



European Commission
**ERASMUS
MUNDUS**

Erasmus Mundus Joint Doctorate

Minutes of the Selection Meeting

Les Pensières, Annecy - February 27-29, 2012

With 129 applications among 48 nationalities, the IRAP PhD program has realized an exceptional call for 2012. This program is now known all over the world and we have applications from many new countries. We noticed also a high number of applications from women. For us, this represents encouraging results in order to continue our action in promoting our activities with an attractive website, with a campaign of 2000 posters sent in all institutes of the world, with advertisement in Nature and Courier CERN and also using specific mailing lists of SF2A, MG meeting and ICRANet.

It is a pleasure to see that the field of Relativistic Astrophysics we introduced, interests so many candidates all around the world.

In addition, the quality of the applications are top level. Among the 26 European applications, only one application has been rejected. This means that the choice has been extremely difficult. Initially we have planned a meeting for one-day in Annecy on February 27. We have employed three days.

The members of our PhD and of Erasmus Mundus consortium are all satisfied by this call.

Our criteria as usual are based on excellence of applications. Using a dedicated secure web access all members of our consortium have analysed the applications at the deadline of the call.

The members not able to participate in Annecy have been able to follow the selection meeting by video-conferences.

After one-day discussion we have selected 9 candidates corresponding to the requirements of the Erasmus Mundus call.

19 candidates applied this year from Iran with a large number of women. Many of these applications are on very high quality. Among them we have selected one Iranian girl at top level. She will be in Nice Observatory and will use the biggest Telescope of the World built by European Southern Observatory in Chile. This is good news for the young generation of this country and for other young applicants that this European Program could help them to realize their dream.

The "pressure" from young Indian generation students toward our IRAP PhD program is constantly increasing. We have received 30 applications from top-level candidates.

One of these candidates will work in Ferrara University in the team lead by Prof. Frontera at the forefront of experiment in X-ray astronomy. The Relativistic School created by Prof. Ruffini in Roma is now well known in the world and young students from

Armenia, Brazil, Germany and France will have the opportunity to join his team by working on the most hot topic in Relativistic Astrophysics.

The Albanova theoretical group at University of Stockholm led by Prof. Rosquist and Prof. Felix Ryde who already supervised two EM students will be joined this year by a very bright German student prepared in the Freie University in Berlin by one of the most distinguished members of our Faculty: Prof. Hagen Kleinert. Finally the new group in Annecy which has already established a very effective collaboration with top scientists working in Relativistic Astrophysics in Russia will be joined by a Russian women scientist.

Their topic is one of the most fundamental in astrophysics with the understanding of the birth of the first stars in the Universe.

All the students will have the possibilities to visit and collaborate with the ICRANet network in the established centers in Roma, Pescara, Nice and the new one in Rio de Janeiro. There they will find some of the greatest astrophysicists in the world: Prof. Belinski, Prof. Einasto, Prof. Kerr and many members of the joint Faculty to collaborate with. ICRANet and ICRA were the funding members of the IRAP PhD www.icra.it, www.icranet.org.

As usual, our new selected students will start their first year in our program with a one-month course in Nice University. It will be the occasion to do all the administrative formalities (bank account, insurance, residence permit) and to start to learn some words of French. During two weeks the 19 students from the two other cycles will join them in order to reinforce our "spirit" of PhD School. Then, they will join their respective labs.

The non-selected candidates, some qualified but not addressing the specific issue of Relativistic Astrophysics, have not been accepted.

In view of the very high quality of the remaining ones, we have classified them equally, allowing further selection in the case of some of the selected ones for some reasons will not accept the fellowship.

We have made a special point to invite all the members of the IRAP PhD program to follow the good example of La Sapienza University to give some additional fellowships to this program. This will allow to optimize the choice of new students by using this IRAP PhD selection process to fully utilize the IRAP PhD process. During our selection meeting, the consortium has met Prof. F. Hekking, Director of the PhD School of the PRES de Grenoble.



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Erasmus Mundus Joint Doctorate Minutes of the Selection Meeting

Annecy February 27, 2012

Signatures

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Feroz VAKILI

Kjell Rosquist

FILIPPO FRONTERA

MARCO NOVELLO