

Report to PaNAGIC from GWIC

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The Gravitational Wave International Committee (GWIC) was formed in 1997 to facilitate international collaboration and cooperation in the construction, operation and use of the major gravitational wave detection facilities world-wide. GWIC meets annually, with recent meetings in Pisa (2008), Sydney (2007), Maryland (2006), Okinawa (2005), and Dublin (2004).

The membership of GWIC represents all of the world's active gravitational wave projects, both ground-based and space-based. Each project has either one or two members on GWIC depending on size. Because the GWIC representatives are generally the leaders of each project, GWIC has access to the broader expertise throughout the community. GWIC also includes representation from the International Society on General Relativity and Gravitation and from the astrophysics/theoretical relativity community. At its 2008 meeting, GWIC heard presentations from the pulsar timing collaborations which are searching for very low frequency gravitational waves, and decided to invite these groups to join GWIC.

GWIC sponsors the biennial Edoardo Amaldi Conferences on Gravitational Waves. The Amaldi meeting is considered by many in the gravitational wave community to be their most important international gathering. The members of GWIC serve as the Scientific Organizing Committee for the Amaldi meetings. The next (8th) Amaldi meeting will be held at Columbia University from June 21-26, 2009. GWIC also supports the biennial LISA Symposium, and two workshop series, on data analysis and on advanced detectors.

In 2006, GWIC established an international prize, to be awarded annually to an outstanding Ph. D. thesis based on research in gravitational waves. The 2006 and 2007 Prizes have generated growing interest, with nominations from eight countries.

Most importantly, GWIC provides advocacy and a forum to foster international collaboration. By bringing together the leaders of the different projects on a regular basis, it has helped break-down the barriers and improved communication among the various gravitational wave projects. The growing collaboration among the various gravitational wave projects has been triggered in large part by discussions which have taken place at GWIC meetings. In particular, the 2007 agreement between LIGO/GEO and Virgo to analyze their data together has its roots in the GWIC meeting in the summer of 2005.

Last year, GWIC commissioned a committee to prepare a global road-map for the field of gravitational wave science, with the perspective to optimize the global science in the field. The charge to the committee is to cover both ground- and space-based detectors with a 30-year horizon. The final report will use broad input from the communities

involved to identify relevant science opportunities and the facilities needed to address them. We hope that this study – the report from which should be available during winter 2008/9 - will help focus the global R&D work in the field for the next few years, and help guide the funding agencies to support the highest priority projects.