**Terms of References (ToR)**

The board of the Institute of Theoretical Astrophysics, University of Oslo (UiO) mandates the evaluation committee appointed by the Research Council of Norway (RCN) to assess the Institute of Theoretical Astrophysics based on the following Terms of Reference.

**Assessment**

You are asked to assess the organisation, quality and diversity of research conducted by the Institute of Theoretical Astrophysics (ITA) as well as its relevance to institutional and sectoral purposes, and to society at large. You should do so by judging the unit’s performance based on the following five assessment criteria (a. to e.). Be sure to take current international trends and developments in science and society into account in your analysis.

* 1. Strategy, resources and organisation
  2. Research production, quality and integrity
  3. Diversity and equality
  4. Relevance to institutional and sectoral purposes
  5. Relevance to society

For a description of these criteria, see Chapter 2 of the natural sciences evaluation protocol. Please provide a written assessment for each of the five criteria. Please also provide recommendations for improvement. We ask you to pay special attention to the following four aspects, which are goals in the Institute of Theoretical Astrophysics’ strategic plan, in your assessment:

1. Develop the Institute as an international leader in research in solar and stellar physics, cosmology and extragalactic astrophysics.
2. Welcome new ideas and research opportunities through a bottom-up approach.
3. Attract and retain internationally leading researchers.
4. Secure access to excellent local and international research infrastructures.

In addition, we would like your report to provide a qualitative assessment of the Institute of Theoretical Astrophysics as a whole in relation to its strategic targets. The committee assesses the strategy that the administrative unit intends to pursue in the years ahead and the extent to which it will be capable of meeting its targets for research and society during this period based on available resources and competence. The committee is also invited to make recommendations concerning these two subjects.

**Documentation**

The necessary documentation will be made available by the natural sciences secretariat at Technopolis Group.

The documents will include the following:

* a report on research personnel and publications within natural sciences commissioned by RCN
* a self-assessment based on a template provided by the natural sciences secretariat
* The Institute of Theoretical Astrophysics’ “Strategy 2030”

**Interviews with representatives from the evaluated units**

Interviews with the Institute of Theoretical Astrophysics will be organised by the evaluation secretariat. Such interviews can be organised as a site visit, in another specified location in Norway or as a video conference.

**Statement on impartiality and confidence**

The assessment should be carried out in accordance with the *Regulations on Impartiality and Confidence in the Research Council of Norway*. A statement on the impartiality of the committee members has been recorded by the RCN as a part of the appointment process. The impartiality and confidence of committee and panel members should be confirmed when evaluation data from the Institute of Theoretical Astrophysics are made available to the committee and the panels, and before any assessments are made based on these data. The RCN should be notified if questions concerning impartiality and confidence are raised by committee members during the evaluation process.

**Assessment report**   
We ask you to report your findings in an assessment report drawn up in accordance with a format specified by the natural sciences secretariat. The committee may suggest adjustments to this format at its first meeting. A draft report should be sent to the Institute of Theoretical Astrophysics and RCN by [date?]. The Institute of Theoretical Astrophysics should be allowed to check the report for factual inaccuracies; if such inaccuracies are found, they should be reported to the natural sciences secretariat no later than two weeks after receipt of the draft report. After the committee has made the amendments judged necessary, a corrected version of the assessment report should be sent to the board of the Institute of Theoretical Astrophysics of the University of Oslo and the RCN no later than two weeks after all feedback on inaccuracies has been received from the Institute of Theoretical Astrophysics.