

Dear JCMT colleagues

SCUBA-2 is currently being commissioned, and it is anticipated that the instrument will be released to the community later in 2011. For at least the following 3 years, and possibly longer, the JCMT will be primarily dedicated to wide-field surveys using this instrument.

There is no identified development path for the JCMT beyond SCUBA-2 and its ancillary instruments FTS-2 and POL-2; indeed, all of the Observatory's resources have been focussed on bringing SCUBA-2 to a state of readiness. There is therefore a compelling need to consider whether there exists a scientific rationale for extending the operation of the telescope and potentially augmenting its capabilities.

With the agreement of the JCMT Board, I have initiated a study to assess the science case for continued operation and development of the JCMT and to derive an approximate cost estimate. The study is called JCMT2020 and the team is being chaired by Prof. Walter Gear of Cardiff University; other members are James di Francesco (HIA), Simon Craig (JAC) and David Henry (UKATC). Specifically, I have asked the study team to address the following questions:

1. Is there a world-leading science case for the JCMT up to 2020 and beyond?
2. What new instrumentation (if any) is necessary to accomplish this?
3. What telescope modifications (if any) are necessary to accomplish this?
4. How much will all this cost, to within $\pm 30\%$?

The team now seeks to gather a broad community input to the science case. Any members of the current JCMT community interested in contributing to this study are invited to

(a) visit this page to register for the JCMT2020 mailing list:
<http://mailman.jach.hawaii.edu/mailman/listinfo/jcmt2020>

(b) visit this page to register for the JCMT2020 wiki:
<http://www.jach.hawaii.edu/jcmt2020>

Both will be used as the study progresses, the former for discussion and the latter for posting documents (example science cases, draft reports, etc.)

Finally, users will be aware that the JCMT partnership that has served the community so well for the past 24 years is evolving, with the Netherlands having recently announced their withdrawal from the Observatory in 2013. This evolution does not imply that the JCMT will cease operations; on the contrary, the JCMT2020 study is of critical importance in this context since it will define whether the JCMT can remain at the forefront of submillimetre astronomy for several years to come. I invite your participation.

Kindest regards,
Gary Davis,
Director JCMT.