

# Terms of Reference of the ACURA Advisory Council on the SKA

## Preamble

The Terms of Reference recognize the importance of Canadian participation in the Square Kilometre Array Project (SKA) and the need for university involvement. University representatives will advise ACURA and NRC on the needs of university astronomers during the design, pre-construction and construction phases of the SKA. This need is to be filled by the ACURA Advisory Council on the SKA (hereafter AACS).

Members of the AACS include astronomers and administrators at ACURA universities and representatives from Canadian industry who are working to advance Canadian partnership in the international SKA project and participating in the national program of activities in support of the SKA. The goals of the AACS are to:

- Promote and advance Canadian participation in the SKA project;
- Participate in the articulation of scientific, technical and strategic goals for Canada's role in the SKA and advise ACURA on their substance and means of attainment;
- Coordinate participation among universities, NRC and industry in SKA pre-construction work packages;
- Define a role for Canadian scientific participation and leadership in the SKA;
- Advise on strategic development of technology for the SKA in Canadian Industry.

## 1. Terms of Reference and Procedures

In order to achieve the above broad goals, the AACS will:

- 1.1. Meet regularly to advance Canadian participation in the SKA;
- 1.2. Invite representatives of NRC to such meetings to discuss progress on SKA work-packages, and provide feedback to NRC;
- 1.3. Coordinate, review, and discuss SKA pre-construction activities, and facilitate the establishment of working groups or other internal collaborative initiatives as necessary;
- 1.4. Facilitate the participation of industrial partners in the Canadian pre-construction SKA program;
- 1.5. Promote the SKA to national stakeholders and the public;
- 1.6. Identify potential resources to support all elements of the Canadian SKA program.

## 2. Governance of the AACS

The AACS Chair will provide a formal written report to each meeting of the ACURA Board (and additionally as the Chair deems necessary or as requested by the ACURA Board), containing: (i) a summary of AACS meetings since the last report to the Board; (ii) updates on Canadian and international SKA developments; and (iii) advice on steps ACURA should take to inform and advise NRC and other Government bodies on matters relating to Canada's engagement in the SKA.

### **3. Membership of AACS and of Other Related Committees**

- 3.1. The Council will consist of both voting members and non-voting members.
- 3.2. The Council will consist of a minimum of nine (9) voting members and a maximum of fourteen (14) total members..
- 3.3. The appointment process should strive for an appropriate balance in geography and gender, in accordance with the make-up of the communities from which members are selected.
- 3.4. ACURA will appoint the Chair and may appoint up to three other members, all as voting members.
- 3.5. The Canadian Astronomical Society (CASCA) may appoint up to three voting members.
- 3.6. The Canadian SKA Industry Association (see item 6) may appoint up to three voting members.
- 3.7. If not already appointed as voting members of AACS as described above, the following individuals or their designates may serve ex officio on AACS as non-voting members:
  - a. the Canadian SKA Science Director
  - b. the Executive Director of ACURA
  - c. the Chair of the ACURA Board
  - d. the President of CASCA
- 3.8. NRC will have no members on the Council, but shall be invited to send up to three observers to each meeting of the Council, to participate in all discussions except any “in camera” sessions (see item 7.3).
- 3.9. AACS may appoint a Vice-Chair from amongst its voting members to act in place of the Chair when the Chair is absent.
- 3.10. Initial appointments of voting members to the Council will have staggered end dates to ensure gradual turnover. Subsequent terms of all voting members of the Council will be three years, renewable.
- 3.11. The AACS Chair shall serve ex officio on the ACURA Board.
- 3.12. Whenever the NRC advises that the position of Canadian SKA Science Director has become vacant, AACS shall recommend to the ACURA Board a nomination for this position.

### **4. Decisions of AACS**

The AACS is expected to normally reach a consensus on motions, nominations, and recommended actions to be undertaken by its members. In cases where a recorded vote is requested by a Council member or deemed desirable by the Chair, the following rules will apply:

- 4.1. Each voting member of the Council will have one vote. The Chair will vote only to break a tie amongst the other voting members.
- 4.2. To pass, a motion requires a majority vote, either by a quorum of voting members present at meetings of the Council, or by electronic written vote.
- 4.3. A quorum of the AACS will be one-half of the voting members.

### **5. Canadian SKA Science Advisory Committees**

Whenever the Council requires additional information or activity on SKA scientific matters beyond the expertise or capability covered by its members, it may vote to convene an ad hoc Canadian SKA Science Advisory Committee (CSSAC). The relevant procedures are as follows:

- 5.1. A CSSAC shall be convened to answer a defined set of questions or charges from AACS, or to organise a specific event or series of events. Any such activity shall relate to SKA science, the Canadian SKA program or Canadian participation in the international SKA project.
- 5.2. Members of a CSSAC shall be appointed by the AACS in consultation with the CASCA Board.
- 5.3. A list of all current and previous CSSACs, along with their corresponding responsibilities and reports, will be maintained on the AACS webpage (see item 8.2), except when judged by AACS to be of a confidential or sensitive nature.

## **6. The Canadian SKA Industry Association**

The Canadian SKA Industry Association (CSIA) is an independent body composed of representatives of firms with an interest in participating in the development of the SKA. Industrial firms may be full participants in the AACS through the CSIA, or as observers at Council meetings by invitation from the Chair (see item 7.2). Industry participants are expected to share development risks in their respective SKA-related research and development programs. The relevant procedures are as follows:

- 6.1. Industry participants shall be represented in AACS through the CSIA.
- 6.2. The CSIA will be constituted by a separate agreement among industry participants.
- 6.3. The CSIA may appoint up to three voting members to the AACS (as per section 3.7).

## **7 Meetings**

- 7.1. AACS will meet as required, but no less than twice per year, normally in advance of an ACURA Board meeting.
- 7.2. By invitation of the Chair, additional observers may attend meetings of the AACS as non-voting participants.
- 7.3. Notwithstanding the above, the Chair may declare portions of any meeting to be restricted to AACS members only.

## **8 Community Engagement**

- 8.1. AACS shall make regular calls to the Canadian astronomy community for agenda items and submissions to be considered at its meetings.
- 8.2. AACS shall establish and maintain a webpage to serve as a portal and repository of all AACS and Canadian SKA activities and relevant information.
- 8.3. AACS shall post public summaries of its meetings and reports from its CSSACs (see item 5.11) on this webpage.