



Virgo - EGO Scientific Forum Charter

Introduction

This document describes the Virgo- EGO Scientific Forum (VESF), its main functions and its internal organization. The relations with the Virgo collaboration and the European Gravitational Observatory (EGO) are also described.

Description and goals of the VESF

The VESF has the purpose of enlarging the involvement of the scientific community on the scientific activities of the Virgo gravitational waves antenna sited at EGO, in Cascina, close to Pisa.

The Forum is intended to be open to scientists in the field of astrophysics, astroparticle, general relativity, gravitation etc, that may be interested in the data expected from Virgo and its future upgrades.

The VESF is a structure in which non-Virgo scientists can interact with the Virgo collaboration regarding the R&D activity for future improvements, data analysis methods and strategies, the interpretation of the results and their relationship with other astrophysical data

Functions of the VESF

VESF will be a place for discussions and proposals on theoretical and experimental strategies concerning gravitational wave detection, with particular emphasis on the Virgo data analysis, but also including possible upgrades of the Virgo instrument.

Members of the VESF may participate to one or several of the following tasks:

1. regular update of the list of gravitational wave sources potentially detectable with the Virgo detector,
2. development of the waveforms describing the gravitational wave emitted by potential astrophysical sources,
3. coincidence searches with other astrophysical instruments
4. development of data analysis methodologies,

5. Virgo data taking and data analysis;
6. R&D for future upgrade of the Virgo detector.

Participation to the VESF

Membership

Members of the VESF are research groups belonging to a given institution. A research group is composed by a minimum of three people (including scientists, senior engineers and PhD students). Under particular circumstances the participation of individuals is accepted. Contemporary participation to the VESF and to other scientific collaborations both in the field gravitational wave detection or in other fields of astrophysics are possible and welcome.

MOUs

The contribution of each member to the VESF is described in a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the member and the VESF itself.

Adhesion to VESF

After the foundation phase the adhesion of a new member is proposed to the VESF executive board. During this phase the MOU is prepared by the new member and the executive board. The new adhesion and the relative MOU are approved by the VESF Council with a qualified majority (2/3).

Organization of the VESF

VESF executive board

The VESF is governed by the VESF executive board. The executive board is composed by the EGO director, the Virgo spokesperson, the VESF coordinator, and four persons elected by the VESF council for a period of two years, to represent the following research areas

- General Relativity
- Theoretical Astrophysics and Cosmology
- Observational Astrophysics
- Experimentation in fields related to GW detection not participating to Virgo

VESF coordinator

The VESF executive board is chaired by the VESF coordinator, who is appointed by the VESF executive board. He/she is chosen within the VESF executive board.

If the coordinator is an elected member, a new voting poll is opened to elect another representative for the relevant research area. The VESF coordinator can assign specific coordination tasks to persons participating in the VESF.

VESF council

The council is formed by representatives of each VESF member. The number of representatives is equal to the number of persons belonging to the group divided by six plus one. The council meets at least once a year and is chaired by the VESF coordinator. It indicates possible VESF coordinators to the executive board. It approves the admission of new members with a qualified majority (2/3). It sets the VESF scientific priorities, its policies and directions.

Resources for VESF

The allocation of fellowships and other resources to VESF members is part of the EGO R&D program. The VESF executive board collects and coordinates the proposals from VESF members and forwards them to the EGO director for evaluation by the Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee of EGO and final approval by EGO Council.

Relationship with the Virgo collaboration

The relationship between the Virgo collaboration and the VESF is managed by the Virgo spokesperson who is a member of the VESF executive board.

Access to Virgo data and participation to the Virgo data taking are managed via specific MOU between the concerned VESF member and the Virgo collaboration represented by the Virgo spokesperson. Such a MOU will also establish the publications policy.

Relationship with EGO

The relationship between EGO and the VESF is managed by the EGO director who is a member of the VESF executive board.