

# THE WINTER SCHOOL COMES OF AGE

By FRANCISCO SÁNCHEZ, Director of the IAC



We organized the first Canary Islands Winter School of Astrophysics in 1987. That was 18 years ago... and it was born with the intention of carrying on. It gives great satisfaction today to see how the Winter Schools have taken place year after year and it is gratifying to think of how many people have attended them. Many of its former students are today lecturers and scientists of standing. The schools have acted as encounters with shared ambitions and close contact among students and lecturers from all over the world during two intense weeks in a privileged archipelago with some of the best skies in the world. And the School carries on... Shall we reach the number 50?

This year's School is dedicated to the techniques of detection and analysis of astrophysical objects with emission lines. A new window is opening on to the Universe with the possibilities of the new astronomical instrumentation to be mounted on large ground-based telescopes, such as our own GTC (Gran Telescopio CANARIAS), and space telescopes. The students attending this School will learn how to gain access to them, not only through theoretical classes but also through practicals. I hope it will be so successful that they won't forget the eighteenth of this series of Schools with such a pedigree.

And to celebrate this special birthday, this coming of age that brings with it the right to vote, we have created this Press Room in which the School participants and the communications media will find information of interest, including articles, interviews, news, photos and other interesting snippets that will be added daily to this web site.

I thank everybody - the organizers, lecturers and students - and particularly the Local Government (Cabildo) of Tenerife for making this new Winter School a reality.