Nonprofits for Research & Education

The Maunakea Observatories are a collaboration of nonprofit, independent institutions with telescopes located on Maunakea on the island of Hawai‘i. Together, the Observatories make Maunakea the most scientifically productive site for astronomy worldwide.

- Observing time is free. Everyone with a compelling research proposal is welcome to apply.
- We are supported by numerous international partners and research institutions worldwide.
- Nonprofit in nature, the Observatories do not generate revenue, rather are principally funded through Federal research agencies, such as the National Science Foundation.
- Our astronomical research is purely scientific in nature, dedicated solely to better understanding the universe around us.

Commitment to Natural Resources

The Maunakea Observatories deeply value safety, environmental stewardship, science, cultural heritage, and community.

- We support the Comprehensive Management Plan and the Center for Maunakea Stewardship.
- We comply with strict guidelines that protect the natural environment.
- Maunakea watershed areas are replenished by rainfall below 8,000 feet. Observatories located near 14,000 feet do not impact Hawai‘i Island aquifers, confirms hydrologists.
- Any chemicals used in operations are contained on-site for maintenance, properly handled by trained professionals and disposed of safely and immediately, once no longer necessary.
- Native species on the summit remain unimpacted by observatory operations.

The Maunakea Observatories

Canada–France–Hawai‘i Telescope
East Asian Observatory (JCMT)
Gemini North Telescope (NSF’s NOIRLab)
Very Long Baseline Array
NASA Infrared Telescope Facility
Subaru Telescope (NAOJ)
Submillimeter Array
United Kingdom Infrared Telescope
University of Hawai‘i 2.2 Meter
W. M. Keck Observatory (Keck I and Keck II)

The telescopes on Maunakea are operated by separate nonprofit observatories. Each has its own strengths with varying fields of view and sensitivities to light from radio to ultraviolet wavelengths. They are all important to the scientific productivity of Maunakea.

mutual stewards of science and the environment

Maunakea is a deeply revered cultural landscape that also happens to be the premier site in the world to study the cosmos. We deeply respect its cultural importance and storied past. The decisions we make today are intertwined with the future of Maunakea and its cherished summit. We appreciate that Maunakea is sacred to many people in different ways, and we are thankful and privileged to study the universe from Maunakea’s summit – a unique portal to the universe.