

Call for nominations to the AAL Science Advisory and Project Oversight Committees

[Astronomy Australia Limited](#) (AAL) seeks applications for its Science Advisory and Project Oversight Committees. These two new committees are expected to hold their first meetings in August 2018, and will replace AAL's four existing advisory committees.

AAL encourages applications from all interested candidates with the appropriate expertise and skills. AAL specifically considers gender balance across committee appointments, and seeks to maximise the number of AAL member institutions involved with AAL committees.

About AAL

AAL is a not-for-profit company limited by guarantee, whose [members](#) are all Australian universities and research organisations with significant astronomical research capability. AAL's core business is to:

- engage with astronomers in support of the national research infrastructure priorities of the Australian astronomy decadal plan
- advise the Australian Government on the investments necessary to realise those priorities
- manage some of these investments.

AAL finances a portfolio of infrastructure projects and facilities from Australian Government funding. AAL oversees the progress of these projects, and reports regularly on them to the Government.

Advisory Committees

In order to make informed decisions about the best way to invest in astronomy infrastructure, AAL relies upon strategic and technical advice from its advisory committees. The Australian astronomy landscape is undergoing significant change. In 2017 Australia signed a ten year strategic partnership agreement with the European Southern Observatory. In 2018, the management of the AAT will be transferred to a consortium of Australian universities, with AAL as the consortium manager. The Square Kilometre Array precursor telescopes are approaching full-scale operations, and AAL has increased its involvement with high-energy astrophysics facilities. Meanwhile, the volume and complexity of astronomical data sets has grown considerably, and the need for organised data science solutions to astronomical problems has increased. In order to respond to these changes, AAL has increasing need for cross discipline advice, and so has closed its four existing committees, and these two new committees will be formed.

AAL is seeking nominations from Australian-based astronomers, along with technical personnel associated with Australian astronomy, willing to sit on the new committees.

AAL Science Advisory Committee

The AAL Science Advisory Committee (ASAC) is tasked with providing AAL with strategic advice on the infrastructure requirements of the Australian astronomical community, to enable them to address the six key science questions for Australian astronomy, as described in the Australian astronomy decadal plan:

- 1) How did the first stars and galaxies transform the Universe?
- 2) What is the nature of dark matter and dark energy?
- 3) How do galaxies form and evolve across cosmic time?
- 4) How do stars and planets form?
- 5) How are elements produced by stars and recycled through galaxies?
- 6) What is the nature of matter and gravity at extreme densities?

ASAC may be asked specific questions by the AAL Board but will also have a remit to provide overview advice on developments in astronomy and their relation to the Decadal Plan. AAL is seeking astronomers with particular expertise in the infrastructure needed to answer these key science questions. The ASAC will meet at least twice a year (one face-to-face meeting and remaining meetings via video-conference).

Call for Nominations

AAL Project Oversight Committee

The AAL Project Oversight Committee (APOC) will monitor and assess the progress of AAL-funded projects and activities, and assess whether project plans are being efficiently implemented. APOC will report on project progress to the AAL Board but may also be called on to provide feedback and guidance on the feasibility of project proposals. AAL is seeking astronomers and industry or technical experts with experience in project management and assessment of highly technical and scientific infrastructure projects.

The APOC will meet four times a year (one face-to-face meeting and three video-conferences).

The AAL Board will appoint the inaugural members of these two committees by early July. As the committees are new, approximately half the members will be appointed for a one year term and the remainder for a two year term. Future appointments will be made for two year terms.

Applications

If you consider yourself well placed to contribute to one of these committees via your expertise, ideas, and experience, please email applications@astronomyaustralia.org.au with a maximum three page application with:

- a covering letter describing your expertise relevant to the committee terms of reference
- a brief CV
- any relevant conflicts of interest.

AAL is committed to equity and diversity and encourages applications from all interested candidates with relevant expertise and skills.

Please do not hesitate to contact AAL if you have any questions regarding these committees:

[Mark McAuley](#), CEO, 03 9214 8036;

[James Murray](#), Senior Program Manager, 03 9214 8426;

[Mita Brierley](#), Senior Program Manager, 02 9850 6371

Applications close on Tuesday 19th June 5 PM AWST. Late applications will not be accepted.

Call for Nominations

AAL Science Advisory Committee (ASAC)

Terms of Reference

The AAL Science Advisory Committee (ASAC) is a committee of Astronomy Australia Ltd. The purpose of ASAC is to assist AAL by executing the following:

- Consider the suite of Australia's national telescopes and computing facilities (including the Australian share of international facilities) and assess whether they, both individually and in combination, cater for the needs of the Australian community in addressing the key science questions of the Australian Astronomy Decadal Plan 2016 - 2025;
- Advise on how to leverage Australian capabilities to maximise participation and collaboration in, and benefits from, astronomy infrastructure projects of national significance;
- Keep the Board apprised of global developments in major telescope facilities, astrophysical experiments and computing infrastructure, and provide it with strategic advice accordingly;
- Advise the Board on the strategic alignment of new project proposals with the Decadal Plan, and on their prospective scientific return-on-investment.

Membership

- ASAC will be composed of astronomers from a broad range of scientific and technical fields.
- Members of ASAC are appointed by the AAL Board for a two-year fixed term, with the possibility of renewal. Committee members will be appointed by AAL via an application process. AAL will appoint a Chair and Deputy Chair to the committee.
- The committee will comprise ten members, with diversity across the full breadth of Australian astronomy including (but not limited to): observing techniques and wavelength regimes, observation, theory and eResearch.
- An AAL Board member will sit on ASAC in an ex-officio (non-voting) capacity.
- The AAL Board may choose to include additional ex-officio (non-voting) positions, for multi-directional strategy and information sharing purposes.
- The committee will be limited to a maximum of 12 members (including ex-officio members)
- AAL aims for institutional, geographical, career stage and gender diversity across its advisory committees.
- Meeting frequency: At least twice per year (one face to face and the remaining via video conference), to be reviewed after one year.

AAL Project Oversight Committee (APOC)

Terms of Reference

The AAL Project Oversight Committee (APOC) is a committee of Astronomy Australia Ltd. The purpose of APOC is to assist AAL by executing the following:

- Monitor and assess the progress of all AAL-funded projects and facilities;
- Supply detailed commentary to the Board on project performance progress against milestones;
- Provide advice on potential or realised risks of AAL-funded projects;
- Provide advice on the eligibility and feasibility of new projects for NCRIS or other funding.

Membership

- Members of APOC are appointed by the AAL Board for a two-year fixed term, with the possibility of renewal.
- Committee members will be appointed by AAL via an application process.
- AAL will appoint a Chair to the committee.
- The committee will comprise seven members (including the Chair), with experience that covers a range of astronomical research infrastructure projects.
- Ex-officio members may be appointed as required by the AAL Board.
- AAL aims for institutional, geographical, career stage and gender diversity across its advisory committees.
- Meeting frequency: Four times per year (once in person, the rest via video conference), in line with project reporting requirements.