

***** MEDIA ADVISORY *****

Issued jointly by the LIGO Laboratory, LIGO Scientific Collaboration, National Science Foundation, and Virgo Collaboration

MONDAY: Scientists to discuss new developments in gravitational-wave astronomy

Scientists representing LIGO, Virgo, and some 70 observatories will reveal new details and discoveries made in the ongoing search for gravitational waves.

WHAT: Journalists are invited to join the National Science Foundation as it brings together scientists from the LIGO and Virgo collaborations, as well as representatives for some 70 observatories, on Monday, October 16, at 10:00 a.m. EDT at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C.

The gathering will begin with an overview of new findings from LIGO, Virgo, and partners that span the globe, followed by details from telescopes that work with the LIGO and Virgo Collaboration to study extreme events in the cosmos.

The first detection of gravitational waves, made on September 14, 2015 and announced on February 11, 2016, was a milestone in physics and astronomy; it confirmed a major prediction of Albert Einstein's 1915 general theory of relativity, and marked the beginning of the new field of gravitational-wave astronomy. Since then, there have been three more confirmed detections, one of which (and the most recently [announced](#)) was the first confirmed detection seen jointly by both the LIGO and Virgo detectors.

The published articles announcing LIGO's [first](#), [second](#), and [third](#) confirmed detections have been cited more than 1,700 times (total), according to the Web of Science citation counts. A [fourth](#) paper on the three-detector observation was published on October 6; a manuscript was made publicly available on September 27.

Journalists interested in attending should RSVP to 1016rsvp@mit.edu as soon as possible and by 12 p.m. EDT on Friday, October 13, at the latest to guarantee a response.

WHEN:

Monday, October 16, 2017

10:00 AM US EDT

** Panels to begin at 10:00 a.m. and 11:15 a.m., with a 15-minute break in between. Event expected to conclude by 12:30 p.m. Light refreshments will be provided.

WHERE:

The National Press Club

Holeman Lounge

529 14th Street NW, 13th Floor

Washington, DC 20045

WHO:

The following researchers will offer brief opening remarks over the course of two panels, with time for questions at the end of each panel:

10:00 a.m.

Moderator: France Córdova, Director of the National Science Foundation

- David Reitze, Executive Director, LIGO Laboratory/Caltech
- David Shoemaker, Spokesperson, LIGO Scientific Collaboration/MIT
- Jo van den Brand, Spokesperson, Virgo Collaboration/Nikhef, VU University Amsterdam
- Julie McEnery, Fermi Project Scientist, NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center
- Marica Branchesi, Virgo Collaboration/Gran Sasso Science Institute, Italy
- Vicky Kalogera, Astrophysicist, LIGO Scientific Collaboration/Northwestern University

11:15 a.m.

Moderator: Jim Ulvestad, NSF Assistant Director (Acting) for Mathematical and Physical Sciences

- Laura Cadonati, Deputy Spokesperson, LIGO Scientific Collaboration/Georgia Tech
- Andy Howell, Staff Scientist at Las Cumbres Observatory/UC-Santa Barbara
- Ryan Foley, Assistant Professor of Astronomy and Astrophysics, University of California-Santa Cruz
- Marcelle Soares-Santos, Research Associate, Fermi National Accelerator Laboratory/Brandeis University
- David Sand, Assistant Professor in Astronomy, University of Arizona
- Nial Tanvir, Professor of Astrophysics, University of Leicester, UK
- Edo Berger, Professor of Astronomy, Harvard University
- Eleonora Troja, Research Scientist at NASA Goddard Space Flight Center/University of Maryland
- Alessandra Corsi, Assistant Professor, Department of Physics and Astronomy, Texas Tech University

MEDIA RSVP & INQUIRIES:

Due to seating constraints and security at the venue, journalists interested in attending should RSVP to 1016rsvp@mit.edu as soon as possible and by 12 p.m. EDT on Friday, October 13, at the latest to guarantee a response. We will try to accept RSVPs after that point, but cannot guarantee access. A mult box will be available for broadcast media, and the Press Club is equipped with wireless access.

Reporters interested in receiving embargoed information related to the research being presented can contact those listed below or email 1016rsvp@mit.edu; in doing so, please confirm that you and your outlet's editors honor embargoes. We will then share embargoed material with you on Friday, October 13.

LIVE WEBCAST:

For press not based in the Washington, D.C., area, this event will be simulcast live online, and we will try to answer some questions submitted remotely. For details about how to participate remotely, please contact Aya Collins at the NSF.

MEDIA CONTACTS:

To RSVP or request embargoed material, please email 1016rsvp@mit.edu. Please refer other questions to the following media contacts:

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The Virgo collaboration consists of more than 280 physicists and engineers belonging to 20 different European research groups: six from [Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique \(CNRS\)](#) in France; eight from the [Istituto Nazionale di Fisica Nucleare \(INFN\)](#) in Italy; two in the Netherlands with [Nikhef](#); the MTA Wigner RCP in Hungary; the POLGRAW group in Poland; Spain with the University of Valencia; and the European Gravitational Observatory, EGO, the laboratory hosting the Virgo detector near Pisa in Italy, funded by CNRS, INFN, and Nikhef.