

“Future Astronomers of Europe”

ESO's Contribution to the European Week for Scientific Culture

The European Southern Observatory is pleased to announce the launch of its new programme “Future Astronomers of Europe”. It is organized in conjunction with the European Week for Scientific Culture (November 22–27, 1993), with support from the Commission of the European Communities.

The main event of the ESO programme is a series of national essay contests among secondary school pupils who expect to obtain their baccalaureate in 1994 or 1995. The contests will take place this autumn in seventeen European countries and Chile.

The subject of all contests is the same: “An Observing Night with the ESO Very Large Telescope.”

The participants are requested to describe an astronomical research programme of their choice that they would like to carry out with this optical telescope which will be the world's largest when it is ready in the year 2000. No boundaries are set for the curiosity and phantasy of the “future astronomers” of Europe and the organizers look forward to receiving a lot of exciting, imaginative entries.

The National Contests

The national contests will be arranged in 17 European countries in September–October 1993. These are Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom. Because of its special relationship with Chile, ESO will also arrange a similar contest in that country. The exact timing of the contest will vary from country to country due to the different school calendars.

The practical arrangements are in the hands of national committees that have been set up in each of these countries and which comprise educators, scientists and ministerial representatives. The addresses are given on this page.

In each country, the national winners will be selected by a national jury. The prizes will be presented during national award ceremonies in the capitals, at the beginning of November 1993. The local media will receive full information about these events in due time directly from the national committees.

The National Committees	
Further information about the “Future Astronomers of Europe” programme may be obtained from the National Committees at the following addresses:	
Austria	Prof. H. Mucke, Planetarium der Stadt Wien, Oswald Thomas Platz 1, Vienna 2 Tel. +43-222-249432, Fax +43-222-8893541
Belgium	Dr. C. Sterken, Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Campus Ofenplein, Pleinlaan 2, B-1050 Brussels Tel. +32-2-641 3469, Fax +32-2-641 3495
Chile	ESO “Future Astronomers” Programme, European Southern Observatory, Alonso de Córdova 3107, Vitacura, Casilla 19001, Santiago 19 Tel. +56-2-2285006, Fax +56-2-2285006
Denmark	Mr. B. F. Jørgensen, Tycho Brahe Planetariet, Gl. Kongevej 10, DK-1610 Copenhagen V Tel +45-33-144888, Fax +45-33-142888
Finland	Mr. M. Hotakainen, Tahtitieteellinen Yhdistys Ursa Ry, Laivanvarustajankatu 3, SF-00140 Helsinki Tel. +358-02247187, Fax +358-0657728
France	Mr. B. Pellequer, Geospace d’Aniane, Boîte Postale 22, F-34150 Aniane Tel. +33-6-7034949, Fax +33-6-7752864
Germany	Dr. H.-U. Keller, Planetarium Stuttgart, Neckarstraße 47, D-70173 Stuttgart Tel. +49-711-162920, Fax +49-711-2163912
Greece	Dr. D. Simopoulos, Eugenides Foundation, Astronomy Department, 387 Sygrou Avenue, Palaio Faliro, GR-175 64 Athens Tel. +30-1-941-1181, Fax +30-1-941-7372
Ireland	Dr. T. Ray, Institute for Advanced Studies, 5 Merrion Square, Dublin 2 Tel. +353-1-662 1333, Fax +353-1-662 1477
Italy	Dr. B. Monsignori-Fossi, Osservatorio Astrofisico di Arcetri, Largo Enrico Fermi 5, I-50125 Florence Tel. +39-55-2752246, Fax +39-55-220039
Luxembourg	Dr. Jeannot Hansen, Ministère de l’Education Nationale, 29 Rue Aldringen, L-1926 Luxembourg Tel. +352-4781, Fax +352-4785130
The Netherlands	Dr. P. Wisse, Museon, Stadhouderslaan 41, NL-2517 The Hague Tel. +31-70-338 1338, Fax +31-70-354 1820
Norway	Prof. Jan-Erik Solheim, IMR, Nordlysobservatoriet, Universitetet i Tromsø, N-9037 Tromsø Tel. +47-83-45150, Fax +47-83-89852
Portugal	Dr. T. Lago, Centro de Astrofisico, Universidade do Porto, Rua do Campo Alegre 823, P-4100 Porto Tel. +351-2-600 1672, Fax +351-2-6003654
Spain	Mrs. A. Sanchez, Planetario de Madrid, Parque Tierno Galvan, E-28045 Madrid Tel. +34-1-467 3898, Fax +34-1-468 1154
Sweden	Dr. Aa. Sandquist, Stockholms Observatorium, S-13336 Saltsjöbaden Tel. +46-8-164447, Fax +46-8-7174719
Switzerland	Mr. M. Wieland, Schweizer Jugend Forscht/La Science Appelle les Jeunes, Technoramastrasse 1, CH-8404 Winterthur Tel. +41-52-242 4440, Fax +41-52-242 2967
United Kingdom	Dr. P. Moore, Farthings, West Street, Selsey, Sussex, England Tel. +44-24-3603668, Fax +44-24-3607237

The 1st Prizes

The 18 national winners of the 1st prizes will be invited to spend two weeks at ESO during the second half of November 1993. They will participate in a specially conceived programme which will be the dream of any young astronomy fan: it includes "complete immersion" in a professional research environment, with the opportunity to travel to a remote observatory and to perform observations with one of the world's best astronomical telescopes. The participants will be part of a multinational group of young people sharing their interest for astronomy, but with very different backgrounds, thus providing plenty of opportunities for cultural enrichment. As far as the time permits, an interesting social programme will also be arranged.

The participants will first travel from their home countries to the ESO Headquarters in Garching near Munich (Germany). Here, they will receive preliminary instructions from professional European astronomers, which will enable them to prepare a real observational research programme in all details. Next, they will travel together to the ESO La Silla observatory in Chile, where they will perform real astronomical observations with a major telescope, under the guidance of ESO astronomers. The observations will be reduced, interpreted and prepared for publication. The participants will therefore experience the entire scientific process, from the conception of a programme to the results of the observations.

This unique event will be given full media coverage in the form of associated press conferences before and after the trip to South America.

How to Participate in the Essay Contest

More complete information about this essay contest and participation forms

Change of Editor

Dear readers:

This will be the last issue of *The Messenger* prepared under my editorship. Beginning with the September 1993 issue, *Marie-Hélène Ulrich*, ESO staff astronomer, will take over and from now on, all related correspondence should be directed to her (email: mulrich@eso.org; Internet).

The ESO Director General has kindly agreed to relieve me from this most interesting, but time-consuming job because of my other duties at ESO, in particular as Secretary to the ESO C&EE Programme.

I take this opportunity to thank most cordially all contributors to the Messenger issues during the past years. It has been an exciting and very rewarding experience to have been so closely involved in spreading the word about the numerous activities in and around ESO.

Please continue to give the same friendly and efficient support to my successor; I am sure that she will in return provide you with a most efficient vehicle to let the world learn about your achievements.

Throughout my two terms as Messenger Editor (1976–1979 and 1986–1993), I have always enjoyed to work with the Technical Editor, *Kurt Kjär*. I am happy that he will continue to put all of his long and irreplaceable experience into the timely and efficient preparation of each issue. I am extremely thankful for his friendly and competent help and also his willingness to work long hours whenever needed in order to bring out a new Messenger issue in time. If you have liked reading this journal over the years, and if you have had difficulties in finding more than a few errors, it is above all due to his devotion. *R. M. WEST*

will be available from the national committees in late July 1993. Information packages will be made available to all

secondary schools in the mentioned countries.

ESO Exhibition in Florence

As any visitor will testify, Italy is the land of contrasts, of a striking, yet harmonious cohabitation of breathtaking masterpieces of art from many epochs, be it paintings, music or architecture – and similar expressions of ultramodern life.

This was not different when on March 27, ESO's travelling exhibition opened its doors at the Sala D'Arme of the 14th Century Palazzo Vecchio, one of the

most prestigious locations for exhibitions in Florence.

On this Saturday morning, about 200 guests attended the inauguration ceremony, held at the magnificent Salone



Figure 1: Palazzo Vecchio (the Old Palace), the site of the ESO exhibition in Florence.

FIRST ANNOUNCEMENT

The Third CTIO/ESO Workshop

"The Local Group: Comparative and Global Properties"

will be held in La Serena, Chile, from January 24 to 28, 1994.

Further information can be obtained from the following addresses:

e-mail (Internet): lgroup@ctios3.ctio.noao.edu

FAX: +56051 205342

mail: CTIO/ESO Workshop, CTIO, Casilla 603, La Serena, Chile