

Smadar Naoz

Candidate for Nominating Committee

Affiliation: University of California, Los Angeles

Position/Title: Professor

PhD institution: Tel Aviv University, 2010

Areas of scientific interest:

I am interested in a broad range of theoretical astrophysics topics, spanning dynamical research problems from cosmology to black holes, gravitational-wave sources, stars, and extrasolar planets.



AAS and/or Division leadership positions and dates:

- Past Chair, Division on Dynamical Astronomy (DDA), American Astronomical Society, 2025 – present
- Chair, Brouwer Career Award Selection Committee, Division on Dynamical Astronomy (DDA), American Astronomical Society, 2026
- Science Editor, *The Astrophysical Journal* family (*ApJ*, *ApJL*, *ApJS*), American Astronomical Society, 2024 – present
- Chair, 2024 – 2025 and Vice-Chair, 2023 – 2024, Division on Dynamical Astronomy (DDA), American Astronomical Society
- Committee Member, Division on Dynamical Astronomy (DDA), American Astronomical Society, 2018 – 2021

Other relevant positions, experience, and dates:

- Elected Committee Member-at-Large, Far West Section (FWS), American Physical Society, 2022 – 2025; Member, Nominating Committee, Far West Section, American Physical Society, 2024
- Founder and Chair, Astro-Diversity Committee, UCLA, 2016 – 2020
- Founder and Chair, Physics-Diversity Committee, UCLA, 2017 – 2020
- Founder and Chair, Physics and Astronomy Diversity Committee, UCLA, 2020 – 2024
- PI, American Physics Society Bridge Program, UCLA, 2017 – present; Chair, 2018 and Member, 2019 – 2023, Bridge Admission Committee; First-Year Mentor, 2018 – 2021
- Chair, UCLA Division of Astronomy and Astrophysics Grad Admission, 2023 – 2026
- Member, NASA NHFP Selection Committee, 2026
- Chair, NASA Astrophysics Theory Program (ATP), Fall 2021

- Member, NASA Review Panels: ATP review panel, Fall 2011, Fall 2013, Fall 2016, Fall 2021 (Chair); HST review panel, Spring 2016; NASA TCAN review panel, Summer 2020; NASA LSP review panel, Spring 2021; NASA emerging world Summer 2018
- Member, National Science Foundation (NSF) review panel, Spring 2013, Winter 2018
- External Reviewer, The Heising-Simons Foundation 51 Pegasi b Fellowship, 2020
- Keck Telescope TAC Member, 2022 – 2024
- Steering Committee Member, 2015 – 2016, and Mentor, 2015 – 2024, Cal-Bridge Program

Statement:

I am honored to be considered for service on the AAS Nominating Committee at a time when higher education and our scientific community more broadly face significant challenges. In times like these, it is especially important that we remain anchored in our core values: intellectual honesty, ethical leadership, and a deep commitment to expanding opportunity.

The Nominating Committee plays a quiet but powerful role in shaping the future of our Society. The leaders we nominate signal who we are, what we value, and who belongs. I believe that responsibility requires intentionality. We must seek out leaders who reflect the full breadth of our community, across career stages, institutional types, research areas, and professional paths, and who are committed to lowering barriers for those for whom access to higher education and scientific careers has not been straightforward.

Throughout my career, I have worked to build bridges: mentoring students and early-career scientists, creating inclusive spaces for dialogue and collaboration, and advocating for structures that strengthen and make our field more equitable. If elected, I would bring that same commitment to the Nominating Committee, thoughtfully identifying candidates who embody excellence, integrity, and a genuine dedication to serving the entire astronomy community.

Our Society's leadership should not only represent us; it should help safeguard the principles that allow science and higher education to thrive. I would be honored to contribute to that work.