



DEPARTMENT OF ASTRONOMY AND ASTROPHYSICS

INVESTIGATING THE COSMOS

UC San Diego's Department of Astronomy and Astrophysics plays a crucial role in shaping our understanding of the universe while enabling practical applications — nurturing the curiosity of astrophysicists who drive advances in technology, engineering and data science. From probing nuclear processes within stars and mapping the cosmic microwave background to exploring gravitational waves, other worlds and the formation of galaxies, our research scientists investigate fundamental forces and structures that shape the cosmos.

Established in 2023, the department builds upon a heritage of research and discovery in the physical sciences that spans more than 40 years. The campus community has included famous physicists and astronomers, such as Margaret Burbidge and Sally Ride, who leave with us a legacy to encourage future generations.

Today, our astrophysicists are leaders in theoretical, observational, and experimental studies of the universe. UC San Diego researchers study the cosmos while advancing new technologies capable of capturing advanced astronomical images. With access to world-renowned observatories and telescopes paired with local computational power, unique collaborative investigations have positioned our department for leadership in astrophysics research. Our graduate students innovate astrophysics with new theories and methodologies while receiving critical professional development and training. And our undergraduate students learn through a newly designed interdisciplinary curriculum while driving top-tier research, preparing them for a diverse range of career opportunities.

At UC San Diego, we believe that what we don't know today will forever change our tomorrows. Empowered by generosity and fueled by curiosity, we are unafraid to chase the unknown — to ask the questions no one has asked before and to push the boundaries of possibility. Together, we unite diverse people and unconventional perspectives to propel limitless impact. Because we know that when we come together, nothing is beyond us.

50%

Increase in number of faculty members within the first two years of the department's creation, from 12 founding faculty to 18

1:1

Ratio of students to researchers in many of our on-campus laboratory spaces

5

Partner observatories capture imagery and unique data that our scientists use to advance our understanding of astronomical phenomena



PHILANTHROPIC OPPORTUNITIES

POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWS

Recruiting postdoctoral fellows helps us grow independent research groups, expanding the subject matter topics that undergraduate and graduate students can explore. Philanthropic support for endowed postdoctoral fellowships can be decisive in attracting bright individuals to San Diego at the peak of their pre-faculty careers, while supporting the intellectual growth of the next generation of scholars.

FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT

Students and faculty need specialized equipment to monitor the unseen parts of our universe while exploring new technologies. For undergraduates, radio wavelength antennas, optical telescopes and other lab classroom equipment enable hands-on experiences. Your support for specialized facilities can further learning and research.

GRADUATE STUDENT FELLOWSHIPS

Department of Astronomy and Astrophysics graduate students often begin their studies with a variety of research interests and need time to determine their scientific identity. Supporting graduate student fellowships allows PhD candidates the much-needed time to define their intellectual identity and determine their research interests.

UNDERGRADUATE SUMMER RESEARCH AWARDS

Undergraduate summer research stipends help students secure internships at observational facilities or research labs where they receive hands-on experience in data collection and analysis. Supporting our undergraduate students through a summer research award can set them up for success after graduation.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Funds to support activities that bring planetary visualization techniques and telescopes to K-12 schools, community centers, local campgrounds and parks serve the interests of all San Diegans who wish to see and experience the forces beyond our planet. Gifts of any size to community outreach programs can maintain and support San Diego's curiosity surrounding astronomy at large.

Together, we can dive into the mysteries of the universe. We are at the forefront of exploration, and your support can drive discovery by advancing new technologies and help answer some of the biggest questions of our time.

Learn more at astro.ucsd.edu.

For more information on supporting the new Department of Astronomy and Astrophysics, please contact:

Claudia Ehrlich

Senior Director of Development
clehrlich@ucsd.edu