



# Support Astronomer Position at the GTC



Gran Telescopio Canarias (GTC) invites applications for one Support Astronomer (SA) position, based in La Palma (Spain).

The GTC, with a diameter of 10.4 metres, is the largest single aperture telescope in the world and it is in operation since March 2009. The GTC is sited at the Roque de los Muchachos Observatory (ORM) on the island of La Palma (Canary Islands) which is a world-class observatory and the best site in Europe for ground based optical/infra-red astronomy.

The Support Astronomers of the GTC are integrated in the science operations group that has the responsibility on the astronomical operations of GTC. The following profile is being sought for these positions:

a) Qualifications, knowledge and skills

Applicants must have a Ph.D. in observational astronomy or related subject, together with a good understanding of astronomical instrumentation. Experience with telescope and/or instrument building and commissioning will be a plus. The ability to work effectively with the engineering staff to diagnose and solve technical problems, plus a strong and competitive research programme are essential requirements. The successful applicant will become a member of the IAC Research Division. Applicants with research interests complementing those of the existing IAC staff would be especially welcomed. A guaranteed fraction of his/her time (20%) will be devoted to his/her own personal research. SAs, as Affiliate Scientist of the IAC, will have access to the common facilities available at the IAC for its staff, including funds for attending scientific meetings and for publication fees, computing infrastructure, etc.

Applicants must be able to communicate effectively in both English and Spanish, be self-motivated and lively team players with effective problem-solving and inter-personal skills. The ability to work without direct supervision is essential. Applicants should be able to maintain an established work schedule and to follow instructions precisely. Applicants with new and innovative ideas for exploiting and enhancing the observing capabilities of the GTC are encouraged to apply.

SAs will report directly to the GTC Head of Science Operations. The principal duties of the GTC Support Astronomers are as follows:

- a) Provision of night-shift support and scientific and technical advice to visiting astronomers.
- b) SAs will be expected to regularly conduct service observing on GTC, including performing preliminary data analysis, approximately six nights in every month.
- c) SAs will also be responsible, as instrument specialists, for the good condition of the GTC facility instruments, including planning strategies in support of data reduction, calibration and data archiving.
- d) SAs will be involved, together with the GTC engineering staff, in the integration and commissioning of the new science instruments at the telescope. In addition, opportunities will exist for the successful candidates to participate and contribute to the development of new scientific instruments and telescope upgrades.
- e) Carrying out scientific competitive research.
- f) SA will participate in public relations activities.

The work will be split between the telescope at the ORM and the sea-level office (CALP) located in Breña Baja, La Palma. Appointed individuals should be available for night-time support on a rota system as part of a multi-disciplinary Operations Team. A full, current driving license is required.

## **Contractual Issues**

The contract will be signed with GRANTECAN, the organisation executing the operation of the GTC on behalf of the IAC. The starting annual gross salary will be 35.744,72 Euros (subject to income and social security taxes). SA positions are permanent positions, subject to a 6-month probation period. Medical insurance under the Spanish National Health Service is provided for the candidate, including coverage for spouse and children. The day and night-time work based at the ORM has additional bonuses.

## **Applications**

Interested applicants should send **NOT LATER THAN SEPTEMBER 30<sup>th</sup>, 2015**, PREFERABLY ELECTRONICALLY the following documentation: Curriculum Vitae, list of publications, a brief statement of research interests, and two letters of recommendation to be sent directly from active researchers who are familiar with the candidates' previous experience, to the Director of GRANTECAN, Centro de Astrofísica de La Palma, Cuesta de San José s/n, 38711 San Antonio, Breña Baja, Tenerife, Spain. (Phone +34 922 425 720 ext 739; Fax: +34 922 425 723; e-mail: [director@gtc.iac.es](mailto:director@gtc.iac.es)).

Successful candidates should be available by **January 11<sup>th</sup>, 2016**.

## **Further information**

Further information on these positions is available from the GTC Head of Science Operations Dr. Antonio Cabrera (☎: +34 922 425 720 ext 747 or e-mail [antonio.cabrera@gtc.iac.es](mailto:antonio.cabrera@gtc.iac.es)). Further details about the IAC and the GTC may be found at their respective web sites: <http://www.iac.es> and <http://www.gtc.iac.es>.