

Windows to the Universe: Classical and Modern Observatories

Annual Report for 2019

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https://www.iau.org/science/scientific_bodies/working_groups/319/

This WG has recently been established after the IAU GA in Vienna in spring 2019 as a combination of two former WGs: “Classical Observatories from the Renaissance to the 20th Century” and the Inter-Commission B7-C4 WG “Windows to the Universe: High-Mountain Observatories, and Other Astronomical Sites of the Late 20th and Early 21st Centuries”.

These former WGs were established in close cooperation with C4 to support the development and coordination of nominations of classical and modern astronomical observatory sites from the Renaissance to the 21th century for inscription on the UNESCO World Heritage List (WHL).

The aim of the WG is to advance the WHL nomination project "Route of astronomical observatories", which focuses on the possible serial (multi-site) nomination of a number of classical observatories all over the world, combining observatories in different continents, connected by scientific cooperations or by comparable scientific instrumentation.

The next objective is to promote further case studies of classical observatories and to publish them in the web portal (www.astronomicalheritage.net).

For the future, it is intended to support observatories in sensitizing the public for the heritage issue by means of talks, guided tours, observing nights, exhibitions and other activities (in cooperation with Commission C1 Astronomy Education and Development). In this connection, also the preservation of a dark and quiet sky above the more modern observatories should be addressed.

Matthias Hünsch
Chair of WG

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