



DIRECTOR (PROFESSOR)

Inter-University Institute for Data Intensive Astronomy

Faculty of Science

The **Inter-University Institute for Data Intensive Astronomy** (IDIA, <https://idia.ac.za>), established in 2015, is a partnership of three South African universities: the University of Cape Town, the University of Pretoria and the University of the Western Cape with the aims to build capacity and expertise in data intensive astronomy in the partner institutions and to provide systems and solutions for converting data to knowledge in the big data era of MeerKAT and the Square Kilometre Array (SKA). The University of Cape Town is seeking to appoint a new Director for IDIA to continue and build on the exciting work done to date.

IDIA developed and operates the ilifu Data Intensive Research Cloud (<https://ilifu.ac.za>) hosted at the University of Cape Town. In collaboration with the South African Radio Astronomy Observatory, ilifu provides a dynamic platform for the South African research community for processing and analysis of MeerKAT programs and other SKA pathfinder projects, as well as supporting some major bioinformatics projects. ilifu is the first research cloud facility of its kind in South Africa and is currently used by more than 500 South African and international researchers in astronomy and bioinformatics. Most of the processing and analysis of MeerKAT data is performed on the ilifu cloud. IDIA also provides leadership in the development of the CARTA visual analytics tool (<https://cartavis.org>).

IDIA teams work with national and international stakeholders on technologies and systems relevant to the emerging network of SKA Regional Centres, including cloud platforms for processing and analysis, visualization of big astronomy data in the cloud, and cloud federation with the European Open Science Cloud and with facilities of the South African National Integrated Cyber-Infrastructure System.

The Director of IDIA reports to the Dean of Science while also being a member of the Department of Astronomy. The Director is the line manager for a team of around 15 developers and research officers and works closely with two Associate Directors (Technology Development and Outreach) to determine the strategic directions for IDIA, with input from a Management Committee composed of representatives from the partner institutions.

The University of Cape Town, with the IDIA partner universities, will appoint a Director for an initial five year term, starting in 2024. The appointment is at the full Professor level. We seek a senior astronomer with a strong research program in data intensive astronomy and demonstrated collaborative leadership and administrative skills.

Requirements for the job:

- PhD degree in a relevant discipline
- Evidence of a global standing in data-intensive astrophysics relevant to MeerKAT and SKA science
- Clear demonstration of outstanding research leadership with an active research program in one of the IDIA core areas of strength
- Demonstrated leadership in partnership building and stakeholder engagement at national and international levels
- A track record of fund raising
- Experience of team building and successful management of teams with diverse skills
- Demonstrated ability for strategic thinking

Responsibilities:

- Provide scientific strategic leadership for IDIA which builds on the current strengths and creates innovative approaches to its work.
- Be an active member of the department, which includes leading a research group in data intensive astrophysics relevant to MeerKAT and SKA science, and mentoring postgraduate students and post-doctoral researchers.
- Lead an executive team at IDIA responsible for programs in technology and systems development, operations and support for users of ilifu, and development and outreach.

- Work with South African government and government agencies to advance national priorities in data intensive research and open science.
- Provide strategic leadership of IDIA into the SKA era in collaboration with national and international partners as a hub for technology innovation, research excellence and social development.
- Responsible for financial management of IDIA and reporting to the IDIA partner institutions.
- Attract sustainable independent research funding.

Appointment will be made at the level of Professor in alignment with the candidate's standing as well as the Faculty's expectations for performance at this academic rank.

The annual 2023 cost of employment, including benefits at Professor level is R1,504,192.

To apply, please e-mail the below documents in **a single pdf file** to Ms Natasha Khan at recruitment06@uct.ac.za

- UCT Application Form (download at <http://forms.uct.ac.za/hr201.doc>)
- Motivational letter and Curriculum Vitae (CV)
- A personal research statement and statement of vision for the next five years for IDIA.
- Names and contact information of three references.

An application which does not comply with the above requirements will be regarded as incomplete. Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted and may be required to undergo competency and pre-placement-medical assessments.

Telephone: 021 650 3469

Reference number: E240128

Closing date: 26 April 2024

Website: <http://www.idia.ac.za>

UCT is a designated employer and is committed to the pursuit of excellence, diversity, and redress in achieving its equity targets in accordance with the Employment Equity Plan of the University and its Employment Equity goals and targets. Preference will be given to candidates from the under-represented designated groups including candidates with disabilities. Our Employment Equity Policy is available at www.hr.uct.ac.za/hr/policies/employ_equity

UCT reserves the right not to appoint.