

Frame Contract for ESO Outreach Services
2015–2017

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Synopsis

The European Southern Observatory (ESO) is an international astronomical organisation that carries out an ambitious programme focused on the design, construction and operation of powerful ground-based astronomical observatories to enable important scientific discoveries.

The core activities of ESO's Education and Public Outreach department (ePOD) consist of:

- Publishing and distributing world-class news/photo/video releases and vodcasts with European flavour.
- Exploring and developing innovative groundbreaking astronomy communication techniques and tools, especially with respect to visualization, information retrieval and interconnectivity.

The ESO outreach Department (ePOD) has recently had a staff decline. Despite this ePOD has significantly increased the level of output over the past years. One of the principal strategies for the ESO education and Outreach Department is to assemble and maintain a powerful, professional team of communication experts and to let them use their skills, creativity and ingenuity for the benefit of European astronomy. Our current complement of extremely talented and hardworking ESO staff need in a few areas to be supported by outreach services from a Frame Contractor:

1. Web development (ESO, IAU, ESA/Hubble)

The work is focused on further development of our Django/plicity web infrastructure. The service contractor delivering web development will be responsible for programming vital components of the products that are being developed, typically in Django/Python.

The tasks include the technical implementation and improvement of appropriate online archives (images, videos, and news), further development of the metadata standard for ESO's images and videos, innovative/intuitive search functionalities within advanced information systems etc.

2. Web content support (ESO, IAU, ESA/Hubble)

The web content support Contractor assists the web content coordinator in the Web & Advanced Developments with web skills to facilitate sharing the excitement of astronomy related with some of the world largest telescopes in planning and in operation on Earth. The main part of the job is to get content distributed for the Department: updating, maintenance and development of various outreach web sites.

The web content support Contractor will work on astronomy outreach websites for ESO ePOD. The main duties will be:

- Organise, upload and update content for multiple astronomy-related websites.
- Monitoring and improving the quality of ESO ePOD's web-based products.
- Help in the development and design of new website tools and features.
- Edit and format content (text, images and videos) when necessary.

3. Graphic design (ESO, ESA/Hubble)

The graphics design Contractor will deliver world-class designs in print, online and more as part of the standard production of ESO's Education and Public Outreach department:

- Online design on demand
- Print design on demand

4. Portal to the Universe Editorial services (ESO)

The Contractor delivers editorial support for the Portal to the Universe (PTTU) to make sure PTTU is kept up-to-date with the latest content and will push the development of the product on the web and through other channels. The various channels are accounted for in a large spreadsheet.

To follow the main editorial guideline which is to feature excellent content that is more "recent" or "better" than what is featured already, e.g. to:

- Feature front page features in the banner (time-critical)
- Feature news, blogs, podcasts (time-critical)
- Mark non-astronomy posts as SPAM (time-critical)
- Approve new journalists and PIOs
- Find and Approve new feeds
- Persuade non-RSS PIOs to use RSS feeds
- Develop PTTU

5. Community coordination (ESO, IAU, ESA/Hubble)

The Contractor will be in charge of delivering a tailored overall promotion strategy, implement the activities resulting from it and evaluate their impact. He/she will offer creative solutions to promote new projects and activities, as well as come with proactive proposals for a better promotion of ePOD's products. He/she will coordinate the entire presence of ESO on the social media channels, making sure that ESO is always keeping up with the latest innovations in outreach and communication. Finally, he/she will develop strategic outreach partnerships with stakeholders from ESO's community in order to increase the visibility of the ESO brand and its popularity.

- o Deliver the promotion strategy
- o Implement the promotion strategy, and coordinate/supervise the execution of all the promotion deliverables
- o Manage ESO's social media presence by updating ESO's channels and interacting with the community on a constant and regular basis
- o Devise and implement distribution plans for all new and reprinted products
- o Update and maintain the complex address databases of all ePOD's target groups, especially with focus to grow the reach
- o Establish partnerships for the promotion of ePOD's products for various campaigns
- o Manage and improve the distribution of ePOD's electronic newsletters

6. Public Information Officer support (ESA/Hubble, ESO)

The Contractor delivers public information officer assistance for ESA's part of the Hubble Space Telescope with the key purpose to promote HST science for ESA done by European scientists (@ European institutions) by staying abreast of the latest research being done with HST. The work is coordinated closely with ESA/ESTEC and STScI/NASA/OPO.

- o Writing and coordination of HST press releases, announcements, Pictures of the Week, Hubblecast scripts
- o Responding to external requests from media and the general public
- o Writing and coordination of content for the spacetelescope.org website
- o Additional writing tasks as needed
- o Maintain and update the online ESO image archive (captions, tags, metadata information).
- o Check the ESO Webpage for broken links, find the missing content and check for additional links leading to the same wrong page. Also find solutions on how to avoid this type of broken link in the future (if possible).
- o For the ESO Supernova Planetarium & Visitor Centre:
 - Help with the coordination of the project, the program and the strategic planning.
 - Plan and implement guided tours (writing scripts, manuals for tour guides, calculation of needed manpower).
 - Create text content for the ESO Supernova web page.
 - If needed represent ESO at events regarding the ESO Supernova in the area of Darmstadt and Heidelberg.
 - Write the ESO Supernova operation system manual for tour guides and presenters and keep it updated in the development process.
- o Hubble 25th anniversary tasks to be specified

Contract set up

The timeframe of the contract will be from 1.7.2015-30.06.2017.

The contract should be flexible so that resources can be adjusted within each of the six areas above, as long as the overall value is maintained.

The work will be reimbursed every month on an hourly basis after presentation of an invoice from the Contractor. A timesheet with hours and tasks will be filled in daily by each employee of the Contractor and provided monthly to ESO together with the invoicing.

Any software needed to carry out the services will be purchased by the Contractor in the cheapest possible and competitive way and reimbursed by ESO with the first monthly invoice.

Statement of Work for Outreach Services 2015–2017

The remainder of this document focuses on descriptions of the services needed for the 6 different types of outreach services that we will need in 2015–2017 (from 1 July 2015 until 30 June 2017).

1. Web Development (ESO, IAU, ESA/Hubble)

Context

ePOD's technical infrastructure includes the ESO public web presence, which ensures massive distribution of Education and Public Outreach (EPO) products (press releases, images, videos, brochures, etc.). The public availability and distribution of ESO EPO products is mission critical for the operations and success of ESO ePOD.

Overall the Web & Advanced Development group implements software and infrastructure for cutting-edge science communication (e.g. managing the development of interfaces between laypeople users and complex, rich outreach data with advanced backends), coordination of demanding online distribution of video podcasts (the single most demanding outgoing Internet traffic from ESO), and setting up/administrating the ePOD MySQL database.

The Service

The work is focused on further development of our *Djangoplicity* web infrastructure. The service contractor delivering web development will be responsible for programming vital components of the products that are being developed, typically in Django/Python.

The tasks include the technical implementation and improvement of appropriate online archives (images, videos, news), further development of the metadata standard for ESO's images and videos, innovative/intuitive search functionalities within advanced information systems etc.

Qualifications and Experience

- In-depth experience (~5 years) with technical web development (Django/Python).
- In-depth experience with advanced web design (JavaScript, HTML5/CSS3, responsive design).
- Experience with Distributed Task Queues (Celery/RabbitMQ).
- Experience in database design on an advanced level.
- A degree in computer science or informatics is a plus

Key competences

- The Contractor can work independently, following accurately pre-defined guidelines, adhere to deadlines.
- Rational thinking and a focus on orderly logical workflows
- It is critical that he/she can efficiently communicate via emails in English with a reasonable response time.
- The Contractor should be flexible and able to cope with varying amounts of work

Location

- As it is expected that the Contractor will work remotely with occasional visits to ESO's headquarters in Garching, for face-to-face interactions with the Web & Advanced Development group.

Work load

- 2015: 167 hours
- 2016: 333 hours
- 2017: 167 hours

2. Web Content Support (ESO, IAU, ESA/Hubble)

Context

ePOD currently maintain around 18 websites, including the outreach part of eso.org, the main site for Hubble outreach in Europe, International Astronomical Union and more. Our “enabling access to digital products” policy is part of an overall strategy to strengthen the outreach content on the ESO web. The Department is very strong in the production of astronomical images, videos, exhibitions and educational materials, and focuses on the web as one of its main distribution channels.

The Service

The web content support Contractor assists the web content coordinator in the Web & Advanced Developments with web skills to facilitate sharing the excitement of astronomy related with some of the world largest telescopes in planning and in operation on Earth. The main part of the job is to get content distributed for the Department: updating, maintenance and development of various outreach web sites.

The web content support Contractor will work on astronomy outreach websites for ESO ePOD. The main duties will be:

- Organise, upload and update content for multiple astronomy-related websites.
- Monitoring and improving the quality of ESO ePOD’s web-based products.
- Help in the development and design of new website tools and features.
- Edit and format content (text, images and videos) when necessary.

Qualifications and Experience

- Rational tech-savvy thinking and a focus on orderly logical workflows
- At least 3 years of previous professional experience with web editing (HTML).
- Good working knowledge of Windows and Mac OS and preferably also some knowledge of Unix/Linux.
- Good knowledge of HTML/CSS and be able to edit the code using a text editor.
- Experience with Dreamweaver is desirable.
- On top of the requirements, the ideal candidate would also have:
 - Experience with Adobe Photoshop and Acrobat Professional.
 - Some basic knowledge of astronomy and an interest in communicating astronomy.
 - Experience in more advanced web design (JavaScript, Flash/ActionScript).
 - A bit of experience in technical web development (Python/Django, PHP).

Key competences

- The work can at times be repetitive, but still needs a very high degree of dedication, an extreme sense of logic, a good sense for detail, esthetical sense and thoroughness.
- The Contractor should be able to work independently, following accurately pre-defined guidelines, adhering strictly to deadlines.
- As it is expected that the Contractor will work remotely, it is critical that he/she can efficiently communicate in English both verbally and in writing with a reasonable response time.
- Be able to communicate effectively
- Be able to work in a fast paced environment and multitask
- The Contractor should be flexible and able to cope with varying amounts of work

Location

- Remotely

Work load

- 2015: 1454 hours
- 2016: 2908 hours
- 2017: 1454 hours

3. Graphic Design (ESO, ESA/Hubble)

Context

As part of its portfolio, ePOD produces many world-class graphical productions in print and online.

The Service

The graphics design Contractor will deliver world-class designs in print, online and more as part of the standard production of ESO's Education and Public Outreach department:

- Online design on demand
- Print design on demand

Qualifications and Experience

- Several years of experience with graphics design as illustrated by an extensive portfolio.
- In-depth knowledge of Photoshop and solid experience with fine-art colour correction
- In-depth knowledge of InDesign
- In-depth knowledge of Illustrator

Key competences

- The Contractor can work independently, following accurately pre-defined guidelines, adhere to deadlines.
- Some level of rational thinking and ability to follow an orderly logical workflow
- It is critical that he/she can efficiently communicate verbally and in written form in English with a reasonable response time.
- The Contractor should be flexible and able to cope with varying amounts of work

Location

- Remotely

Work load

- 2015: 210 hours
- 2016: 420 hours
- 2017: 210 hours

4. Portal to the Universe Editorial Support

Context

ESO's Education and Public Outreach department is responsible for various web sites. One of these is the Portal to the Universe (<http://www.portaltotheuniverse.org>). The site features news, blogs, video podcasts, audio podcasts, images, videos and more.

The Service

The Contractor delivers editorial support for the Portal to the Universe (PTTU) to make sure PTTU is kept up-to-date with the latest content and will push the development of the product on the web and through other channels. The various channels are accounted for in a large spreadsheet.

Responsibilities

To follow the main editorial guideline which is to feature excellent content that is more "recent" or "better" than what is featured already, e.g. to:

1. Feature front page features in the banner (time-critical)
2. Feature news, blogs, podcasts (time-critical)
3. Mark non-astronomy posts as SPAM (time-critical)
4. Approve new journalists and PIOs
5. Find and Approve new feeds
6. Persuade non-RSS PIOs to use RSS feeds
7. Develop PTTU

Qualifications and Experience

- A solid experience in popular astronomy communication/journalism is required
- Some level of rational thinking and ability to follow an orderly logical workflow
- Very good knowledge of physics or astronomy is required
- Fluent in English
- Good journalistic skills

Key competences

- The Contractor can work independently, following accurately pre-defined guidelines, adhere to deadlines.
- As it is expected that the Contractor will work remotely, it is critical that he/she can efficiently communicate via emails in English with a reasonable response time.
- Working hours that are in the CET evening/night hours would be a benefit.
- A strong desire to make the PTTU an even more prominent site is needed
- About one trip per year to ESO's headquarters in Garching, for face-to-face interactions with eP-OD can be expected.

Location

- Remotely

Work load

- 2015: 175 hours
- 2016: 350 hours
- 2017: 175 hours

5. Community Coordination

Context

ePOD delivers every year a series of outstanding products for different types of audiences: educators, science centres, mass media etc. However, while the production of these products is done at top quality level, the promotion of the products needs to be given appropriate attention to exploit the production investment properly. Given that ePOD products are meant for outreach and education and that most of the time they are made available for free, the most effective way of promoting them is by building a strong connection with all of ePOD's target groups, especially "partners" who can act as amplifiers in their respective environments. This is an area which includes developing ambassador networks, proactive distribution plans, electronic newsletters, Social Media, and is formally known as "community coordination".

In order to have an integrated and successful interaction with its community, ePOD needs a dedicated community coordinator who can design a strategy aimed at all these publics, implement it, constantly improve it based on feedback and experience and evaluate its impact. By connecting ePOD with all its target groups, the community coordinator will increase the reach, awareness, impact and popularity of the entire range of ePOD products.

The services

The Contractor will be in charge of delivering a tailored overall promotion strategy, implement the activities resulting from it and evaluate their impact. He/she will offer creative solutions to promote new projects and activities, as well as come with proactive proposals for a better promotion of ePOD's products. He/she will coordinate the entire presence of ESO on the social media channels, making sure that ESO is always keeping up with the latest innovations in outreach and communication. Finally, he/she will develop strategic outreach partnerships with stakeholders from ESO's community in order to increase the visibility of the ESO brand and its popularity.

Responsibilities

- Deliver the promotion strategy
- Implement the promotion strategy, and coordinate/supervise the execution of all the promotion deliverables
- Manage ESO's social media presence by updating ESO's channels and interacting with the community on a constant and regular basis
- Devise and implement distribution plans for all new and reprinted products
- Update and maintain the complex address databases of all ePOD's target groups, especially with focus to grow the reach
- Establish partnerships for the promotion of ePOD's products for various campaigns
- Manage and improve the distribution of ePOD's electronic newsletters

Qualifications and Experience

- Several years of experience in science communication and public relations, and preferably also outreach for astronomy-related products
- Experience in designing communication, public relations and promotion strategies and leading communication, public relations and promotion campaigns
- Strong and proven knowledge of marketing and advertising for astronomy related projects/activities
- Preferably a masters degree or similar in marketing or public relations
- Several years of hands-on experience in management of social media communication

Key competences

- The Contractor can work independently, following accurately pre-defined guidelines, adhere to deadlines.
- As it is expected that the Contractor may work remotely, it is critical that he/she can efficiently communicate via emails in English with a reasonable response time.
- Rational thinking and a focus on orderly logical workflows
- Working knowledge of several languages would be an asset

- The Contractor should be flexible and able to cope with varying amounts of work

Location

- Remotely

Work load

- 2015: 920 hours
- 2016: 1840 hours
- 2017: 920 hours

6. Public Information Officer Support for ESA/Hubble & ESO

Context

ESO's Education and Public Outreach department is responsible for outreach for various astronomical projects. One of these is ESA's part of the Hubble Space Telescope based on an agreement between ESA and ESO.

The services

The Contractor delivers public information officer assistance for ESO and ESA's part of the Hubble Space Telescope with the key purpose to promote HST science for ESA done by European scientists (@ European institutions) by staying abreast of the latest research being done with HST. The Hubble work is coordinated closely with ESA/ESTEC and STScI/NASA/OPO.

Responsibilities

- Writing and coordination of ESO news products, HST press releases, announcements, Pictures of the Week, Hubblecast scripts
- Responding to external requests from media and the general public
- Writing and coordination of content for the spacetelescope.org website
- Additional writing tasks as needed
- Maintain and update the online ESO image archive (captions, tags, metadata information).
- Check the ESO Webpage for broken links, find the missing content and check for additional links leading to the same wrong page. Also find solutions on how to avoid this type of broken link in the future (if possible).
- For the ESO Supernova Planetarium & Visitor Centre:
 - Help with the coordination of the project, the program and the strategic planning.
 - Plan and implement guided tours (writing scripts, manuals for tour guides, calculation of needed manpower).
 - Create text content for the ESO Supernova web page.
 - If needed represent ESO at events regarding the ESO Supernova in the area of Darmstadt and Heidelberg.
 - Write the ESO Supernova operation system manual for tour guides and presenters and keep it updated in the development process.
- Hubble 25th anniversary tasks to be specified

Qualifications and Experience

- A solid experience in popular astronomy communication/journalism is required
- Very good knowledge of physics or astronomy is required
- Fluent in English
- Very good journalistic skills

Key competences

- The Contractors can work independently, following accurately pre-defined guidelines, adhere to deadlines.
- Rational thinking and a focus on orderly logical workflows
- As it is expected that the Contractor will work remotely, it is critical that he/she can efficiently communicate via emails in English with a reasonable response time.
- A strong desire to make ESO and ESA/Hubble even more known brands
- As coordination with several in-house collaborators is necessary, trips per year to ESO's headquarters in Garching, for face-to-face interactions with ePOD can be expected.

Location

- Remotely

Work load

- 2015: 1983 hours
- 2016: 2800 hours
- 2017: 1400 hours