

Report of 2017 Ethiopia ISYA

by

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The 2017 ISYA was held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia on May 7 to 19, co-organized by the Entoto Observatory and Research Center (EORC). The students and lectures were hosted at the Axum Hotel in the capital city of Ethiopia. Most of the lectures were held at Axum Hotel, except for afternoon lectures on the second week of the school, which were held at Entoto Observatory, where observing was scheduled afterwards.

There were a total of 152 applicants, 70 of them were from Ethiopia and 82 of them from other regional countries. The [school](#) accepted 32 students: 17 Ethiopian students and 15 regional students. The regional countries represented were Ghana 2, Kenya 2, Nigeria 2, Madagascar 2, Rwanda 2, Sudan 2, and Uganda 2. One of the accepted Nigerian students could not participate in the end due to passport issues. A gender imbalance from Ethiopia (16 males and 1 female) was compensated by the more equalitarian balance from the regional students (6 males and 8 females).

Ten [lecturers](#) were invited to lecture at the Ethiopia School of which three were from the host country and seven drawn from around the world. The lecturers and their topics covered are listed as follows:

Itziar Aretxaga from Mexico on Galaxies

Oleg Malkov from Russia on Stellar Evolution and Virtual Observatory

Solomon Tessenay Belay from Ethiopia on Stellar Evolution

Leonid Berndikov from Ethiopia on Photometric observation and reduction

James Okwe Chibueze from South Africa on Radio Astronomy and Star Formation

Catherine Cress from South Africa on Large Scale Structure

David C. Jewitt from USA on Solar System and Exoplanets

David F. Mota from Norway on Cosmology

Kam-Ching Leung from USA on Binary Stars and Emission-line Stars

Mirjana Povic from Ethiopia on Spectroscopic Observation and Reduction.

Itziar Aretxaga and Kam-Ching Leung also led discussions on Writing CV, Applying for Graduate School, and Job Opportunities.

Originally, the topic of Virtual Observatory was to be given by Suddanshu Barway from South Africa, but due to visa problems, his participation was replaced by that of Oleg Malkov, who also assisted Solomon Tessenay with his course.

Poor internet connectivity at Axum Hotel was a constant during the 2 weeks of the school, and adjustments had to be made to some of the lectures, especially in that of VO. The second week of the school had poor weather conditions and although practice was done with existing data and the students were shown how to program an observing season and how the instruments worked, little on-sky data was acquired by the students.

After the two week ISYA school the students were invited to participate in a Communications Workshop organized and paid by the SKA team (20-21 MAY), and all of them accepted to stay for 2 extra days to engage in this activity, which was also assisted by the Office of Astronomy for Development. EORC assisted the students in extending their visas to stay. After that, some further stayed for the Middle Eastern and African Regional IAU Meeting, although they were a minority, as local funding for their participation was not secured.

From talking to students at large, we gathered they were very happy with opportunity of learning from the lecture series as well as the hands-on practices at the Observatory. As

usual, we solicited student feedback through the Student Evaluation Form (see Table attached). The worst problem for them seemed to be the poor internet connectivity in most of their rooms and lecture halls. Some students had problems with airport transportation. By and large, the students were very happy with the School.

The Alumni Photo file and Group Activity pictures are linked above and the Summary of Student Evaluation Form is shown below.

ISYA Evaluation Form - Results

If you give a mark of less than 3 to any question, please add a short explanation under "comments"

Name (optional):

If you do give your name, we can interpret your answers in the light of what we know of your background.

Answer only one of the questions in each group connected by "Or"

General

		5	4	3	2	1	
The website told me all I needed to know	Strongly agree	11	5	3	2	0	disagree
The application form was easy to fill in	Strongly agree	11	6	2	2	0	disagree
Applications were efficiently handled	Strongly agree	8	10	2	0	0	disagree

Comments

I had difficulties in phone number; my application had to be sent via word document through an email.

Lectures

		5	4	3	2	1	
The lectures were the most useful part of the ISYA	Strongly agree	13	5	0	0	0	disagree
The time spent on the lectures was too long	Strongly agree	4	5	4	2	3	disagree
<i>Or</i> the time spent on the lectures was too short	Strongly agree	2	0	3	1	3	Disagree
<i>Or</i> the time spent on the lectures was just right	Strongly agree	7	5	3	0	0	Disagree
The lectures were at too high a level	Strongly agree	4	3	5	1	2	Disagree
<i>Or</i> the lectures were at too low a level	Strongly agree	3	0	2	0	6	Disagree
<i>Or</i> the lectures were just right	Strongly agree	8	6	0	0	0	Disagree
The lectures were well presented	Strongly agree	12	8	0	0	0	Disagree
The lecturers responded well to questions	Strongly agree	11	7	0	0	0	Disagree
I found it easy to get on with the lecturers	Strongly agree	8	8	3	0	0	disagree
The lecture room was comfortable	Strongly agree	9	8	2	1	0	Disagree

Comments:

The lecture room had internet problem. Next time try to put more lecture on high-energy astrophysics and more lecture data reduction on all wavelength band. The lecture covered were PERFECT! All lectures are nice but time spent is long and it is good level.

Observation training

		5	4	3	2	1	
The observation projects were the most useful part of the ISYA	Strongly agree	7	4	3	2	1	disagree
The time spent on observation was too long	Strongly agree	2	6	4	2	2	disagree

<i>Or</i> the time spent on observations was too short	Strongly agree	2	4	6	0	1	disagree
<i>Or</i> the time spent on observations was just right	Strongly agree	4	4	4	0	0	disagree
The lectures did not prepare me adequately for the observations	Strongly agree	2	4	5	2	5	Disagree
The computing facilities were good	Strongly agree	4	8	5	1	0	Disagree
The help I got with my project was adequate	Strongly agree	7	9	2	0	1	Disagree
I found the supervisors helpful and easy to get on with	Strongly agree	10	9	1	0	0	Disagree

Comments:

Since there was internet problem especially in the Hotel, and the soft wares needs much time to download I couldn't. The lecture and observation was good but weather was bad conditions. I find it very difficult to follow most of the lab work. The time allotted for it was just too small. The next time try to see the time with good weather. We didn't do any observation just acquired knowledge about how the telescope work due to the bad weather I appreciate Mirijana Povic for the enthusiasm and all her effort to make sure us taken observations. The lecturers were well delivered and prepared us the observation, but the weather condition was not good for observation. There was no observation just projects. According of the humidity, we can not observe.

Presentation exercise

		5	4	3	2	1	
The student presentations were the most useful part of the school	Strongly agree	5	6	6	0	1	disagree
The time spent on this was too long	Strongly agree	3	2	3	1	5	disagree
<i>Or</i> the time spent on this was too short	Strongly agree	2	7	1	1	1	disagree
<i>Or</i> the time spent on this was just right	Strongly agree	4	5	3	1	0	disagree
This exercise was well organized	Strongly agree	10	6	2	1	0	Disagree
This exercise was interesting	Strongly agree	13	4	2	0	0	Disagree

Comments:

Accommodation:

		5	4	3	2	1	
The airport transport was efficiently done	Strongly agree	7	2	5	0	2	disagree
The rooms were good	Strongly agree	12	7	1	1	0	disagree
The breakfast was good	Strongly agree	6	6	6	0	1	disagree
The meals were good	Strongly agree	6	5	4	3	2	Disagree
The organizational support was good	Strongly agree	9	7	3	1	0	Disagree
Generally, the ISYA environment was good	Strongly agree	13	5	2	0	0	Disagree
Axum Hotel was a good place to hold this ISYA	Strongly agree	9	3	6	1	1	Disagree

Comments:

Not familiar with Ethiopia food. Most of the meals were too spice for me and the organizational support were not good because at some point you could ask for help was not given. There was not a good communication between the organizers and the participants and thus led to late visa acquisition and unpreparedness. Spicy food, no shuttle at airport and we took taxi, *wifi* condition was poor. The problem of network, next time the hotel has to change the food. Everything was very good, else internet not work. The internet is no good. There was a challenge with poor internet service. In terms of accommodation and food, the hotel was OK, But the connection to internet, it will be wise for the organizers to visit the host

facility prior to the school, just to make sure everything is in order. The hotel prepare similar type of food day after day. Internet access was not the best.

Cultural tours and leisure:

		5	4	3	2	1	
The leisure possibilities after the lectures were good	Strongly agree	20	5	2	0	0	disagree
The Saturday May 13 excursion was good	Strongly agree	15	5	2	0	0	disagree
	Strongly agree						disagree
	Strongly agree						disagree
	Strongly agree						Disagree
	Strongly agree						Disagree
The Sunday May 14 tour was good	Strongly agree	12	4	1	0	0	Disagree
	Strongly agree						Disagree
The cultural excursions were good	Strongly agree	15	5	0	0	0	Disagree
The School Dinner (May 14) was fine	Strongly agree	13	8	0	0	0	Disagree
Sport facilities were good	Strongly agree	3	3	3	2	4	Disagree
Generally, this part of the ISYA was good	Strongly agree	10	9	0	1	0	Disagree

Comments:

Not so leisure time after lectures but the weekend was very good, no sport. There was no time for sport. The School dinner nice, we enjoy on them.

The future

		5	4	3	2	1	
I developed an international network as a result of this ISYA	Strongly agree	16	6	0	0	0	disagree
The ISYA helped me to better understand my actual research interests	Strongly agree	16	6	0	0	0	disagree
The ISYA encouraged me to strengthen my research in astronomy	Strongly agree	18	4	0	0	0	disagree
Through the ISYA I acquired a broader view on the research done in astronomy	Strongly agree	16	6	0	0	0	disagree
I have benefited significantly from attending this ISYA	Strongly agree	21	11	0	0	0	Disagree

Comments:

It was very helpful to attend the School. The weather conditions of the place at the time of workshop should be made known to participants beforehand, Establishment of a strong communication network between the organizers and the accepted applicants is needed to avoid delays and in conveniences, I think discussion time can be created after lectures for students to discuss whatever they have been taught that day, This helps the student to understand better and assimilate what they have learned, You really did a good job after all, WELLDONE!, Thank you for allowing me to be part of this workshop, I will forever appreciated it. The lectures were very good and the lecturers put in a lot of effort to help us understand, I am very grateful for the grand opportunity and how I wish it would be held more often such that young people get to build careers in Astronomy. The internet access was a challenge and did not make us somehow productive but I believe we all had a great experience and exposure. Continue to organizing ISYA activities throughout the world.

If you have any other comments, please put them here: