



GEMINI BOARD MEETING

23 MAY, 25-27, 2022

RESOLUTIONS

Resolutions Arising from the 23 May and 25-27 May 2022 Gemini Board Meeting

Introduction

The Board met in person and by videoconference on 23, 25-27 May 2022. The Board is pleased to see the continued operations at Gemini North and Gemini South, despite the ongoing challenges associated with the COVID-19 global pandemic. The Board congratulates the Observatory on achieving a number of milestones since the last meeting, including the start of GHOST assembly and testing; the shipping of GPI-2 for upgrade at Notre Dame; the shipping of the GNIRS natural-seeing IFU to Hawaii; the contract negotiations for the GNAO Adaptive Optic Bench conceptual designs; negotiations with SwRI to find a path to resolve SCORPIO cost-overrun claims; the successful design review of the GEMMA-funded automated scheduling system; and the hiring of 26 staff over the past 10 months.

The Board would like to thank the following Board and STAC members, who have just ended their tenure, for their service: Dr. Laura Ferrarese, Dr. Karen O’Neil, Dr. Cynthia Froning, Dr. Greg Rudnick, Dr. Demian Aranciba, Dr. Eric Steinbring, and Dr. Lisa Poyneer.

The Board heartily welcomes our new representative from Chile, Dr. Edgardo Costa and four new US members, Dr. Vandana Desai, Dr. Andy Howell, Dr. Rebecca Oppenheimer, and Dr. Claudia Scarlata, as well as the new STAC members, Dr. Ivana Damjanov, Dr. Maria Drout, Dr Jennifer Patience, and Dr Gelys Trancho.

The Board resolutions below are for public release. In addition, the Board approved a number of Actions directed to the Observatory, the Gemini’s Executive Agency, the Board, and its subcommittees.

RESOLUTIONS

2022.A.1. STAC Report and Recommendations. The Gemini Board thanks the STAC for providing a detailed report from its 23-24 May 2022 meeting. The Board endorses the recommendations contained in that report, in particular:

2022.A.1.a. The Board endorses the following development priorities, GNAO + GIRMOS, SCORPIO, GHOST, IGRINS-2, GPI-2, GLAO CoD, GNIRS Controller, GeMS Improvements, GNIRS IFU and GPOL, MAROON-X facility conversion investigation work and IUP.

2022.A.1.b. The Board approves the STAC recommended science time goals for semester 2023A of 95.9% on Gemini South and of 95.9% on Gemini North, and the adjustment of science time for semester 2022B to 80.4% for Gemini South and 81.4% for Gemini North.

2022.A.1.c. The Board enthusiastically endorses the continuation of planning for an in-person 2022 Gemini Science Meeting to be held on July 26-29 in Seoul, Korea. The Board specifically appreciates the organizers efforts to ensure that the meeting is accessible online



GEMINI BOARD MEETING

23 MAY, 25-27, 2022

RESOLUTIONS

to those who cannot, or prefer not to, travel at this time, and for the development of extensive contingency plans. The Board recommends that the website and registration forms very clearly outline what is accessible to the remote-participating audiences and what is not, in order to set expectations and avoid disappointment and potential backlash such as was witnessed at other hybrid meetings.

2022.A.1.d. The Board endorses STAC item 22.12, “The STAC was concerned to hear about the significant telescope infrastructure faults reported in the last semester and is worried that continued aging of the telescopes will result in an increase in the number of events resulting in the loss of on-sky time for science. It will be key for Gemini to also focus on the preventive maintenance to ensure that the telescope is also on track. Gemini has already passed half of its lifetime. The STAC encouraged the Observatory to study this issue further and present the status on a plan for preventative maintenance at a future STAC and Board meeting.” The Board appreciates the fault analysis presented in the Operation reports, including highlighting causes and lessons learned from each fault instance which should help Gemini move toward an effective plan for fault prevention and maintenance.

2022.A.1.e. The Board endorses the STAC resolution concerning the evaluation and formulation of compensatory telescope time (CTT) for GPI-2, “The STAC endorses the plan to convene a small focused working group to iterate on the details of GPI-2 CTT policy with the goal of proposing an agreement at the governance meetings in or near November 2022. Our guiding principle remains ensuring that the science productivity and output of the instrument is maximized and well distributed across the Gemini community and GPI-2 team. We recommend that the group include individuals from Gemini Operations, the GPI-2 team, Gemini governance (Board/STAC), and, specifically, anticipated users both in the exoplanet and disk areas, where most of the time/target conflicts are expected to be, and in other science areas of potential GPI-2 use. The STAC would be happy to suggest people to Gemini.”

2022.A.1.f. The Board endorses the STAC resolution 22.10 related to GMOS. Gemini’s workhorse instruments at each site, GMOS, are aging, as evidenced by their fault rates. These community instruments are largely requested and used by the community and constitute the largest proposed for and allocated instruments at both sites, and they account for over 60% of the observatory’s publications. While still capable of producing valuable scientific observations, some GMOS programs are being affected, and there is concern for GMOS availability into the future.

2022.A.2. Gemini Engagement. The upcoming period from 2022-2028 will be a paradigm-changing time for the Gemini Observatory. The commissioning and operations of the vast array of new instrumental capabilities, new synergies with other facilities across wavelength and time, and the large datasets to be made available to the community will both challenge and reinforce Gemini’s leadership in the world-wide astronomical community.



GEMINI BOARD MEETING

23 MAY, 25-27, 2022

RESOLUTIONS

The excitement and value of Gemini and its core role in advancing astronomy in this new context, as well as its role serving as a pathfinder for next generation end-to-end user support for all facilities, should be widely communicated to both scientific and lay audiences using the full array of resources available to Gemini CEE, and NOIRLab. Additionally specific engagement with the local communities, in Hawai'i and Chile, should be a critical and well thought-out part of the planned activities.

2022.A.3. Gemini Workforce. Following Action B.4 from its November 2021 meeting, the Board renews its concerns about the high turnover rate at the Observatory -- 12% over the past fiscal year. The Board is thankful for the thorough review provided by NOIRLab HR of the retention issues faced by NOIRLab at large and by Gemini in particular, and particularly thanks the HR team for attempting to identify the Gemini-specific causes of retention failures. The Board is very concerned about the high rates of turnover seen in the past two years. While all areas of business have seen larger than normal turnover, Gemini has lost a number of very experienced senior staff, persons difficult to replace. This impacts the scientific productivity throughout the Observatory in meaningful and significant ways, as was noted in many of the reports the Board received. The Board is especially concerned about the impact upon staff and observatory identity of the proactive AURA/NOIRLab activities that are replacing the "trusted brand" of Gemini, an especially well known and trusted local and international astronomy entity.

2022.A.4. AURA Corporate. The Gemini Observatory delivers the science capabilities, while NOIRLab under AURA is the administrative structure that enables them. The science mission of Gemini is being impacted by the implementation of the new management structure and the prioritization of integration over delivery of science within NOIRLab. Important to the operations of a world-class observatory are the maintenance and care of the telescopes, instruments, enclosures, staff, and the required services provided. AURA Corporate provides services to Gemini via such mechanisms as CAS and HR. These services can be the difference between meeting employee and Observatory needs and falling short in terms of time delays and service.

2022.A.5. New Logo for Gemini. The Board wishes to thank Lars Christensen and the CEE Team for carefully considering what key elements the new logo should convey. His team has produced a number of drafts that were iterated with the Gemini Directorate. Several designs were considered by the Directorate and one was preferred. The Directorate strongly believes that it best represents the twin nature of the telescopes on different sites, and that the silhouette of the iconic dome clearly identifies Gemini. The logo was designed to be consistent with the style of the NOIRLab logo family.

2022.A.6. NOIRLab Renewal Award. In December 2021, Gemini Observatory submitted a joint proposal with other NOIRLab facilities to the NSF for the renewal of the Gemini Cooperative Support Agreement (CSA) for FY 2023-2027. Through the CSA, NSF acts as the Executive Agency, and is empowered to act on behalf of the Participants to arrange for the carrying out of Gemini Operations, transfer of contributions received from the Participants to the Managing Organization (AURA/NOIRLab), and is responsible for ensuring that the Award fulfills the requirements of the International Gemini Agreement. The review process is underway and NSF is working to have the new award in place by October 1, 2022. A function of the Gemini Board is



GEMINI BOARD MEETING

23 MAY, 25-27, 2022

RESOLUTIONS

to approve the Executive Agency's selection of Managing Organization and any renewals or changes and to approve the terms of the Award between the Executive Agency and the Managing Organization supporting Gemini.

2022.A.7. AURA Information Session. The Board thanks the Managing Organization, AURA, for their suggestion to provide information to the Board on AURA, its purpose, how it interacts with the NSF and the Board, etc.

2022.A.8. Governance Meeting Schedule. At the November 2021 meeting, the Board agreed to move the May and November GBOD meetings to occur later by approximately 1 month, and to move the dates of the Gemini Finance Committee from August to September. The Board hopes that moving the meetings' dates will ease the reporting requirements on the Observatory. The Observatory has suggested a timeline for approving the FY2023 Budget and Program Operating Plan as well as the next Gemini governance meetings for 2023.