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Re: Baader Planetarium and the OpenScience Observatories

Dear Mr Baader,

this is to thank you and your team for the ongoing support of our project that seeks to inspire the next generation of scientists by providing on-line access to research-grade astronomical instrumentation for a variety of audiences, supported by tailored learning resources. Our two autonomous robotic facilities PIRATE and COAST at the Observatorio del Teide (Tenerife) enable our distance learning undergraduate students to experience authentic astronomical research, our astronomy research group to conduct competitive research projects, and the general public to engage with astronomy via the telescope.org web portal.

The Tenerife facilities were built in 2016 and are the culmination of the Open University's involvement in observational astronomy that started with a period of residential schools at a teaching observatory in Mallorca, progressing to our own robotic facility (PIRATE) which very successfully operated from Mallorca in 2010-2015.

Since 2004 we regularly engaged Baader Planetarium as a trusted supplier, for maintenance, for expert advice, and as a partner for creating innovative solutions. The support and service we received has been second to none. If problems did occur your team displayed ingenuity and expertise to provide a swift remedy – we have never been let down. We are particularly grateful that you made PIRATE temporarily available from your headquarters to support our teaching activities in spring 2016 while the hardware was waiting to move to its new permanent home in Tenerife.

Baader Planetarium engaged in detailed discussions with us on the design and specifications of the Tenerife facilities, supplied the hardware, and successfully completed the installation in Tenerife on time, ready for use. We are very pleased with the performance of our telescopes since, and are looking forward to future fruitful collaborations.

Our experience with Baader Planetarium has been exceedingly positive, and we have no hesitation in highly recommending Baader Planetarium as an innovative and reliable partner for projects involving astronomical instrumentation.

Yours sincerely

Dr Ulrich Kolb