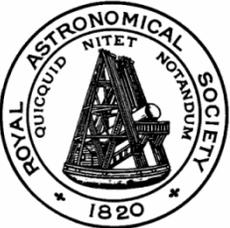




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# THE ROYAL ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY (RAS)

Presentation to the EAS meeting  
Leiden



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# Main Activities

- founded in 1820
- organises scientific meetings, including the annual 5-day National Astronomy Meeting ( which in 2009 will be held jointly with the JENAM)
- publishes international research and review journals, books and images
- awards medals and prizes
- maintains an extensive library
- operates a jobs vacancy service
- supports education through grants and outreach activities
- represents UK astronomy nationally and internationally.



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# Membership & Location

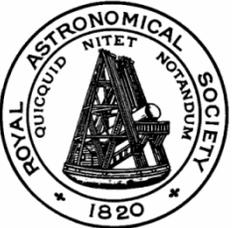
- 3,200 members , including most of the tenured staff of UK university astronomy departments
- 30% based in 70 overseas countries
- 11% under 40 ; 35% over 60
- 11% female
- 30% of UK based membership is 'amateur'
- The Society is located at Burlington House, in the centre of London, which was developed by the Government in the nineteenth century as a meeting place for the arts and sciences.



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# Organization & Finance

- RAS is entirely funded by contributions from its members and income from investments and scientific journals.
- annual turnover is c. £2.5m ( 3.3 m EUR)
- Control rests with the ( annual) General Meeting of Fellows and in between with an elected 21 person Council
- Council appoints standing committees (Publications , Education, Finance et al)
- Executive Secretary ( CEO) has responsibility for day to day running of the Society assisted by 14 other paid staff)
- Editors of the Society's research journals provide their services for a honorarium.



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# Affiliations

- The RAS has formal associations with a number of organizations (*Institute of Physics; Geological Society* et al) and many more informal ones including the *EAS*
- It sponsors or supports a number of sub-disciplinary organizations (*Astrophysical Chemistry Group ; UK Solar Physics; British Geophysical Association* et al)
- It adheres to umbrella science bodies (*Science Council; Campaign for Science and Technology ; Parliamentary and Scientific Committee* et al)
- It is the UK national member organization of the IAU



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# Publications

- *Monthly Notices of the Royal Astronomical Society* (MNRAS), one of the world's leading primary research journals in astronomy and astrophysics and derives two thirds of its content from outside the UK.
- *Geophysical Journal International* (GJI), together with the Deutsche Geophysikalische Gesellschaft, the leading solid-earth geophysics journal based in Europe.
- (In addition *Astronomy and Geophysics*, a topical, full-colour magazine is provided free to members)
- free publication (no author payments) with costs covered by subscription charges



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# Public Policy & Media

- RAS leads the professional community in dealings with government (currently re impact of reductions in astronomy budget)
- It generates policy papers (*'PhD and Careers in Astronomy'* ; *'Blue Skies Research'*; *'Research Assessment'* et al)
- Its press officer is a first point of call for TV, radio and press



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# Education & Outreach

## RAS

- provides grants, especially to university students
- ‘kite marks’ education resources suitable for school teachers
- organizes competitions for schools and awards prizes for doctoral theses
- arranges lunchtime public lectures
- Is closely involved in the ‘International Year of Astronomy 2009’



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# Information

- RAS library's holdings of astronomy books and journals is more comprehensive than many universities with 300 current periodicals (and over 3,000 ceased titles) and over 10,000 books ( including the second-largest specialist collection of astronomical rare books in Britain)
- The RAS web site is a large repository of data on the Society and an important means of communicating with the community – see

[www.ras.org.uk](http://www.ras.org.uk)