

CASCA EPO Committee Report

December 2023

Submitted by Julie Bolduc-Duval (Chair) on behalf of the committee

1. Membership

Julie Bolduc-Duval	Discover the Universe	2009-	Chair
Frédérique Baron	Université de Montréal	2019-2025	
Terry Bridges	Okanagan College	2022-2025	Chair of Westar subcommittee
Robert Cockcroft	McMaster University	2014-2024	Board representative
Veronika Dornan	McMaster University	2023-2024	Grad student committee representative
Daryl Janzen	University of Saskatchewan	2023-2026	
Viraja Khatu	University of Western Ontario	2023-2026	
Nathalie Ouellette	Université de Montréal	2019-2025	
Christa Van Laerhoven	Yukon Astronomical Society	2020-2026	

2. Changes to membership

Following the call for new members in spring 2023, we welcomed Daryl Janzen and Viraja Khatu as new members for 3-year terms. We also welcome Veronika Dornan as the new graduate student representative.

Christa Van Laerhoven has renewed her membership to the committee for another 3-year term. Rob Cockcroft's term has been extended for a year as he serves as Board representative.

Phil Langill and Mike Chen finished their terms on the committee. We thank them for their contributions over the years.

Nathalie Ouellette finished her term as chair and was replaced by Julie Bolduc-Duval. Discussions with the Board was necessary since Julie has been an ex-officio member of the committee for many years as director of Discover the Universe.

3. Committee activities

a. Westar sub-committee

Chair: Terry Bridges

Members: Christa Van Laerhoven, Rob Cockcroft and Frédérique Baron

The sub-committee hired a part-time Westar coordinator, Daniella Morronne, who started on October 1, 2023. The goal is to come up with a new version of the Westar program in the coming months, which will be more inclusive and create an exchange with the communities. The sub-committee hopes to have the first Westar visit under the new format in 2024.

b. Social media sub-committee

This sub-committee currently has no members and there is no consensus as to how CASCA should engage on social media. CASCA has accounts on Facebook, X (Twitter), LinkedIn, Instagram and YouTube, but we are missing the login information for both LinkedIn and YouTube. At the very least, CASCA should follow the institution members of CASCA and re-share their posts, but no one volunteered to take this responsibility. More discussion is needed about CASCA's goal on social media.

c. Discover the Universe

Lead: Julie Bolduc-Duval

Discover the Universe has been focussing their energy on preparing schools in Eastern and Atlantic Canada for the total solar eclipse of 2024. Julie also collaborated with the National Film Board to create educational resources on the documentary North Star, which features Laurie Rousseau-Nepton.

d. Total Solar Eclipse 2024

What is the role of CASCA for the coming eclipse? We agreed it was late to start a national initiative, especially since many members are already very active in their local institutions. Julie had started a Community of Practice in the spring of 2023 and we will continue this simple format until the eclipse. One session will feature Nathalie and how to engage the media for the eclipse.

e. Focus for the coming years

As the new Chair, Julie initiated a discussion about the purpose of the EPO committee. What is the "plus-value" of having an EPO committee within CASCA, and how can we go further than what everyone is doing in their own community?

Two main points came up:

- Westar program, which could become a flagship program for CASCA and is developing well with the new paid Westar coordinator.
- Offering science communication training to CASCA members. This idea was well received by everyone and we will look into this in future meetings.