



Resolutions of the 7th Meeting of the BRICS Astronomy Working Group

20 May 2021

The BRICS Astronomy Working Group (BAWG) from Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa, as well as astronomers from these countries who attended the working group meeting on the BRICS Astronomy on the 19-20 May 2021. The meeting was hosted online on Zoom by IUCAA in Pune with the support of the Department of Science and Technology of India, and the delegates deliberated on strategic and operational matters and resolved as follows:

1. The Working Group previously identified and adopted the BRICS Intelligent Telescope and Data Network (BITDN) project as a flagship and also noted the report from the Secretariat that the flagship project was formally noted by the Ministers at the 2020 BRICS Ministerial Meeting as indicated in Declaration No.8 of the meeting held on 13 November 2020.
2. The Working Group understands that the BRICS governments are working on developing mechanisms for a Call for Proposals for flagship projects and that the PIs together with the support of the BAWG secretariat will rework and finalise the BITDN and submit it in line with the requirements of this Call for Proposals when it will be announced.
3. The Working Group discussed progress regarding the funding support and implementation of the BITDN. It was noted that the countries are at various stages of engaging with their respective governments and funding agencies to support the flagship. South Africa reported that a seed funding has been secured to get the flagship initiated from the Lead PI in Cape Town. The proposed plan is to employ a project coordinator and software developer on three-years contract to support and coordinate the work of the PIs and BRICS consortium partners. It was agreed that countries will continue to use existing facilities and resources to get the BITDN going into implementation in the early stages.
4. The BAWG agreed on tasking the PIs and Co-PIs of the flagship project to work closely

together to develop a practical workplan concerning the early implementation of the flagship project activities, before joint funding is available, including also the coordination of individual national activities during this early interim period.

5. The BAWG recommended that the focal points in each country should present the scientific results of the early phase of the BITDN to their corresponding Ministries in order to seek funding support to realize the flagship project until the centralized funding mechanism has been announced as indicated in Resolution No.2 above.
6. The BAWG noted the importance of enhancing collaboration among astronomers from the BRICS countries. The respective Focal Points in each country will organize a discussion on the creation of BRICS Astronomy Association, and report to the Secretariat on the position of their respective Ministries on the matter of an Association by the end of 2021 calendar year. The Secretariat shall summarize the reported information, and organize an online discussion on the possible forms of an Association no later than the first quarter of 2022, which will allow the question of the form of the Association to be finalized at the next 2022 BAWG meeting.
7. The BAWG thanked India for successfully hosting the 2021 meeting. China has offered to host the following meeting in 2022 and the Secretariat will work closely with China to ensure that the meeting will be a success.

Signed by the Secretariat on behalf of the BRICS Astronomy Working Group



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