

## LSST:UK Call for Expressions of Interest in Rubin Observatory Commissioning

Colleagues are invited to submit expressions of interest in participating in Rubin Observatory commissioning no later than 5pm UT, October 30, 2020. This roughly matches the timescale on which the Rubin Project Team are aiming to rebase the project plan including commissioning activities. Expressions of interest received before 5pm UT, September 11, 2020 will also receive full consideration for inclusion in LSST:UK's In-kind Proposal that itself is due to be submitted on September 25, 2020. This approach arises because negotiations of the in-kind contributions from international partners are running in parallel with rebaselining of the Rubin project plan. Indeed, recent feedback on LSST:UK's In-kind Letter of Intent (LoI) attaches high priority to UK involvement in Rubin commissioning. Therefore, whilst the timescale are tight, this represents a new and exciting opportunity for UK colleagues to become integrated in Rubin commissioning. At this stage firm commitments to spend time in Chile are not required – expressions of interest are sufficient.

All colleagues with a UK affiliation are eligible to submit an expression of interest in response to this call, regardless of whether individuals currently hold Rubin data rights as an Affiliate PI or Junior Associate within the LSST:UK Consortium. This is because we are keen to access the full range of expertise that is relevant to commissioning a modern survey telescope. Discussions with Rubin Project Team colleagues, and feedback on our In-kind LoI, indicate that relevant expertise includes but is not limited to: commissioning of survey telescopes and instrumentation; cross-correlation of technical data with on-sky data to test operational readiness; novel techniques including machine learning that may enhance the commissioning process.

This is an opportunity to become fully integrated members of the Rubin System Integration, Testing, and Commissioning (SIT-Com) team. Colleagues should expect to work under the functional direction of the SIT-Com team leaders. We understand that SIT-Com team members engaged in commissioning activities at the summit of Cerro Pachón are expected to undertake  $\geq 2$  “tours” to Chile of 3 months each, with data analysis occurring remotely. UK-based SIT-Com team members not involved in work at the summit are also likely to spend sustained periods of time at Rubin locations in the US and/or Chile. To be fully effective SIT-Com team members during the 2021/22 and 2022/23 academic years, colleagues will be expected to undertake training in the first half of 2021. We recognize that these timescales are tight, and potentially challenging due to significant uncertainties and stress around the 2020/21 academic year in light of covid-19. We encourage interested colleagues who may be concerned about timescales to contact us about their interests nevertheless, with a view to developing a work-able plan collaboratively.

Travel and subsistence funds are already in place to support UK-based SIT-Com members during periods spent in the US/Chile on Rubin commissioning activities, as part of LSST:UK Phase B funding. Also, given the close links between the UK's proposed involvement in the Rubin Observatory via the In-kind process, and this opportunity to shape the UK's contribution to Rubin commissioning, STFC funding may be available to support UK roles in Rubin commissioning. We therefore encourage colleagues to think creatively about how they may be able to add value to Rubin commissioning, given the possibility of new funding.

Expressions of interest should be submitted [via this online form](#) before 5pm UT, October 30, 2020, with submissions received before 5pm UT, September 11, 2020 receiving full consideration for inclusion in LSST:UK's In-kind Proposal. Further information about Rubin commissioning is available in [this briefing paper](#). Colleagues are also encouraged to email Graham Smith ([gps@star.sr.bham.ac.uk](mailto:gps@star.sr.bham.ac.uk)) and Bob Mann ([rgm@roe.ac.uk](mailto:rgm@roe.ac.uk)) with any questions, ideas, or concerns.

Graham Smith (LSST:UK Commissioning Coordinator)  
August 21, 2020