

Astronomers in the ESA Space Telescope Division at the Space Telescope Science Institute

The European Space Agency (ESA) provides scientific personnel to the Space Telescope Science Institute (STScI) as part of its collaboration with NASA on the Hubble Space Telescope (HST) Project. There are currently openings for astronomers funded by the ESA HST Mission within the Scientific Program Directorate of ESA, through a contract with the STScI. These scientific positions are three-year term, renewable contracts with salaries and benefits commensurate with those of AURA employees at the STScI.

Astronomers work in key areas throughout the Institute including instrument support, user support, observation planning and scheduling, and archival support. In general, functional duties encompass several of the activities associated with the instruments currently on board HST or to be deployed in the future servicing mission. This includes the characterization, on orbit testing and calibration of the scientific instruments and/or the support to users during the preparation, implementation and execution of the observing programs. Duties for other HST related positions include the scientific oversight of projects to further improve the HST observing efficiency and user interface, or related to the scientific use of the HST archives. Efforts are made to suitably match the background and experience of qualified candidates to program needs.

Some specific posts currently open include the following activities:

- direct support to Users of HST instruments currently on board, ACS, WFPC 2, NICMOS, STIS and FGS
- preparation of support to Users of HST instruments to be deployed on the forthcoming servicing mission: WFC3 and COS
- development of archival tools and systems in support of the HST archives and the Hubble Legacy Archive project

Astronomers spend 50% of their time on personal research and 50% in support of the science mission of the Institute. Therefore, in addition to maintaining an active program of research in astronomy, the successful candidates will be expected to carry out functional tasks related to Institute initiatives. The STScI professional environment is stimulating and intended to facilitate independent research. STScI supports postdoctoral, graduate student and visitor programs, workshops and meetings, and has excellent computer, technical and library infrastructure.

Candidates for these positions must have a Ph.D. or equivalent degree in astronomy or physics, and have considerable research experience with an established record of independent research and scientific publications in astronomy. The primary qualifications we are seeking are excellence in instrumental or observational research. Applications are encouraged from both junior and senior astronomers, as the experience and accomplishment of the successful applicant will determine the level of the appointment.

STScI is an Equal Opportunity, Affirmative Action Employer and therefore, women and minority candidates are strongly encouraged to apply. As these contracts are funded by ESA, nationals from ESA member states are strongly encouraged to apply.

Send your curriculum vitae and bibliography, along with a signed letter of application and a brief statement of how you think working at STScI may further your research and functional goals, and arrange to have three letters of recommendation sent electronically to the address below. Applications received by August 31, 2007 will receive full consideration.

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