

Policies and procedures for allocation of observing time on the Perek telescope at ASU in Ondřejov

Version 2
December 2, 2021

Article 1 Purpose of the document

This document sets out the rules and procedures for the usage of the Perek telescope at the observatory of the Astronomical Institute of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic (ASU) in Ondřejov (hereinafter the Perek telescope) for users from the astronomical community who are not affiliated with ASU (hereinafter the external users) but wish to apply for observing time.

Article 2 Types of Telescope Time

The Perek telescope has specified fractions of paid time and time free of charge. Only the paid time is available to external users.

The ASU governing entity determines the terms and conditions for paid time, including the nightly or hourly rate.

Article 3 Availability of observing time

The majority of the monthly available time for observations with the Perek telescope is used for implementation of internal observing projects and programs led by astronomers who are employees of ASU.

A few nights per month are available at the Perek telescope for observing projects and programs led by external users to support new ideas and scientific progress in the field.

In scientifically justified cases, the head of Stellar Physics Department at ASU in Ondřejov (hereinafter the Stellar Department), or the entrusted person(s) appointed by the head, may change the amount of observing time available for projects requested by external users.

Article 4 Instrument availability

There are currently three instruments offered for observations with the Perek telescope:

- a single-order spectrograph;
- an echelle spectrograph;
- a photometric camera.

A detailed description of the technical capabilities of the Perek telescope and its current instrumentation is available on the website of the Stellar Department at <https://stelweb.asu.cas.cz/en/telescope/>.

Article 5 Observing modes

Two observing modes are offered at the ASU observatory in Ondřejov.

- **Visitor Mode observations**

- Observations in Visitor Mode apply when the observer is present at the Stellar Department.
- The visitor mode observations can be allowed to an astronomer only after prior approval by the head of the Stellar Department, or the entrusted person(s) chosen by the head, based on his/her previous experience with observations with the Perek telescope, or after on-the-spot training prior to the start of the observing run.
- A visitor observer is responsible for his/her observing program and observing strategy.
- The telescope is operated and controlled exclusively by the designated night assistant.
- The unit cost for the Visitor Mode observations is the "observation night" (see the Article 6).

- **Service Mode observations**

- The PI(s) of the observing proposals are responsible for the preparation of their observation program and for defining their observing strategy.
- The observations are executed by the observatory staff only during specific nights dedicated for service observations.
- The observations are acquired and provided to the PI(s) on the best effort base.
- If the observing conditions within a period of 6 months do not meet the required ones defined in the observing strategy, the request for observing time has to be revised and resubmitted.
- The maximum amount of observing hours that can be requested in the Service Mode observation is 4 hours per proposal.
- The unit cost for the Service Mode observations is the "observation hour" (see the Article 6).

Article 6 Definition of the unit of observation time

- The "**observation night**" unit is valid for visitor mode observations. An observation night lasts as long as the Sun is more than 12 degrees below the horizon at the observation site.

- The "**observation hour**" unit is valid for service mode observations. The observation hour includes all overheads (readout, offsets, etc.) and the time needed for acquisition of calibration spectra during the observing night. Calibration files requested to be taken during day time are not included in the counting of the total amount of observing hours. Table of overheads for each instrument for observations is available on the website of the Stellar Department at <https://stelweb.asu.cas.cz/en/telescope/observations/observing-overheads/>.

Article 7

Rules for requesting observation time

- **Submission Deadlines**
 - Observing proposals can be submitted four times per year. Submission deadlines are stated on the website of the Stellar Department at <https://stelweb.asu.cas.cz/en/telescope/observations/applying-for-observing-time/>.
 - Urgent applications (e.g., transients) will be dealt on the best effort base.
- **Observation request form**
 - Observing time requests have to be written in a free format following the guidelines available on the website of the Stellar Department at <https://stelweb.asu.cas.cz/en/telescope/observations/applying-for-observing-time/> and sent as a PDF file by e-mail to proposal@asu.cas.cz.

Article 8

Proposal Review and Time Allocation Processes

- Technical feasibility of the proposed observing program and strategy is performed by the telescope instrument specialists.
- The scientific review process is done by the Time Allocation Committee (hereinafter TAC) of ASU in a timely manner and will follow the following criteria.
 - The scientific merit of the project, its contribution to the advancement of knowledge in the specific sub-field, and its importance to astronomy in general, relative to the value of the resources requested.
 - The justification of the requested accuracy of the observations and clear rationale for the type and number of targets, the choice of instrument(s) and the amount of time requested.
 - The strength of the data analysis plan.
 - The educational value of the program proposed and possible importance of the requested data for the implementation of students' theses. In particular, the expected contribution of students to the observations, analysis and publication.
 - Publication record of the applicant in the scientific field of the proposed project and related to observations, including those acquired during previous runs with the Perek telescope (if applicable).

- The evaluation will be based exclusively on the submitted written proposal and publicly available information.
- The TAC reviews each proposal and sends the decision about the time allocation to the applicant(s) in the timely manner.

Article 9

Conditions for restriction or termination of observations

- Night assistants are in charge at night. They are responsible for the safety of the observing process and they decide on any urgent/sudden termination of the observations. Observations have to be terminated particularly in the following situations:
 - humidity reaches the limit of 90%; reopening of the telescope is possible if the humidity drops and remains below 90% for at least 30 min.
 - it is fully overcast (observation is possible in case of cirrus clouds or when it is partly cloudy). If the weather conditions improve the night assistance will permit the continuation of the observations.
 - a strong wind (e.g., sudden peaks above 20 m/s, average wind speed above 10 m/s). The night assistance will make the final decision.
 - rain, snow or thunderstorm approaching;
 - In a case of disagreement with the observer the night assistance has the final word on termination of the observations.
- Observations are terminated in case a serious technical issue occurs at the telescope or its instrumentation or in case of a sudden medical ailment of the night assistant;
- In exceptional cases the observatory has the right to declare an extraordinary break in observation (e.g., a strong spring pollen season).
- To verify meteorological conditions, meteorological devices managed by ASU in Ondřejov (especially meteorological station, all-sky camera, etc.) and websites, especially the website of the Czech Hydro-meteorological Institute are used.
- In case of an observatory failure the lost observing time will be compensated by future time allocation.

Article 10

Data Handling Policies

- All data acquired at the Perek telescope are the property of ASU.
- Observed data are made available exclusively to the PI(s) of the project and for a proprietary period of one year, after which they become public to the scientific

community. In exceptional and justified cases the proprietary period may be extended upon request.

- The observed raw data is supplied to users in .fits format.
- The Stellar Department staff has always access to all observed data for the purpose of testing (e.g., reduction, chip quality monitoring, focusing, and etc.).

Article 11 Acknowledgement

- Use of the data obtained with the Perek Telescope at ASU in Ondřejov must be acknowledged either as a footnote on the first page or in the Acknowledgements section of the publication - "Based on data taken with the Perek telescope at the Astronomical Institute of the Czech Academy of Sciences in Ondřejov."
- This rule also applies to bachelor, master, and PhD theses.
- Failure to do so may affect evaluation of future observational applications.

The document was discussed at the meetings of the Stellar Department on 10th and 22nd of Nov 2021.

In Ondřejov, December 2, 2021.

Mgr. Brankica Kubátová, Ph.D.
Head of the Stellar Physics Department