

Charter for TDA chapter - 13 June 2023 version

Time domain astronomy (TDA) is the fastest-growing area of astronomy. It has been a main science driver for major facilities and is an area of significant growth in Australia. TDA, in particular the study of transient events, is unique from other areas of astronomical research in that it requires coordinated observations, often by separate research groups, for search and follow-up using facilities located across Australia and over the world, as the transient events evolve, and before they fade from view forever. TDA requires collaborative work with researchers at all wavelengths (radio through gamma-ray) and messengers (gravitational waves and particles) in observation, theory, software development and instrumentation.

1. Support the professional development of Australia-based astronomers whose work is concerned with aspects of time-variable astronomy, which includes, but is not limited to, stellar explosions, eruptions, and mergers, planetary transits, asteroids, comets, and meteors, AGN reverberation mapping, pulsar timing, astrophysical jets, etc. Our chapter will provide ASA members with valuable opportunities to network at a local level, enabling their personal and professional growth.

2. Promote collaborations within Australia by connecting members who share scientific interests and geographical proximity and enhance collaborations with international collaborators and partners on coordinated detection, observations, and follow-up investigations, leveraging Australia's unique geographical location and facilities.

3. Build a connected, coordinated, multi-wavelength, multi-messenger community in Australia and establish/grow world-wide connections, especially on time-window-critical, multi-wavelength and/or multi-messenger discoveries.

We propose to have a flexible format in terms of workshops and meetings with a TDA meeting (or workshop) held every 12-24 months so as not to 'over-burden' the community with ASA-related events. Meetings may be themed by sub-area or they can be more general; a survey can be conducted to gauge what the community would like to see. Workshops would be short in duration (2-3 days; similar to ANITA), likely with an attached training component for early career scientists, similar to the ANITA (as of 2023) model. We anticipate engagement with ADACS and/or other technical services.

Organisation and Governance

1. Membership

Time Domain Astronomy (TDA) is a Chapter of the ASA and thus to be a member of TDA requires being a financial member of the ASA. TDA membership is open to all ASA members that are motivated to support and increase collaborative work, either

nationally or internationally, in observations, theory, and/or instrumentation-related research in time domain astronomy.

The three classes of membership are:

- Full Membership of TDA is open to all Honorary Fellows, Fellows or Full Members of the ASA,
- Student Membership is open to Student members of the ASA, and
- Associate Membership is open to Associate and Honorary Associate Members of the ASA.

Only full members are entitled to vote in all ballots and elections of TDA. Student members are entitled to vote for a student representative on the steering committee.

2. Chair and steering committee

The Chapter will be managed by a committee that strives to be balanced in terms of **gender identity**, **career stage** (including students), **research focus**, as well as **geographic and demographic diversity** of Australia's TDA community. The committee will have a Chair and the committee will consist of approximately 8 people. The Chair will be elected by the Chapter membership following a nominations process. The term length for committee members is 2 years, with staggered tenure. New members of the committee can be drawn from the Chapter membership and will join every two years via a process that involves a nomination and ballot for vacant positions. The term of the student representative will be for 1 year and will be elected by the student members of the Chapter. The committee will appoint a Secretary and a Webmaster from the committee members.

The TDA steering committee consists of the following:

- 1 Chair
- 1 Deputy-chair
- 1 immediate past Chair (when relevant)
- 1 ECR member defined as 5 years post-PhD (accounting for career breaks)
- 1 HDR student member elected by the student members of TDA
- 3 general members
- Note that if none of the committee members is an ASA Council member the ASA Council may appoint an additional committee member from its ranks.
- A secretary will be appointed from the steering committee (responsible for minutes of meetings, circulation of the minutes to the membership, setting up when to meet polls, and organisation of the elections)
- A webmaster/media officer will be appointed from the steering committee (responsible for managing the TDA website and social media accounts, if relevant).

- Initially, since there will be no immediate past Chair, we will elect 4 general members: two with 2-year terms and 2 with 1-year terms. After 1 year, two new general members will be elected with 2-year terms. 1 year later, only 1 new general member will be elected with a 2-year term. This process can be fine-tuned.

The Chair and steering committee are elected by the TDA membership under the following arrangements:

- The Chair holds office for two years.
- Steering committee members hold office for two years (but see above).
- The student representative is elected annually.
- There is a limit of *two consecutive* appointments of the Chair (4-year block).
- There is a limit of *two consecutive* appointments of the Deputy-chair (4-year block).
- There is no limit on the number of terms for other steering committee members, student representatives, or 'on-off' terms for any member.
- The Immediate Past Chair provides continuity of information relating to past decisions and actions on behalf of TDA.
- By 1 March of each year, the Chair calls for nominations for the position of Chair (every 2nd year), the to-be-vacated positions on the steering committee (half each year once established), and student representative (every year).
- A ballot of the members is conducted by March 15 by the secretary, and the result is declared in time for the new Chair and steering committee to take up their appointments between April 1 - April 15.
- Election of all office holders in TDA is determined by the direct count of the number of votes obtained by each candidate for a given position, with the Chair, or if conflicted the Deputy Chair or Secretary, having a casting vote in case of a tie.
- In terms of 'research focus': The steering committee should reflect the broad research interests among Australian-based researchers in TDA, including but not limited to the areas listed at the top of this document that span over observations, theory, instrumentation and data computing and software development. If this level of scientific diversity is not achieved with 8 members, the steering committee may elect to add an additional general member in order to achieve its scientific goals (9 members total, or 10 if the ASA Council has appointed one of its own as above).
- Casual vacancies on the steering committee may be filled by a ballot or by appointment agreed by the remaining committee members.

3. Meetings of the steering committee

The steering committee aims to meet 4-6 times per year, depending on surrounding events. Its functions include decisions related to the above goals and other matters related to time domain astronomy that arise from time to time.

4. Authority

Being a cooperative organisation, TDA has no authority over its members, who are subject to the authority and regulations of their own institutions. Nevertheless, it is expected that members who accept various duties (e.g., work as a committee member, workshop organisation) will perform those duties diligently. It is also expected that members will support the goals of TDA in a professional manner and let relevant committee members know if/when they cannot attend a meeting.

Only the Steering Committee Chair has authority to speak on behalf of the ASA and then only on matters that are part of the TDA charter. It is preferable that the matter has been discussed with the ASA Executive first.

Charter Additions or Amendments

Additions or amendments to this charter require agreement by a two-thirds majority of the membership who vote on any proposed change. A minimum of one-third of the total TDA membership must participate in the voting for the vote to be valid. All TDA members are asked to take note of and participate in any such event, when possible.