

First Announcement:

ESO Conference: The Galactic Bulge at the Crossroads

Dear Colleagues,

We are pleased to announce the ESO Conference, “The Galactic Bulge at the Crossroads”, to be held at the Gran Hotel, Pucon, Chile on December 9-14, 2018.

Rationale

The Galactic bulge is a primary component of the Milky Way, comprising $\sim 25\%$ of its stellar mass. All major Galactic stellar populations intersect there, reaching their highest densities, thus making it truly a crossroads. Current theory suggests that the bulge is the most ancient component of the Galaxy. Therefore, exploring the bulge is fundamental to understanding Galactic formation, structure and evolution.

Indeed, thanks to the advent of multiplexed spectrographs, and to the availability of resolved, wide-field NIR photometry, our knowledge of the structural, chemical and kinematical properties of the Galactic bulge has improved dramatically in the last few years.

Since 2013, when the last large international conference on the bulge was organized, progress has been truly impressive. New massively multiplexed spectroscopic surveys (Gaia-ESO Survey, APOGEE South, MOONS), new deeper NIR photometric surveys (e.g., VVVX, the extension of the VVV Survey) as well as Gaia have recently begun or will begin imminently. Concomitantly, ever more detailed studies of galaxies at high-redshift promise to catch bulges at the time of their formation.

At the same time, the interpretation of the accumulated data from this complex region is not straightforward, and many fundamental questions still remain to be answered. E.g. What is the age of the oldest stars? How was the metal-poor spheroid formed? What is the 3D shape of the bulge? What is the connection and interplay between the bulge and bar? How many bulge globular clusters are left to be found? What is the relationship of the central supermassive black hole with the bulge?

In this context, a conference on the Galactic bulge is now very timely, thanks to the host of exciting new results that are expected in 2018. To present and discuss them, and to begin building a consensus on their interpretation, we will gather the international astronomical community in December this year.

Conference Venue

The conference will be held in Pucon, which is a spectacular tourist town in the lovely south of Chile, surrounded by active volcanoes, beautiful lakes, national parks, etc. Pucon is a small, friendly, cozy town but boasts all of the infrastructure required to host a major international conference, as well as many attractive outdoor activities.

Conference Website

<http://www.eso.org/gbx2018>

Conference Fees

The registration fee is 250 Euros (or 150 Euros for students) including participation in the conference and the Colloquium material, the coffee breaks, the welcoming cocktail and the conference dinner. Limited financial aid will be available and details will appear in the 2nd announcement.

The registration fee is payable through the ESO shop via credit card (link to be available soon).

Deadlines

Abstract submission: August 1, 2018

Programme release: September 1, 2018

Regular registration and payment: November 1, 2018

Late registration and payment: December 1, 2018

Scientific Organizing Committee

Ivo Saviane (ESO, chair) Doug Geisler (Concepcion)

Manuela Zoccali (PUC, co-chair) Dante Minniti (UNAB)

Bruno Dias (ESO, co-chair) Sergio Ortolani (Padova)

Lia Athanassoula (LAM) Alvio Renzini (OAPD)

Beatriz Barbuy (Sao Paulo)

Contact Information

gbx2018@eso.org

Proceedings

Proceedings will be published on the Zenodo platform (<https://zenodo.org>).

Invited speakers

INTRODUCTION

Alvio Renzini

REVIEW TALKS

Cristina Chiappini Thorsten Naab

Natascha Forster-Schreiber R. Michael Rich

Oscar Gonzalez Juntai Shen

Andrea Kunder Elena Valenti

INVITED TALKS – General

Beatriz Barbuy David Nataf

Thomas Bensby Alejandra Recio-Blanco

Roger Cohen Alvaro Rojas-Arriagada

Victor Debattista Ricardo Schiavon

Bruno Dias Igor Soszynski

Noriyuki Matsunaga Manuela Zoccali

Dante Minniti

INVITED TALKS – The Future

Michele Cirasuolo

Heino Falcke

Livia Origlia

CONFERENCE SUMMARY

Ivo Saviane