

VCLASS Project Memo 1 Rev. 2

VCLASS Survey Science Group Terms of Reference

Claire Chandler, NRAO July 10, 2016; updated Mark Lacy, January 31, 2023

Background

The VCLASS Survey Science Group (SSG) played a critical role in leading the scientific definition of the VLA Sky Survey proposal through to its acceptance by the NRAO Director. Since then, the SSG has provided a significant contribution to the preliminary and critical design reviews, the implementation of the survey, the delivery of the survey data products, the 3rd epoch review, and engagement with the astronomy community and the public. The SSG is expected to play an essential advisory role for the VCLASS Project Office through to completion of the project. These Terms of Reference describe the way in which the SSG interfaces with the VCLASS Project Office at NRAO, with the goal of optimizing and enhancing the value of the survey for the community. Specifically, the SSG will:

1. Assist NRAO in the planning for pipelines, data products and archiving.
2. Help develop community plans for extended data products to maximize the scientific return from VCLASS.
3. Assist NRAO in maintaining and developing both science community outreach and general education and public outreach activities for VCLASS.
4. Act as a point of contact for feedback from the science community to the VCLASS project team on the nature and quality of VCLASS data products.
5. Review survey documentation prior to release to the community.

The SSG may also be requested to help with reviews of the VCLASS project as needed, and participating in, and/or suggesting members of, scientific organizing committees for VCLASS science meetings.

Term

These Terms of Reference will be ongoing until terminated by agreement between the SSG and the VCLASS Project Office.

Structure

The SSG was originally comprised of eight Working Groups, whose Co-Chairs were members of the SSG Board, supplemented by a panel of expert community members at large, similar to the original SSG design. The Working Groups were:

- Extragalactic Working Group
- Galactic Working Group
- Transients Working Group
- Polarization Working Group
- EPO Working Group
- Survey Implementation Working Group
- NRAO Data products, archiving and Enhanced Data Products working Group
- Expert Community Members at Large

Since the survey started in operations, the working groups have been largely inactive, though the co-chairs remained as members of the SSG Board. As of October 2022, we are therefore changing the Board positions to

reflect this. Hereafter, the board members will not be expected to chair or co-chair working groups, but rather be experts in their appropriate fields. Board members are encouraged to consult their communities on issues, but should not feel obliged to hold working group meetings. There is also a category of Members at Large, who have been selected for their wide range of relevant expertise. These members are typically former leads of the SSG working groups, chairs, or co-chairs. These members at large are not expected to regularly attend meetings unless they wish to do so, but remain on the SSG in a consultative role.

Membership

New SSG members shall usually be nominated by the SSG board or members of the VLASS project office. In addition, candidates may self-nominate, or be nominated by other community members in response to an open call for new members. The SSG and VLASS Project Office shall strive to achieve a diverse Board membership. The VLASS Project Director and the NRAO Director appoint the SSG Board. Although appointed into specific areas based on their expertise, SSG board members should feel free to comment on any aspect of the survey science and implementation. The term for SSG Board membership will be two years, with the possibility of renewal subject to the annual review noted below.

Initial appointments to the SSG Board were:

- Stefi Baum and Shami Chatterjee, Co-Chairs of SSG Board
- Gordon Richards and Amy Kimball, Co-Chairs of Extragalactic Working Group
- Rachel Osten and Joseph Lazio, Co-Chairs of Galactic Working Group
- Gregg Hallinan and Greg Sivakoff, Co-Chairs of Transients Working Group
- Larry Rudnick and Bryan Gaensler, Co-Chairs of Polarization Working Group
- Susana Deustua and Jayanne English, Co-Chairs of EPO Working Group
- Casey Law and Kunal Mooley, Co-Chairs of Survey Implementation Working Group
- Eric Murphy and Erik Rosolowsky, Co-Chair of NRAO Data products, archiving and Enhanced Data Products Working Group.
- Expert Community Members at Large: Rick White, Jim Condon, Tracy Clarke, Jim Cordes, Ashley Zauderer, Nicole Gugliucci, Russ Taylor

Appointments (2018-2022). Two positions for science communication were added in 2018.

- Tracy Clarke and Shami Chatterjee, Co-Chairs of SSG Board
- Kristina Nyland and Heinz Andernach, Extragalactic science
- Laurent Loinard and Adam Ginsburg, Galactic science
- Gregg Hallinan and Greg Sivakoff, Transient science
- Larry Rudnick and Bryan Gaensler, Polarization science
- Summer Ash and Jacob Noel-Storr, EPO
- Casey Law and Kunal Mooley, Survey implementation
- Shea Brown and Erik Rosolowsky, NRAO Data products, archiving and Enhanced Data Products
- Amy Kimball (NRAO), Eric Murphy (NRAO), Science Communication
- Expert Community Members at Large: Rick White, Tracy Clarke, Russ Taylor, Rachel Osten, Joseph Lazio

Appointments Jan 2023 onwards. The Survey Implementation positions were removed, and commensal surveys positions added to better reflect the transition of VLASS from planning to observations.

- Kristina Nyland – SSG Board Chair
- Kate Alexander, Heinz Andernach, Extragalactic science
- Laurent Loinard and Adam Ginsburg, Galactic science

- Gregg Hallinan and Greg Sivakoff, Transient science
- Jennifer West and Bryan Gaensler, Polarization science
- Jacob Noel-Storr and Summer Ash, EPO
- Wendy Peters and Chenoa Tremblay, Commensal projects
- Dillon Dong and Erik Rosolowsky, NRAO Data products, archiving and Enhanced Data Products
- Brian Kent and Eric Murphy, Science Communication
- Expert Community Members at Large: Rick White, Tracy Clarke, Shami Chatterjee, Larry Rudnick, Kunal Mooley, Casey Law, Russ Taylor, Rachel Osten, Joseph Lazio

Review

The VLASS Project Office will review the following annually:

- The efficacy of the SSG and its interactions with NRAO
- Membership of the SSG
- These terms of reference

Working methods

Critical to the effectiveness of both the VLASS Project Office and the SSG is good and open communication. Therefore, the opportunity for regular telecons, both for the SSG Board alone and with personnel from the Project Office, will be enabled by NRAO. Dates and times of ad hoc meetings may also be arranged by either the SSG Board members, or the VLASS Project Office. A chair of the SSG Board (or their designee), or a member of the VLASS Project Office, will chair the meetings. Agendas will be circulated prior to meetings, and minutes and action items will be distributed within 24 hours of the end of a meeting.

Additional mechanisms for sharing information, such as the VLASS wiki, Google docs, Authorea, Dropbox, or other services, may be used, and should be accessible to both the SSG Board and the VLASS Project Office.

Revision history

Document ID		Date
Original		2016 March 10
Rev.1	SSG Board membership updated	2016 July 10
Rev.2	Document updated to reflect transition to operations, membership updated.	2023 January 31