



ASTRONET BOARD MEETING

12 October 2021

MEETING MINUTES

Welcome

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and gave apologies from Conny Aerts and Michael Kramer. The Chair introduced Salvatore Sciortino who will replace Luca Valenziano for INAF on the Board.

Membership

The Chair reported that he had written to a number of potential new members: Austria, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, Ireland, Poland, Portugal & Switzerland, drawn from ESO Member States not currently engaged with Astronet. Contacts were made via ESO Council delegations. It was made clear to them that full membership was not a requirement on day one (observer status was possible) and positive initial responses have been received from these countries. Portugal Space submitted letter to Board requesting admittance as an Observer.

The Board considered that there was a risk that interest might be high now, whilst the Science Vision & Roadmap was being delivered, but might decrease if Astronet cannot demonstrate its continuing relevance. Members noted that the aim was to ensure Astronet is a proactive forum for discussing developments across Europe and hopefully raise awareness to European funding organisations. On its creation, several workpackages had been proposed, but had so far not been pursued. The Board should agree the route to reconsider its future programme (and item for its next meeting). **Action on office to include discussion of new workpackages in agenda for next Board meeting.**

The Board agreed that there should be a limit on the amount of time before an observer becomes a full member and that a review point should be indicated to new observers. In addition, the options should be clarified so that they work for both organisations (such as ESA, SKAO) and national representatives.

All members agreed to approve Portugal Space for observer status. **Action on the Chair to inform Portugal, including this limit and on the office to include the nominated representative in future mailings and meetings.**

Administration update

Saskia reported that Membership fees are due soon and invoices will be distributed.

Science Vision & Roadmap

The Chair stated that at a meeting of the Panel chairs in September the schedule had been reset (this can be seen on the attached slides). It was noted that an editorial team has been established (Claude Catala (CNRS, Paris), Ronald Stark (NOVA), Amelie Saintonge (UCL), Anja Andersen (Niels Bohr) who would meet soon. The Board was welcome to suggest additional members, as was the editorial team.

The chapters on Extreme Astrophysics and Societal Aspects were expected soon and would be circulated for comment via the web site and via Board members.

The Board considered the need for another broad community consultation once the draft of the full report was available. Whilst there was merit in this, it would also introduce a considerable time delay in completion and there was concern regarding how useful late-stage input might be.

However, it was agreed that we need to make every effort to ensure the report is inclusive and relevant. It was suggested that at the least the draft should, if possible, be circulated to those who have engaged with the process so far, such as those registering for the EAS webinar and those using the associated SLAC. Other means should be considered. **Action on Sara and the office to explore options for circulation of the report draft.**

Website

The Board agreed that the website is a front door for Astronet and needed to be regularly maintained and relevant. Opinions varied on the need to invest heavily in its design, since its prime role currently was as a gateway, but the Board noted that other organisations pages included more routine news and community information. Guy reported that CNRS continued to be willing to manage updates and to work with the CNRS contractors, who designed the current version. It was agreed that Board members should send their suggestions for changes to Malcolm & Kam by the end of the week. The suggestions will be forwarded to Guy. Depending on the type of changes proposed by the Board, a decision will be made on whether the changes can be made “in-house” or required an action to pay a firm to undertake a redesign. **Action on all to provide updates for the web pages.**

AOB

The Chair thanked Luca for his strong support for Astronet and many valuable contributions to ensuring its success, along with his work on the Board. The Board wished him success in his new role in 2022.

A doodle poll will be sent to arrange a fuller Board meeting for December, at which time the editorial team for the Science Vision will be invited to provide an update. **Action on the office to trawl for meeting date & invite editors.**