

ORGANIZATIONS, PEOPLE AND STRATEGIES IN ASTRONOMY

Edited by A. Heck

Two more volumes of the successful series “Organizations and Strategies in Astronomy (OSA)”, which have been coordinated and edited by A. Heck since 2000, were made available in 2012 and 2013. The new volumes place more emphasis on people, as suggested by the modified title. Rather than being devoted to the publication of hard-science results, the refereed and validated contributions gathered in those books describe how astronomy research lives: how it is planned, funded, structured and organized, how it operates, how it interacts with other disciplines and the rest of the world, how it communicates, etc.

I became familiar with OSA/OPSA six years ago when I was asked to contribute an article describing the status of astrophysics in Greece. Preparing the article required substantial effort in collecting the information, cross checking its accuracy with colleagues and presenting it in an objective manner. In the current volumes of OPSA one can find similar articles on seven countries providing insightful information on their structure of astronomy research and infrastructure. The style of the articles follows the general OSA/OPSA approach, where scientists and non-scientists describe their experience and elaborate, often for the first time at such a level, on non-purely scientific matters, many of them of fundamental importance for the efficient conduct of their activities. The two new volumes cover a large range of fields and themes: in practice, one could say that all aspects of astronomy-related life and environment are considered in the spirit of sharing expertise and lessons learned. There are over forty additional articles on a variety of topics including the impact of ADS in astronomy research, the use of various metrics in estimating the quality of research, the effectiveness of lobbying, ethics in research and many more.

The books will very useful to wide range of audience including astronomy professional and administrators, as well as students who wish to pursue a career in astronomy or in related space sciences.

A detailed presentation of the volume contents as well as details on ordering can be found at http://www.venngeist.org/opsas_pres.htm

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