

Erasmus+: Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degree in Astronomy & Astrophysics Editions 5 & 6

Edition 5 of the AstroMundus course started in 2014, under the new Erasmus+ programme of the European Union. At the same time, AstroMundus successfully underwent quality review and was allowed to apply for a second cycle of 3 course editions, from 2015 to 2019 as an Erasmus+: Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degree program, co-funded by the European Union and by the AstroMundus Consortium. In addition to Erasmus+ EMJMD scholarships, student scholarships for Editions 5 and 6 were provided by the Austrian Ministry under the programme "Hochschulraum-Struktur Mittel Förderung" and by the University of Innsbruck through the Office of the Vice-Rector for Science. In Edition 6 further scholarships were financed by the Gran Sasso Science Institute, the University of Padova, the University of Belgrade and through common funds of the AstroMundus Consortium.



AstroMundus Retreat 2016 – Asiago Astrophysical Observatory Ed. 5 thesis presentations and Best Master Thesis award

The annual retreat 2016 hosted by the University of Padova at the Astrophysical Observatory of Asiago, was the conclusive one for the first AstroMundus Cycle. All 19 Edition 5 students gave excellent presentations of their thesis projects, some of which were jointly supervised by two consortium universities. The audience included the students from the new AstroMundus cycle and staff members of all consortium universities and research institutions. Thesis project spanned a wide range of topics, from stellar astrophysics to Active Galactic Nuclei, nearby and distant galaxies, theoretical and observational cosmology, data analysis techniques, multi-wavelength and high-energy astrophysics.



The prize for the best poster presentation of the thesis project and the prize for the best Master thesis of Edition 5, awarded by two different committees, were both assigned to Bastian Proxauf, for the thesis "Homogeneous Metallicity Scale for Galactic Classical Cepheids" supervised by Prof. G. Bono at the University of Rome Tor Vergata. Bastian is continuing his career in astrophysics as a PhD student at the Max Planck Institute for Solar System Research in Göttingen, Germany.



Some of the poster presentations of Edition 5 AstroMundus students during the programme retreat at the Astrophysical Observatory of Asiago, University of Padova

Prof. Marfeau and Dr. Schuh congratulate Bastian Proxauf on the awarded prize

The AstroMundus – ESO connection: special training for AstroMundus students at ESO Headquarters



Groups of AstroMundus students visited the ESO Headquarters in Garching, Munich in 2014 and in 2016. After a tour of the ESO facilities where new instrumentation is being developed, they took part in a special training session organised by ESO staff on how to write good proposals for requesting telescope time. The students wrote complete proposals for observations with the Atacama Large Millimeter/submillimeter Array (ALMA) and submitted it to a pseudo Time Allocation Committee that gave them immediate feedback. The full story was published by ESO on the Messenger, Issue 163, March 2016, p. 51-52.



AstroMundus Retreat 2017 – Rome, Italian Space Agency headquarters – Ed. 6 thesis presentations



Edition 6 poster presentations of thesis projects during the AstroMundus Retreat 2017 at the Italian Space Agency Headquarters

Prof. Andrew Bunker, University of Oxford, UK, delivering the Retreat closing lecture

The first students of the 2nd AstroMundus cycle, course Edition 6, presented their thesis projects at the annual Retreat 2017 that was hosted by ASI, the Italian Space Agency, in Rome. Thesis projects spanned the topics of gravitational lensing, tests of modified gravity, Quasars, and dwarf galaxies. A special guest was Prof. A. Bunker, Oxford University, who took part in the retreat as a member of the external Scientific Advisory Board, interacted with students and staff member and delivered an inspiring closing lecture.

AstroMundus Edition 6 – Best Master Thesis Award

The award for the best Master thesis of AstroMundus Edition 6 was assigned to Tadeja Versić. Tadeja carried out her thesis project "On the Kinematics of the Sculptor Dwarf Spheroidal Galaxy" at the University of Rome Tor Vergata, under the supervision of Prof. Giuseppe Bono and Dr. Michele Fabrizio. Tadeja is now pursuing her career in astrophysics as a PhD student at the Kapteyn Astronomical Institute in Groningen, The Netherlands.



Examination Committee congratulating Tadeja Versić, AstroMundus Edition 6, University of Rome Tor Vergata

Master thesis defence of Tadeja Versić, AstroMundus Edition 6, University of Rome Tor Vergata