



ALTAIR - Access to Large Telescopes for Astronomical Instruction and Research

Introduction and Charge

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Background

- Senior Review
 - NOAO should provide access to state-of-the-art capabilities on high-performance telescopes of all apertures
 - Choices should be made or priorities set on scientific basis
- Defining path forward requires
 - Prioritized list of capabilities
 - Instruments, observing modes, telescope/site characteristics, etc.
 - Estimate of nights needed
 - Justification for above based on community expressions of scientific interest
 - Understanding how these things may change over next decade



The Charge

- Gather community input, and using this, do the things below
- Understand how the community uses these telescopes
- Develop a list of desired capabilities
 - Optimum for Gemini
 - Optimum for other telescopes
- Provide recommendations to guide US (NSF) position on Gemini
- Provide recommendations to guide US (NSF) position on other telescopes (TSIP)



Process - next steps

- Produce a compelling report
- Publicize throughout community
- Develop a plan for implementing the ALTAIR recommendations
 - ACCORD should be involved in this
- Present and advocate to NSF
- Obtain funding to carry out plan



ReSTAR

- ReSTAR did this for the small and mid-sized telescopes
 - Met 4 times
 - Gathered web survey input from 160 people
 - Gathered additional community input from other groups
 - Discussed and analyzed input
 - Wrote compelling report that includes
 - Discussion of the science enabled by these facilities
 - Description of the needed capabilities that are missing
 - Estimates of the amount of time needed
 - Identification of capabilities that require near- or long-term development
 - Principles to guide a plan to address their recommendations
- NOAO has put together implementation plan
 - Discussions with NSF to modify plan are ongoing
 - Expect to circulate plan for community discussion soon
 - Hope to begin implementation in FY 2009