

# BINA/BIPASS STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

(Thursday 30/11/2023, 09:00 UT)

## **PRESENT:**

- MDB = Michaël De Becker (ULiège, Belgium)
- PDC = Peter De Cat (ROB, Belgium)
- SKG = Shashikiran Ganesh (PRL, India)
- SJ = Santosh Joshi (ARIES, India)
- LM = Laurent Mahy (ROB, Belgium)

## **ABBREVIATIONS:**

- AI = Action item
- SC = Steering Committee

## **1. PROCEEDINGS 3RD BINA WORKSHOP**

The proceedings of the 3rd BINA Workshop will be published in Volume 93 (2024) of the *Bulletin de la Société Royale des Sciences de Liège*. Currently, all papers begin on page 1, which needs to be manually adjusted. This task will be handled by MDB, who will also create ADS entries for the papers once they are published.

The preamble paper, *Proceedings of the 3rd BINA Workshop: Scientific Potential of Indo-Belgian Cooperation* by Joshi et al., is now finalized with only a few modifications remaining after proofreading.

## **2. WORK VISITS**

### **BIPASS**

Stéphane Goriely (ULB, Belgium) has expressed interest in visiting the Indian Institute of Astrophysics (IIA, Bangalore) and the University of Calicut (UOC, Calicut).

### **BINA**

The final two BINA work visits have been scheduled:

- Katrien Kolenberg (UAntwerpen/KU Leuven/VUB, Belgium) will visit Ajit K. Kembhavi (IUCAA) and Priya Hasan (MANUU) in the period 27/11/2023-10/12/2023 to initiate collaborations in citizen science, public engagement, and STE(A)M education.
- Sebastián Gaspar Zúñiga Fernández (ULiège, Belgium) will visit Santosh Joshi (ARIES) and Abhijit Chakraborty (PRL) in the period 04/12/2023-15/12/2023. However, he applied for a tourist visa instead of a business visa, which is required for entry into PRL. This may result in the cancellation of his visit to PRL.

### **VISA REQUIREMENTS**

Belgian colleagues should always apply for a business visa when planning work visits to India.

## **3. BINA WEBSITE**

The development of the BINA website is still on hold. The following steps have been proposed to resume progress:

- PDC and LM will discuss the best course of action with Joan Vandekerckhove.
- An email should be sent to BINA/BIPASS partner institute contacts requesting input on institutions, instrumentation, projects, and activities.

## 4. VARIA

The **1.04-m ARIES telescope** (Nainital, India) received an upgrade.

Now that we are entering the last month before the official of BINA-2, we have taken the time to reflect on the **future of the BINA network**. In addition to the continuation of soft money for network activities (short research and/or exploration visits, along with the organization of meetings), we would like to be able to fund longer research stays for PhD students and (young) postdocs in Belgium and India to collaborate in all types of research areas in space science, including science communication and education. This is completely separate and independent from the operation costs of the 3.6-m DOT telescope (for which the Belgian astronomical community does not want pay under the current circumstances) and only concerns collaborations between Indian and Belgian researchers.

As there will be elections for a new government in Belgium in 2024, now is the best time to express these wishes to people that might have an influence on the budget that will be available for science in the (near) future. The Belgian SC members therefore plan to request an **open discussion with BELSPO delegates** (e.g. Laurent Ghys) about future possibilities for bilateral collaborations in general, but more specifically for our collaboration with India. They will also ask Katrien Kolenberg to take part in this discussion (to have the link to public outreach and the Planetarium). Ideally, this discussion should take place in the beginning of 2024.

→ AI PDC: Invite Katrien Kolenberg to take part in a discussion with BELSPO about the possibilities for funding in the BINA framework the future.

NEXT MEETING:

Beginning of February 2024.