



ESO/Cou-1543 Public  
Date: 05.12.2014

# EUROPEAN ORGANISATION FOR ASTRONOMICAL RESEARCH IN THE SOUTHERN HEMISPHERE

---

## **COUNCIL**

**133<sup>rd</sup> Meeting**  
**Garching, 3 and 4 December 2014**

### **E-ELT GTO Policy**

This document is for **Public Distribution**

The policy for the granting of Guaranteed Time Observations on the E-ELT was approved by Council during their meeting on 3-4 December 2014.

## 1. Introduction

This document defines the ESO policy for the allocation of Guaranteed Time Observations (GTO) for the E-ELT in compensation for staff effort invested in E-ELT instrumentation and related systems by external consortia.

## 2. Eligibility for GTO

Consortia will be rewarded with Guaranteed Time Observations for providing hardware or software that enhances the ESO scientific capabilities, allowing ESO to focus resources and expertise across the member states on projects which are scientifically beneficial for the ESO community.

## 3. GTO awards

The total number of GTO nights on the E-ELT per annum shall target a maximum of 15% of the number of observable nights, as foreseen for E-ELT in Cou-1326 (2010). The GTO will be awarded according to the following guidelines:

- The number of GTO nights available for each instrument will be specified in advance in the Call for Proposals, or before the start of agreement negotiations if no Call is made.
- The number of GTO nights will be non-negotiable.
- All Instrument or sub-system consortia will be offered a GTO compensation which is proportional to the estimated scope of the construction agreement. Since the GTO must be decided and stated in the call for proposals, before even Phase A, the allocation will be set based on the *expected scale* of the facility. As a baseline, an average facility instrument will receive a total of 65 nights of GTO.
- The award will normally be scheduled over the first 8 years of operation for the E-ELT and sooner if possible.
- The total number of GTO nights will be granted to the external consortium and distributed as agreed within their Memorandum of Understanding (MoU).
- All proposed GTO awards, together with an updated model showing predicted future total GTO usage, must be presented to Council for approval in each case.
- ESO will schedule the GTO, in consultation with the instrument PI, close to the time of instrument delivery.

## 4. GTO on other instruments

Although the award of GTO to a consortium should be used primarily with a consortium's own instrument, a complete scientific programme may require observations with other instruments. Instrument consortia will be allowed to take a maximum of 25% of their awarded GTO on another instrument. The instrument selected must be in regular operation during the period of GTO.

If the same GTO science is proposed for the same instrument by two consortia, priority will be given to the consortium which constructed it. Other conflicts will be resolved by the

Observing Programmes Committee (OPC), as is already the case for clashes between GTO and Open Time proposals.

## **5. Cash Contributions**

External cash contributions in return for GTO allocations will not be a normal part of instrument funding. In some cases, however, ESO may not have sufficient funds within its budget to allow construction of an instrument that would otherwise be of scientific importance for the whole community. In these cases, GTO allocation in return for cash funding will be allowed, provided it is scientifically driven – i.e. it must enable a key scientific goal of E-ELT to be reached.

These restrictions do not apply if a cash contribution is made by a consortium without any consequent GTO return.

*[Council, in discussion prior to the approval of this policy, made it clear that they wished to see an analysis of the impact of any cash contributions on the overall GTO position as part of the approval process].*

## **6. Penalties on GTO**

Penalties on GTO will normally be included in ESO's agreements with consortia for

- late delivery of an instrument to the E-ELT;
- significant failure to meet the agreed technical specifications. The reduction in GTO will be proportional to the loss in overall scientific capability in this case.

The implementation of GTO penalties must be approved by Council. Consortia will be exempt from penalties if the delay is due to factors beyond their control.

## **7. GTO Allocation Process**

The GTO allocation process for E-ELT will follow existing rules governing the use of GTO on the VLT, as defined in Appendix 2 of the "VLT/VLTI Science Operations Policy" (Cou-996 rev, approved in December 2004), modified in part by "Allocation of GTO Proposals" (Cou-1301, approved in June 2010). However, in the case of Large GTO Programmes – those requesting more than 100 hr – the GTO teams will be expected (cf. invited, previously) to make public the resulting science products on a timescale to be agreed with ESO in a Data Management Plan.

## **8. Service and visitor mode**

The first 50% of guaranteed time shall be taken in Visitor Mode, in order to ensure that the observatory benefits from presence of consortium experts. The remainder can be taken in any mix of Visitor- and Service-Mode nights. In the case of Service-Mode nights, proposals ranked higher than grade 3 will be treated as Class A programmes for the purpose of scheduling.