News from the Society for Astronomical Sciences

January, 2026

In-person attendees at SAS-2025. Photo by Bob Stephens.

Call for Abstracts for SAS-2026

Papers for presentation at the SAS-2026 Symposium are solicited on all aspects of astronomical science that are (or can be) pursued by observations with small telescopes (less than ≈1-meter aperture). We encourage presentation of work which follows the Scientific Method, including clear hypotheses, reproducible experiments, and results. Examples of work presented at previous Symposia include:

- Observations, data, and analysis of variable stars, eclipsing binary stars, double stars and stellar systems
- Observations, data, and analysis of asteroids and other solar system objects; and exoplanets
- Progress, status, and planning for upcoming observing campaigns such as the TESS follow-up initiative.
- Instrumentation/hardware and techniques (including software) for photometry, astrometry, spectroscopy, polarimetry, and fast-cadence observations (e.g., occultations)
- Investigations of atmospheric effects, light-propagation and scattering, light pollution monitoring as they affect astronomical observations.

We welcome three types of papers: "*Paper with Presentation*" includes both a written paper for the Proceedings and a 20-minute presentation; "*Paper without Presentation*" is a written paper for the Proceedings; and "*Posters*".

We will accept both in-person and remote presentations (in-person are preferred).

All abstract submissions will be reviewed by a panel of experienced amateurs and professionals who will provide helpful feedback to authors and decide which submissions to schedule as part of the symposium as either presentations or posters.

Submit your abstracts via e-mail to:

Program@SocAstroSci.org.

Abstracts are due by April 8, 2026. You will be informed of acceptance by April 15.

Final papers for the Proceedings will be due by May 13, 2026. The Proceedings will be uploaded to the SAS Website about June 17, 2026.

Invitation to SAS-2026

Everyone interested in the use of small telescopes for science and education is invited to participate in the Society for Astronomical Sciences' 45th Annual Symposium, in Ontario,

California, on **June 25-26-27, 2026**. Mark your calendars, invite your science-oriented friends and club members to join us.

The SAS Symposium is the premier annual conference devoted to small-telescope astronomical research. SAS-2026 offers both in-person and interactive online participation.

The Symposium brings together amateur astronomers, students, instructors, and professional astronomers for in-depth discussions of topics related to small-telescope science and research. It is an excellent venue for presenting development of instruments, new observing techniques, discussing targets of observational campaigns, describing instrumentation and data reduction or analysis methods, developing collaborations, and sharing results, expertise and experience. Almost any topic related to astronomical research using modest telescopes is of interest to SAS. In the past these have included – but are not limited to – asteroids, planetary observations, variable stars, solar observing, extra galactic transients, and extrasolar planets.

You do not need to be an expert to benefit from participating in the Symposium. Our goal is to help you learn about small-telescope research opportunities and become a productive observer and researcher, by providing a collaborative environment where you will learn how to perform quality observations, generate useful data, and contribute to astronomical science.

Registration: The registration link is:

https://socastrosci.app.neoncrm.com/np/clients/socastrosci/event.jsp?event=114&

The Registration fee is $150 for SAS members or $175 for non-members.

Long-time participants will notice a small change in the registration form. This one link now handles both in-person and on-line registrants.

Hotel: The Symposium will be held at the DoubleTree by Hilton hotel at 222 North Vineyard Avenue, Ontario, California, 91764 (ph 909-937-0900). There is not a conference rate available.

Workshops: On Thursday June 25th we are hosting two educational and practical workshops.

The morning workshop will be **"Polarization and Polarimetry for small telescopes"**, led by Gary Cole. Astrometry, photometry, and spectroscopy have been the dominant techniques for small-telescope astronomical research, highlighted in papers presented at SAS each year. Several of our advisors have encouraged us to consider Polarimetry as the "next big thing" for small-telescope science contributions. This workshop will cover the concept of polarization, astronomical phenomena and sources, instrument principles and examples, and the science case for small-telescope polarimetry. We'll take you from a standing start to understanding of the role that you can play in this unsung field. Speakers will include amateur astronomers, researchers, and instrument developers.

The afternoon workshop will be **"Data Mining for Small Telescope Science"** led by John Hoot. This workshop will teach you how to get more out of your small-telescope astronomy projects.

In the last two decades, observational astronomy has developed and deployed space telescopes and ground-based surveys covering the whole sky in wavelengths from Gamma rays to cosmic background measurements. Forward thinkers, realizing that this information is priceless, have built data archiving and searching methods that are open to anyone with a computer and an internet connection.

Understanding how to find, retrieve and analyze this body of information can help you in designing your own observational and modeling methods.

The workshop will show you how data mining can help you:
- Improve observational target selection
- Test and develop analysis methods and hypotheses before observing begins
- Provide precision references for data calibration
- Determine the probability of successful observations
- Augment your observational data and improve your analysis of results

This workshop will show you how to find relevant archive data and access it from the web, using open source free application software, scripting languages like python, or other custom scripting software.

Registration fee for each workshop is $50. You can add one or both Workshops to your package when you register using the link above.

SAS-2025 Stakeholder's meeting – Results & Implementation:

The SAS-2025 included a Stakeholder's Meeting to discuss two important challenges facing the organization, and potential solutions.

Problem #1 was funding: For the past years, we have run at a loss of about $5K per year, driven by hotel costs (Symposium) and printing costs (Proceedings), plus ancillary costs related to the website and the CRM tool. The discussion led to three action steps, that have now been implemented:

(a) We will raise the registration fee to $150 (members) $175 (non-members), not including Workshops.

(b) We will eliminate the evening Receptions in favor of an informal "BYOB" gathering.

(c) We will no longer print the Proceedings book. The Proceedings will continue to be reviewed and formatted as usual, and the PDF will be made freely available on our website. You are welcome to print your own copies from the PDF.

In addition, we received several generous donations from participants at SAS-2025. Taken together, these put us on stable financial ground for the future.

Problem #2 is Leadership and Workers: SAS has no paid staff; the leaders and workers are all volunteers, and several of them are ready to retire.

In response to the Stakeholder's meeting, George Loyer has volunteered to take charge of our Customer-Relationship-Management (CRM) tool, and Jerry Hilburn has volunteered to take over the SAS Website. Thank you, gentlemen!

We still need at least two of you to stand for election to the SAS Board, to replace retiring Board Members. Please send your self-nominations to Program@SocAstroSci.org.

Thank you all for your enthusiastic and generous support of SAS, and the annual Symposium!

Sunday morning after SAS-2026: On Sunday June 28th from 9:00 am - 12:00 PM at the Doubletree hotel in Ontario, California, InStAR will host a workshop for students and educators, highlighting opportunities and benefits of student research projects in astronomy. This provides a wonderful opportunity to engage with the student and educator community around small telescope astronomical research, allowing participants to learn from each other. There is no fee to attend, and the InStAR team encourages participants from SAS to attend.

SAS Leadership

Corporate Officers:
Bob Buchheim – President
Robert Stephens – Treasurer
Robert Gill – Secretary

Board Members:
Wayne Green
John Menke
John Martin
Tony Rodda
Jerry Foote (Emeritus)

Newsletter Editor:
Robert Buchheim

Sponsor & Vendor contact:
SASLiaisons@gmail.com
Wayne Green
Tony Rodda

Registration:
Lorraine Moon

All SAS Leaders are volunteers, serving without compensation.

Advisors:
Dr. Arne Henden
Dr. Alan W. Harris
Dr. Dirk Terrell

Membership Information

The Society for Astronomical Sciences welcomes everyone interested in small telescope astronomical research. Our mission is to foster amateurs' participation in research projects as an aspect of their astronomical hobby, facilitate professional-amateur collaborations, and disseminate new results and methods. The Membership fee is $25.00 per year.

As a member, you receive:
• Discounted registration fee for the annual Symposium.
• A copy of the published proceedings on request each year, even if you do not attend the Symposium.

Membership application is available at the MEMBERSHIP page of the SAS web site: http://www.SocAstroSci.org.

The SAS is a 501(c)(3) non-profit educational organization.

SAS Contact Information

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