



Science & Technology Facilities Council

UK Astronomy Technology Centre

National Museums Scotland and the UK Astronomy Technology Centre

This agreement is between the UK Astronomy Technology Centre (UK ATC) and National Museums Scotland. The UK ATC at the Royal Observatory Edinburgh (ROE) site is an establishment of the UK Science and Technologies Facility Council (STFC). The STFC is responsible for the Royal Observatory Edinburgh site, which is managed locally by the UK ATC. National Museums Scotland, the country's national museum service, holds scientific and technological materials in world-class collections.

This agreement is intended to secure the long-term future of equipment and instruments from the site that are owned by STFC but which are surplus to the requirements of the UK ATC's activities. This agreement is open to review by both parties every three years.

History

There has been a longstanding, but piecemeal, programme of passing historical instruments from the UK ATC and its predecessor organisations at the ROE for preservation by National Museums Scotland from 1950 to the present. There are currently some 260 items in National Museums Scotland's care that came from the site. This agreement is intended to continue and formalise these arrangements.

Present

National Museums Scotland is developing a new permanent gallery to include a very significant, and highly visible, presence of material still at the ROE: SCUBA, the Schmidt telescope and a small transit instrument used as a backup time keeper during the Second World War. The ROE Visitor Centre, which is part of the UK ATC, is developing plans for a Heritage Lottery Fund application and this requires clear policies for the care of historic building that it occupies and for objects associated with the site. This agreement is intended to support both these developments.

Future

The UK ATC will proactively offer historic material to National Museums Scotland for it to consider adding to its permanent collections provided the Museum can provide appropriate care for them. This transfer will initially comprise:

- SCUBA,
- The Schmidt telescope,
- The transit instrument.

Future transfers could include remaining older instruments that are not in active use and significant contemporary material including prototypes, development models, and retiring instruments for their long-term survival and safekeeping.

In return National Museums Scotland will acknowledge the UK ATC where possible when these items are displayed or feature in publications. All this material will normally be accessible to the public for research and publication, and available for fixed term loans to other museums when not on display at the Museum.

National Museums Scotland would look favourably on loaning material from their collections (not confined to UK ATC material) for display in the ROE Visitor Centre, subject to National Museums Scotland's current loans procedures, including appropriate conditions of environment and security.

Signed _____

Name _____
Director of the UK Astronomy Technology Centre

Date _____

Signed _____

Name _____
Director of Collections of the National Museums Scotland

Date _____