

Calling women astronomers

September 11 2013

At an astronomy workshop in Perth today, the International Centre for Radio Astronomy Research (ICRAR) announced the creation of a new and unique fellowship scheme aimed at senior women astronomers.

The scheme was announced at the opening of the 2013 Women in Astronomy Workshop, which is being hosted by ICRAR at The University of Western Australia this year.

"We are very excited to announce this new opportunity for senior women researchers, and are looking forward to receiving many applications from outstanding candidates," said Dr Renu Sharma, ICRAR Associate Director.

The fellowship, which will start accepting applications in February 2014, is aimed at providing senior female astronomers with the opportunity to visit ICRAR and interact with researchers and graduate students.

Only one applicant will be accepted every year in this highly competitive fellowship. For the successful applicant ICRAR will provide \$5,000 per month for living and accommodation expenses for three months, as well as substantial travel assistance enabling highly qualified international applicants to participate.

Recognising the difficulty women astronomers can sometimes face when travelling due to [family obligations](#), ICRAR will also provide additional support to cover childcare and other similar expenses.

"ICRAR has always had a strong commitment to promote [science careers](#) for women. Astronomy is fortunate among the physical sciences to have a large number of [successful women](#) and I want to see that number grow," said ICRAR Director, Professor Peter Quinn.

The Women in Astronomy Workshop is organised every year by the Women in Astronomy Chapter of the Astronomical Society of Australia (ASA). This year the two-day workshop's theme is "Pathways to Success."

The workshop is open to both men and women and allows researchers to exchange experiences, network, provides professional development opportunities and promotes best practice in research organisations, as well as confronting gender and other issues which still prevent women from progressing in the field.

"The Women in Astronomy Workshop is a great initiative that allows researchers to interact and discuss the issues that affect [women](#) the most. This year we have some great speakers lined up, and ICRAR is proud to be hosting researchers of such a high calibre," said Dr Sharma.

This year's workshop features presentations from prestigious speakers, including the 2011 Nobel Laureate Professor Brian Schmidt, the Director General of the Square Kilometre Array Professor Phil Diamond, the WA Chief Scientist Professor Lyn Beazley, as well as ICRAR's Director Professor Peter Quinn - West Australian Scientist of the Year 2012 - and CSIRO's Dr Lisa Harvey-Smith, project scientist for Australian SKA Pathfinder and Chair of the ASA Women in Astronomy Chapter.

Provided by International Centre for Radio Astronomy Research

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