

XII. AVAILABILITY OF INFORMATION

A. POLICY

AURA will provide information about research activities undertaken at AURA operated Centers to all interested parties: scientists, educators, students, authors, publishers, educational filmmakers, the news media and the general public. This policy applies to the availability of information and does not apply to detailed design of hardware that may be susceptible to commercial adaptation. Further, this policy should be read in the light of the AURA policy regarding Intellectual Property.

B. PROCEDURES

FOR ACTIVITIES GOVERNED BY NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION (NSF) CONTRACTUAL AGREEMENTS INCLUDING (CO-OPERATIVE AGREEMENTS):

1. Public Information Items:

The objective of these procedures is to make public information materials generated by AURA Centers funded by the NSF widely and easily accessible to communications media and the interested public. There are several AURA Centers supporting NSF astronomy initiatives.

Photographs, video features and news clips, and popular publications are available. While publications are copyrighted, images and videotapes are considered to be in the public domain. However, by accepting any product from an AURA Center, the user agrees that the material may not be used to state or imply the endorsement by the Center or AURA, or by any AURA employee, of any individual, philosophy, commercial product, process, or service. The user further agrees that the above statement of non-endorsement accompany each duplicate made of the original material, and that the propagation of this statement is a condition of subsequent duplication. Queries and requests should be directed to the appropriate Center's Public Information Office.

2. Scientific Data

- a. To promote the most efficient and rapid interpretation of results of observing programs carried out with NSF funded telescopes and instrumentation, the data shall be maintained for the exclusive use of the original investigator(s), for the scientific purposes for which a specific observing program was proposed and conducted, for eighteen (18) months following the completion of that observing program. After this proprietary period, which may be shortened at the discretion of the original investigator(s), the data will be made available to other (secondary) investigators, who must submit proposals describing how they plan to use the data;

- b. For data that reside at an AURA Center, such proposals will be subject to review on the basis of scientific merit, and the secondary investigator may be subject to charges for any costs incurred in reproducing and/or transmitting the data. These data will be available "as is," and the AURA Center can make no guarantees concerning the quality, consistency or completeness of the data. The AURA Center management will inform the original investigator of such requests and encourage those who wish to use the data to communicate with the original investigator concerning the details of the data and their suitability for the proposed investigation;
- c. For data that does not reside at an AURA Center, requests should be made directly to the original investigator(s) after the eighteen-month period. The original investigator is encouraged to share the data and to inform the AURA Center's management of the additional utilization or of any difficulties in complying with the request;
- d. Data taken with an instrument for engineering or test purposes may have scientific value. The availability of such data to outside investigators will be considered on a case-by-case basis and is at the discretion of the appropriate Director, to be exercised in a manner consistent with the policy stated herein;
- e. Synoptic data that are taken routinely by any AURA Center are made available without delay, and there are no restrictions on access by qualified investigators;
- f. This statement of data policy does not include policy that may govern any future data archiving programs undertaken by AURA Centers. Such policy will be found in the description of those programs; and,
- g. In all instances, either the principle or collaborating investigators can apply to the Appropriate Center Director for exception to this policy.

3. Engineering Materials

- a. Requests for engineering material, including instrument plans and prints, telescope plans and prints, etc., are subject to review and approval by the Director of the appropriate AURA Center, or a designee. Materials will be made available at cost to qualified individuals with demonstrated need; and,
- b. Single copies of all AURA engineering technical reports will be

provided, upon request to the Center at no cost. Multiple copies are available at cost.

4. Observatory Publications

Facilities manuals, requirements for proposal submission, proposal evaluation procedures and such other documentation and information required to conduct scientific research will be widely disseminated through the Center website.

C. PROCEDURES FOR ACTIVITIES GOVERNED BY NATIONAL AERONAUTICS AND SPACE ADMINISTRATION (NASA) CONTRACTUAL AGREEMENTS:

1. Public Information Items

a. The objective of these procedures is to make Space Telescope Science Institute (STScI) public information materials, generated by and in support of NASA's programs-widely and easily accessible to the communications media and the interested public. There is one AURA Center supporting NASA missions, the Space Telescope Science Institute; and,

b. NASA and STScI generated photographs, videos features, news clips, and popular publications are available from the STScI website. Images and videos are U.S. Government property and no copyright protection is asserted. However, by accepting any NASA or STScI product, the user agrees that the material may not be used to state or imply the endorsement by NASA or STScI of any philosophy, commercial product, process, or service and that the material may not be used in any manner that might mislead. It is requested that if NASA program materials are used in advertising or other commercial promotion, layout and copy be submitted to NASA or STScI prior to release. Queries and requests should be directed to the STScI Office of Public Outreach and/or the NASA website.

2. Scientific Materials

a. Scientific images and data obtained through NASA programs are U.S. Government property but are proprietary to the investigator for 12 months following observation. This proprietary period can be extended under special circumstances by the Director of STScI.

After the proprietary period is over, the images and data are in the public domain and may be accessed through the Multi-Mission Archive at STScI. Images and data will also be released by the STScI Public Affairs Office in support of announcements of

research findings with the concurrence of the PI scientist with proprietary rights and at the end of the proprietary period as circumstances permit;

- b. During the proprietary period, requests for original scientific data should be directed to the scientist who generated the information; and,
- c. Computer programs and manuals to allow users to submit observing proposals and to analyze data are available through the STScI website.

3. Engineering Materials

Access to information regarding telescope and instrument specifications is available through the STScI website.

4. STScI Publications regarding Proposals for Observing Time

HST General Observer proposed manuals, requirements for proposal submission, proposal evaluation procedures, and other information required to apply for HST observing time are available through the STScI Website.