

DAVID RICHARD SILVA, PH.D.

Director, UTSA Center for Space Technology & Operations
Distinguished Professor of Physics & Astronomy
The University of Texas at San Antonio | San Antonio, TX, USA

ORCHID 0000-0002-7678-2155

davidr.silva@utsa.edu | davidrichardsilva.com

Accomplished professional astronomer
Seasoned senior manager in academic and R&D enterprises
Broad technical experience with large telescopes, focal plane instrumentation, data systems
Broad operational experience with geographical distributed teams & remote, high-altitude sites
Board administrative experience with astronomical projects & observatories / university colleges
Extensive international experience in the Americas, Western Europe, and East Asia

PROFESSIONAL POSITIONS

The University of Texas at San Antonio (San Antonio, TX, USA)

A rising urban serving, Carnegie R1, Hispanic Serving Institution

2024 – present	Director, Center for Space Technology and Operations Research
2024 – present	Affiliate Faculty Member, School for Data Science
2019 – 2024	Dean, College of Sciences
2019 – present	Distinguished Professor, Physics & Astronomy

National Optical Astronomy Observatory (NOAO) (Tucson, AZ, USA)

The US national observatory for night-time, ground-based optical-infrared astronomy

2008 – 2019	NOAO Director / AURA Senior Scientist
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Thirty Meter Telescope (TMT) (Pasadena, CA, USA)

A multi-billion international project to build one of the world's next great telescopes

2008 – 2019	Observatory Scientist / AURA Senior Scientist
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European Southern Observatory (ESO) (Garching bei München, Germany)

The European "national" observatory for night-time, ground-based optical-infrared astronomy

2000 – 2005	Deputy Division Head, Data Management & Operations Division
2003 – 2005	European Leader, Joint ALMA Office Operations Working Group
2001 – 2005	Head, Data Flow Operations
1997 – 2001	Head, User Support Group

National Optical Astronomy Observatories (NOAO) (Tucson, AZ, USA)

The US national observatory for night-time, ground-based optical-infrared astronomy

1996 – 1997	Staff Astronomer, US Gemini Project Office
1994 – 1996	Project Manager, WIYN 3.5-m Telescope Project
1990 – 1993	Post-doctoral Research Associate, Kitt Peak National Observatory

PROFESSIONAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS, HIGHLIGHTS

1991 Ph.D., Astronomy, University of Michigan
1984 B.Sc., Astronomy/Physics, University of Arizona

Revised 16 August 2025

Languages: English (mother tongue) , German (functional), Spanish (beginning)

Experienced mentor with post-doctoral fellows, doctoral students, and undergraduate students
Member, Phi Kappa Phi (ΦΚΦ) honor society (2019 – present)

More than 150 professional publications (50 referred | 29 as 1st, 2nd, or 3rd author), h-index = 25

Professional societies, membership: American Astronomical Society (AAS), International Astronomical Union (IAU), American Association for the Advancement of Sciences (AAAS)

Service to the Profession, elected: AURA Nominating Committee Member (2023 – 2024), IAU Division B President (Facilities, Technology, Data) (2013 – 2015), AAS Nominating Committee (2010 – 2012)

Review boards or similar (senior)

- Member, Wideband Sensitivity Upgrade Management Advisory Committee, Joint ALMA Observatory, 2025 (on-going)
- Member, finance committee, American Astronomical Society, 2025 (on-going)
- Co-chair, external review panel, National Astronomy Observatory of Japan, 2023
- Chair, external review panel, Subaru Observatory, 2022
- Panelist, external review panel, Anglo-Australian Telescope, 2021
- Panelist, Panel on Optical and Infrared Observations from the Ground, NASEM Decadal Survey of Astronomy and Astrophysics, 2020
- Co-chair, operations & management proposal review board, NSF Mathematics & Physical Sciences (MPS) facility, 2017
- Chair, international search committee, director, Joint ALMA, Observatory, 2017
- Member, external review board, National Astronomy Observatory of Japan (NAOJ), 2015
- Member, Management review board, NSF/MPS facility, 2014
- Member, review board, Thirty Meter Telescope (TMT) operations plan, 2011
- Chair, NSF operations & management proposal review board, MPS facility, 2010
- Member, review board, NASA/SOFIA Science Management & Operations Review, 2007– 2008

Boards of Directors or similar

- Institutional Representative (UTSA), University Space Research Association (USRA), 2023 – present
- Advisory Trustee, Southwest Research Institute (SwRI), 2019 – present
- Director (NSF appointment), Board of Directors, International Gemini Observatory, 2013 – 2018
- Director (NOAO), Board of Directors, Large Synoptic Survey Telescope (LSST) Corp., 2008 – 2018
- Director (NSF appointment), Thirty Meter Telescope International Observatory (TIO), 2013 – 2018
- Director (NOAO), Board of Directors, WIYN Observatory, Inc., 2009 – 2012