased to announce the first regular call for observing time proposals for the 10.4-m Gran Telescopio Canarias (GTC), open to the GTC user community. The first semester of regular science operation for the GTC, semester 2009A, will run from March 1st 2009 until August 31st 2009. In this early phase of telescope operation there will be a number of operational restrictions that are detailed below.

All interested applicants must use the IAC's CAT on-line system for submitting their proposals. This can be found at <http://cat.iac.es/> where also instructions are provided. The deadline for submission is 3 October 2008. Proposals that are granted time by the respective time allocation committees will be asked to provide detailed observing information as the second phase of the submission process.

1. Available observing time

Scientific operation of the telescope will commence in March 2009. Although telescope and instrument commissioning work will continue during the semester our expectation is that at least 50% of the nights will be available for science exploitation. Priority will be given to the dark periods of the month.

For reasons of logistics and observing efficiency a minimum request of 10 hours of integration time will apply. This minimum excludes the time for source acquisition and standard calibrations (but must include time for extraordinary calibrations).

During this first semester GTC will not consider override proposals.

2. Instrumentation

The OSIRIS spectrograph and imager for the optical wavelength range will be the only instrument available during this first semester. Hence only proposals for this instrument will be accepted. On-sky commissioning of the instrument will take place just prior to the start of the semester and hence not all characteristics will be verified by the submission deadline. Therefore only the observing modes that pose lower risk will be offered during this early stage. These observing modes are:

- Broad-band imaging
- Tunable filter imaging (only red filter)
- Single, long-slit spectroscopy

Details of the instrument can be found at <http://www.gtc.iac.es/pages/instrumentacion/osiris.php>, including the observing programs on granted time and its reserved targets

CanariCam, GTC's mid-IR instrument, is due to be commissioned during the first semester with the aim of offering it to the community for Semester 2009B.

Other instruments, including visiting instruments, will not be supported during this first semester.

3. Telescope Support Model

During this first semester of operation of the GTC all observations will be carried out in service mode by trained observatory personnel. This will allow flexibility in optimizing the science return of the telescope as function of the atmospheric and technical circumstances each night. It should be noted that proposals with relaxed observing constraints will have a better chance of being completed successfully.

The GTC team, once discussed the second phase of the submission process with the applicants, could invite the applicant team to attend the observing run if considered the most convenient way to perform successfully the proposed observing program.

For general queries contact René Rutten: rene.rutten@gtc.iac.es