

## WELCOME

Floor van Leeuwen, Royal Greenwich Observatory  
Chairman of the Local Organising Committee

Welcome to the Cambridge workshop on "Future Possibilities for Astrometry in Space", jointly organised by the Royal Greenwich Observatory and the European Space Agency. The aim of the workshop has been to get people together with an interest in either or both the scientific and technological aspects of the design of a future astrometric space mission. We use as a starting idea a concept called GAIA, submitted to the Horizon 2000+ Survey Committee in 1994 and which, at this stage of thinking, can realistically produce astrometric data at an accuracy level of around 0.01 milliarcsec, supplemented by high-precision intermediate-bandwidth photometry. The Horizon 2000+ Survey Committee recommended the GAIA mission as its first choice for an ESA cornerstone project using an interferometer in space, provided that an accuracy of order 0.01 milliarcsec can be demonstrated.

The workshop aims at defining the optimised scientific requirements for such a mission, to investigate the need for and possible inclusion of auxiliary observations, as well as specifying some of the technological problems and possibilities: detectors, mirror systems, scanning law, satellite orbit, and so on.

This workshop has been organised to have three plenary sessions, followed by one afternoon of parallel sessions, followed by one morning of concluding discussions. The time available for each scheduled presentation is 15 minutes, including brief discussions. Further discussions will take place during the parallel sessions.

We hope you will enjoy this workshop and your stay in Cambridge.