

+ Researchers

Other women astronomers who have contributed to the development of large instruments:

Nancy Boggess

American astronomer who was one of the scientists responsible for COBE, the satellite launched by NASA in 1989 to investigate the microwave background radiation. She was also responsible for NASA's infrared astronomy programmes.

Annie Baglin

French astronomer at the Paris University and Principal Researcher for the COROT mission. This joint European and French Space Agency project, which was launched in 2006, has two aims: to detect extra solar planets, particularly those similar in size to the Earth, and to explore the mysteries of the interior of stars as this has never been done before.

Catherine Turon

A French astronomer at the Paris Observatory, she produced the input catalogue for the European Space Agency's HIPPARCOS mission (1989- 1993). This astrometric satellite computed the distance and movement of a hundred thousand stars in the vicinity of the Sun with unprecedented accuracy. Between 2003 and 2006 she was President of the astronomy group at the European Space Agency and was responsible for the agency's science programme.



Nancy Roman

(United States, 1925)

Worked at NASA from 1959 to 1979. She was the first woman to hold the post of Head of Astronomy at the Office of Space Science. After holding this position she oversaw several different astronomical satellites culminating in the IUE (ultraviolet) and IRAS (infrared) projects and the Hubble Space Telescope. Nancy was Director of NASA's Astronomical Data Centre from 1995-1996.

The Universe from beyond the atmosphere

Astronomy has been and still is an engine that drives new technologies. Since the telescope was invented at the beginning of the 17th century it has never stopped adding to the power of astronomy. In the middle of the 19th century astro-photography was born, a giant step forward for computing the position and movement of the stars. In the first half of the 20th century astronomers started to observe in ranges other than the visible, starting with radio frequencies.

In recent decades astronomical instrumentation has been revolutionised. The power of our technology to launch satellites and observatories into space and the development of new techniques for observing beyond the Earth mean that we can now observe in all wavelengths, from radio frequencies to infrared, from ultraviolet to X and gamma rays.

