National Science Foundation

Second PhysCOS Early Career Workshop

September 25, 2025

Martin Still | Program Director

MPS/Division of Astronomical Sciences

https://www.nsf.gov

What is the National Science Foundation?

A federal agency; NSF appropriates roughly $300M per year to support the U.S. astronomical community. With this funding, we:

- Provide research awards to the astronomical community (SCIENCE)
- Steward current generation and develop next-generation tools, including telescopes and instrumentation, that support forefront astronomical research (TOOLS)
- Support the development of the next-generation workforce to perform new science with next-generation tools (PEOPLE)

Creating a STEM Workforce

- A strong workforce is vital to maintaining the nation's standard of excellence and global leadership in STEM.
- NSF supports efforts to increase the participation of individuals, institutions, and communities across the nation — ensuring broad access to resources and opportunities for discovery and innovation.
- Guided by the principles of merit, competition, equal opportunity, and excellence, NSF invests in evidence-based approaches that:
  - Build STEM education and research capacity.
  - Catalyze new areas of STEM research.
  - Develop strategic partnerships and alliances.

NSF Solicitations and Opportunities

- Postdoc, postgrad, and undergrad employment via PI-led NSF grants:
  - Astronomy and Astrophysics Grants (AAG), Advanced Technologies and Instrumentation (ATI), Major Research Instrumentation (MRI), Mid-Scale Research Infrastructure (MSRI), Research Experiences for Undergraduates (REU)
- Propose directly for NSF funding:
  - Faculty Early Career Development Program (CAREER), Launching of Early-Career Academic Pathways (LEAP), Astronomy and Astrophysics Postdoctoral Fellowships (AAPF), Graduate Research Fellowship Program (GRFP)
- Join science, engineering, and engagement staff at world class facilities:
  - Rubin, Inouye, ALMA, Gemini, VLA, LIGO, Green Bank, Kitt Peak, Cerro Tololo, GONG
  - Major Research Equipment and Facilities Construction (MREFC)

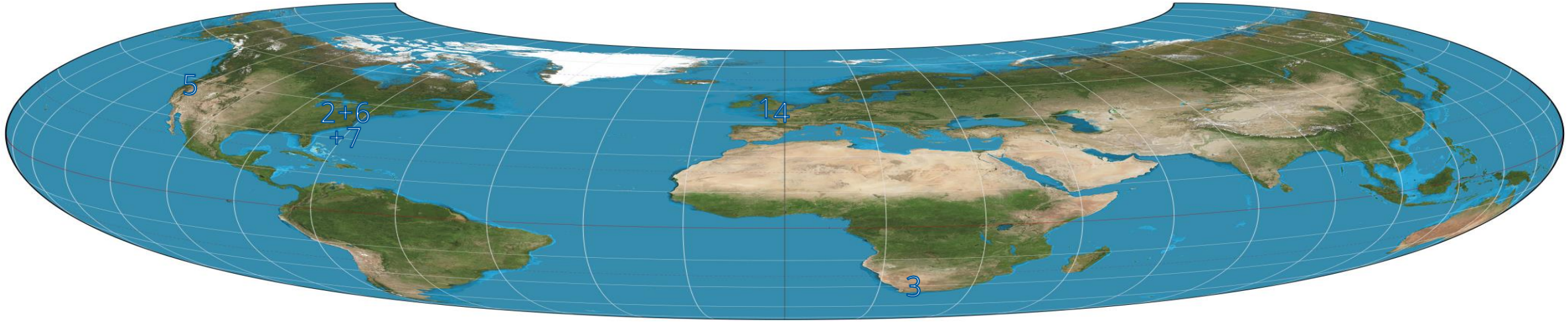
Backup Slides

Career History

PhD graduation

1995-1998	1998-2005	2005-2007	2007-2009	2009-2014	2014-2019	2019-

1. Post-Doctoral Research Assistant — University of St Andrews, Scotland
2. XMM-Newton and Swift Support Scientist — NASA Goddard Space Flight Center
3. Resident Astronomer — Southern African Large Telescope (SALT)
4. XMM-Newton and Swift Operations Manager — University College London
5. Kepler Guest Observer Director & Science Deputy Director — NASA Ames Research Center
6. Program Scientist — Astrophysics Division, NASA Headquarters
7. Program Director — Astronomy Division, National Science Foundation



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6. Program Scientist — Astrophysics Division, NASA Headquarters
7. Program Director — Astronomy Division, National Science Foundation

Research Scientist	Facility Operations and Community Support Scientist	Facility Manager	Project Director	Federal Programs Oversight

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1	2	3	4	5	6	7
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Research Scientist	Facility Operations and Community Support Scientist		Facility Manager	Project Director	Federal Programs Oversight	

Research Interests

- Stellar Evolution/Interacting Binary Stars
- Stellar Evolution/Gamma-Ray Bursts/SNe
- Exoplanets
- Stellar Structure