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What are the OPC Categories?

The Observing Programmes Committee (OPC) is the body in charge of reviewing, evaluating on scientific merit, and ranking the proposals submitted in response to a call for the use of ESO observing facilities of the La Silla Paranal Observatory and thereby advise the Director General on the distribution of observing time, taking account of ESO's scientific policy. The OPC is assisted in its task by Expert Panels covering specific scientific areas, called Categories. The OPC Categories are listed below. When submitting a proposal, the Principal Investigator and Co-investigators are requested to choose the appropriate OPC category for their proposal.

More information can be found [here](#).

As of P110, [Distributed Peer Review](#) (DPR) has been introduced at ESO to decrease the load on the OPC and Panels.

A - COSMOLOGY AND THE INTERGALACTIC MEDIUM

- A1 Galaxies in their environment (e.g. galaxies in groups and clusters, merging galaxies, galaxy interactions, ram-pressure stripping of galaxies in groups and clusters)
- A2 Global properties of galaxy groups, clusters and proto-structures including the intracluster medium
- A3 Dark matter and gravitational lensing
- A4 Intergalactic medium, circumgalactic medium and intervening absorption systems (e.g. Lyman alpha clouds, damped Lyman alpha systems and associated galaxies)
- A5 Discovery surveys and the statistical study of galaxy properties (e.g. spectroscopic and redshift surveys, identifications, large scale structure, galaxy luminosity function and mass function, surveys for active galactic nuclei)
- A6 Reionization and cosmic dawn (probes of reionization, galaxies in the epoch of reionization)
- A7 Cosmological parameters (e.g. distance scale, dark energy, fundamental physics).

B - GALAXIES

- B1 The Milky way and local group galaxies
- B2 Resolved and unresolved stellar populations in galaxies beyond the Local Group (e.g. stellar metallicity, star formation histories)
- B3 Galaxy structure, dynamics and kinematics (e.g. bulges, disks, morphology, in/outflows, dark matter inside galaxies, stellar orbits)
- B4 Dwarf galaxies, stellar clusters in galaxies and satellite galaxies

- B5 Galactic centre, galaxy nuclei and supermassive black holes
- B6 Physics of Active Galactic Nuclei
- B7 Interstellar medium and star formation in galaxies (e.g., in/outflows, starburst galaxies, gas-phase metallicity, dust in galaxies)

C - INTERSTELLAR MEDIUM, STAR FORMATION and PLANETARY SYSTEMS

- C1 Gas and dust, giant molecular clouds, cool and hot gas, diffuse and translucent clouds
- C2 Chemical processes in the interstellar medium
- C3 Star forming regions, globules, protostars, HII regions
- C4 Pre-main-sequence stars (massive PMS stars, Herbig Ae/Be stars and T Tauri stars)
- C5 Outflows, stellar jets, HH objects
- C6 Main-sequence stars with circumstellar matter, early evolution
- C7 Young binaries, brown dwarfs, exosolar planet searches
- C8 Solar system (planets, comets, small bodies)

D - STELLAR EVOLUTION

- D1 Main-sequence stars
- D2 Post-main-sequence stars, giants, supergiants, AGB stars, post-AGB stars
- D3 Pulsating stars and stellar activity
- D4 Mass loss and winds
- D5 Supernovae, pulsars
- D6 Planetary nebulae, nova remnants and supernova remnants
- D7 Pre-white dwarfs and white dwarfs, neutron stars
- D8 Evolved binaries, black-hole candidates, novae, X-ray binaries, CVs
- D9 Gamma-ray and X-ray bursters
- D10 OB associations, open and globular clusters, extragalactic star clusters
- D11 Individual stars in external galaxies, resolved stellar populations
- D12 Distance Scale - stars

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