SWG Chairs Telecon 20-April-2021

Notes: Philippa Hartley, Anna Bonaldi

Participants: SWGs: Natasha Hurley-Walker, Jason Hessels, Barabara Catinella, Aris Karastergiou, Abhirup Datta, Patrick Woudt, Valentina Vacca, Laura Wolz, Adriano Ingallinera, Phil Edwards, Mark Sargent, Fernando Camilo, Stefano Camera, Eduard Kontar, Andrei Mesinger, Paolo Serra

Apologies: Divya Oberoi, Francoise Combes

SKAO: Anna Bonaldi, Philippa Hartley, Jeff Wagg, Tyler Bourke

Update on Science Meeting survey

168 responses to survey, sent to 968 participants
Did not ask for detailed identifying info such as gender or career stage
Time-zone requested to see spread
Most respondents agreed that it was useful to have time-zoned meeting, but most participants (including eg. Aus participants) still called in to the first session due to the greater volume of live discussion

Feedback wrt to on-air platform was generally good; some problems with layout of schedule, and also comments on needing to repeatedly go back to agenda to get to next talk. Some problems with people using the chrome browser

Jason: There were many different places where people could chat online, e.g. the on-air spaces, slack. Needing to go back to the agenda meant that the discussion was often not able to develop.

NHW: 100% vote for discussion in slack

Scientific quality of talks was deemed to be excellent. Quality of the videos was deemed to be of sufficient quality by most. Most people preferred live talks over pre-recorded. Pre-recorded enabled to keep to schedule. Most people would like live talks to be recorded so that they can be watched later.

Some people preferred written Qs to live Q and A - clearer Qs and aids discussion. Some preferred live as it is a warmer feel.

Gathertown: was enjoyed by those who used it (50%). Did not work well for second session when there weren't many people there.

Mark: It was hard to work out if people behind the avatars were active (would know who to approach). Would be handy to have some kind of icon to signal this.

NHW: Could have fewer Gathertown sessions but more targeted for time-zones

Jason: Feedback that poster speaker found it very useful for follow-up

Slack was more popular than gather-town and than on-air discussion

NHW: Having slack more prominently in the conference would be good (e.g. advertised to continue the discussion here...)

Feedback on splinter sessions found that these sessions were deemed to be extremely useful. Live discussion valued. Zero negative comments on splinter sessions

Jason: Meeting worked very well as a general worldwide astronomy conference. SKAO consider branding of the conference in this respect?

In-person/Virtual/hybrid preferences: majority prefer hybrid/full meeting. Only a few prefer fully virtual. Work to do to determine what hybrid might involve. Would be useful to hear of upcoming virtual experiences.

NHW: Hydrid meetings can be either a central meeting where people connect virtually to one central meeting, or a 'hub' model where people meet up locally and connect the hubs together.

Aris: one of the difficulties with recording a talk: end up re-recording many times. One way to deal with that: could suggest people record their sessions in front of their own group

Paolo: feedback for people at different stages of their career, e.g. harder at virtual meeting to approach others

Jeff: We had chosen to go with anonymous survey, but will consider non-anonymised in future so that we can collect all info

Abhirup: More junior people found the virtual was more accessible due to no need for travel funds etc

Jason: Double-blind peer review of abstracts was very good

SDC2 update

Philippa: SDC2 under way, almost half-way through. An important feature is the support from computational facility partners, who are hosting the big data cube. Many teams can therefore take part without moving large volumes of data, but also allows us to test an SRC model. We are collecting feedback on this aspect through a survey to participants; of the 40 teams registered, about half appear very active and we wanted to understand how to support the other half.
Worth to mention is also the scoring service, prepared in collaboration by the operations team.

For future challenges, we would like to introduce more realistic systematics into our simulations, in collaboration with the SDP developers. We are considering also the support for JupyterHub environments and in general support the community to work towards reproducibility.

Jason: what capacity is there to implement some of these requests for future challenges? Can the SWG help?

Philippa: this can be discussed case by case.

Jeff: for EoR, the simulations would be prepared by the SWG and SKAO would provide support.

Andrei: SKA can serve as a double-blind aspect. They could press "play" of the end-to-end pipeline so that they would know the exact recipe. they could choose which cosmological model between possible choices. same for the foreground model to be added as a contaminant.

Abirhup: Different tiers of the challenge, some of which could be accessed by other SWGs

Andrei: what do you use for score? ideally for EoR we would need a posterior. would this be supported?

Philippa: there are different packages, and we would need a module specific for the EoR challenge. Very happy to have a further chat about this and work with your group to develop it.

Anna: the scoring service itself, that allows to create logins for teams, and to run the scoring routine and deliver a score, is common for all challenges. The actual scoring procedure is custom for each challenge, so it can be discussed case by case.

AOB

New position: SKAO postdoc to work on data challenges will be advertised soon