

CALL FOR SPHERE SCIENCE VERIFICATION PROPOSALS

Deadlines

SV Run: 1-11 December 2014

Deadline for SV proposals: 15 October 2014 18:00 CEST

SPHERE, the Spectro-Polarimetric High-contrast Exoplanet Research instrument is the extreme adaptive optics system and coronagraphic facility at the VLT. Its primary science goal is imaging, low-resolution spectroscopic, and polarimetric characterization of extra-solar planetary systems at optical and near-infrared wavelengths. SPHERE is fully described at:

<http://www.eso.org/sci/facilities/paranal/instruments/sphere.html>

SPHERE will be offered to the community for Science Verification (SV) for 11 nights at in December 2014. All astronomers are invited to participate in this unique opportunity to obtain early science with SPHERE and thus to demonstrate the scientific capabilities of this unique instrument.

Proposals will be reviewed by an internal panel and allocated time on the basis of scientific merit and feasibility, as well as in the demonstrated ability of the Principle Investigators to deliver results on a timely basis. It should be noted that given the timing of the SV process, SPHERE proposals submitted to the OPC for P95 will not be considered for SV and that, all other things being equal, preference will be given to proposals covering RA ranges not reachable during P95.

The list of protected targets for SPHERE Guaranteed Time Observations is given at <http://www.eso.org/sci/observing/teles-alloc/gto/95.html>. Observations of targets protected by SPHERE GTO will not be accepted for SV.

The observations will be conducted in Service Mode by a dedicated team of ESO astronomers. The SPHERE SV team will be able to assist the successful PI's in the preparation and optimisation of the OB's on a best effort basis only.

The latest version of the SPHERE data reduction pipeline will be available for reduction of the SV data and the SV team will try - on a best efforts basis - to provide pipeline-reduced data to all SV PIs. Proposers are reminded that all SV data are made public worldwide immediately after passing the usual quality control checks. This will also apply to data processed by the SV team.

Please read the SPHERE documentation carefully and use the SPHERE exposure time calculator (www.eso.org/observing/etc/) to estimate the exposure times. Overheads may be estimated using the information in the Overheads

webpage, which is available at
<http://www.eso.org/sci/facilities/lpo/cfp/overheads.html>.

Please use the special LaTeX template that can be downloaded from the SPHERE science verification web site (<http://www.eso.org/sci/activities/vltsv/>). Proposals may also be prepared using any suitable text editor following the guidelines of the LaTeX template, but please send us **only the pdf output** and please do not send finding charts at this time. The SV team will request these in due course.

Applications should be sent by EMAIL to spheresv@eso.org not later than 15 October 2014, 18:00 CEST.