

Colloquium

SFB 956

Conditions and Impact of Star Formation

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Physikalische Institute Köln

Video stream / Host: Volker Ossenkopf-Okada

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Astronomy and the Climate Crisis

Astronomy is a dirty business, at least in terms of its carbon footprint. Frequent, long-distance flights, the operation of observatories at remote locations, as well as the execution of CPU-intensive simulations lead to per-capita greenhouse gas emission significantly larger than those of the general population. Fortunately, inexpensive solutions, that would significantly reduce our carbon footprint immediately, are available. In this talk, I will break down the typical emissions from astronomical research and argue that we should reduce our own emissions significantly and become role models for demanding realistic change while we continue to collaborate globally. Perhaps more importantly, astronomers can convey awe for the wonders of the universe, a sense of the uniqueness of our planet, and a feeling of global citizenship – the most important ingredients to provoke a feeling of urgency about the climate crisis, that ideally leads to climate action.

