DEPARTMENT OF PHYSICS
THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG

香港天文與天體物理研究所
THE HONG KONG INSTITUTE FOR ASTRONOMY AND ASTROPHYSICS

HKIAA Colloquium Series

The Einstein Probe Mission

May 12, 2026 (Tuesday)

2:15 p.m.

CYCP1, LG/F, Chong Yuet Ming Chemistry Building, The University of Hong Kong

Dr. Weimin YUAN

National Astronomical Observatories, Chinese Academy of Sciences

Abstract: High-energy transient and variable sources are prevalent in the universe. They arise from violent and sometimes catastrophic celestial events, providing invaluable laboratories for studying the evolution of stars, the processes of compact objects, and the physics under extreme conditions. Launched in January 2024, the Einstein Probe (EP), also known as "天关" (Tianguan) in Chinese, is a space observatory designed to discover and characterise transient and variable sources in the X-ray waveband. EP carries an imaging X-ray all-sky monitor employing novel lobster-eye focusing technology and a powerful X-ray telescope for quick onboard follow-up observations. EP has detected many X-ray transients and highly variable sources with unprecedented sensitivity compared to previous and current wide-field monitoring instruments. This talk will present the status of the mission and selected highlights from the first two years of its science operations. EP is a space mission led by the Chinese Academy of Sciences in collaboration with the European Space Agency, the Max Planck Institute for Extraterrestrial Physics in Germany, and the French Space Agency (CNES).

Biography: Dr. Weimin Yuan is a staff member at National Astronomical Observatories (NAOC), CAS. His research interests are concerned with X-ray and high-energy astrophysics, including studies of active galactic nuclei and high-energy transients, as well as building space astronomical instruments. Dr. Yuan obtained his doctoral degree from Technical University of Munich/Max-Planck Institute for extraterrestrial Physics in Germany. He worked as a postdoc at JAXA's Tsukuba Space Center in Japan for the development of the MAXI mission, and later at Institute of Astronomy, University of Cambridge in UK in X-ray astronomy. He joined CAS in 2004, first at Yunnan Observatory, and has been at NAOC since 2010. Dr. Yuan is Principal Investigator of CAS's Einstein Probe mission.

Reference: "Science objectives of the Einstein Probe mission", Yuan et al. 2025, Science China Physics, Mechanics & Astronomy, Volume 68, Issue 3, https://ui.adsabs.harvard.edu/abs/2025SCPMA..6839501Y/abstract

Anyone interested is welcome to attend in person or via Zoom.
Meeting ID: 964 7297 1072 Password: 410133

Event details: https://hkiaa.hku.hk/events/
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