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Steward Observatory is the research arm of the Astronomy Department at the University of Arizona (UA). With Andrew Ellicott Douglass as the director, it was founded in 1916 as a result of a gift from Mrs. Lavinia Steward.

Steward Observatory telescopes are operated on several mountains in southern Arizona and available on a competitive peer-reviewed basis to scientists at the UA, Arizona State University, and Northern Arizona University. The astronomical facilities focus on research that benefits from Arizona’s dry, clear weather over wavelengths from ~3 mm to 0.3 microns.

Profiting from instrument development associated with ground-based work, Steward Observatory conducts space astronomy research mainly in the mid- and far-infrared region. Steward personnel use external research facilities in other wavelength ranges as well, from x-ray to cm-wavelength radio astronomy.

The Steward Observatory Mirror Lab, located under the east side of the UA football stadium, is developing the world’s largest spun-cast mirrors for the next generation of large telescopes including the 8.4-m LSST and the 25-m Giant Magellan Telescope. The Mirror Lab has provided large, high quality optics for three 6.5-m mirrors (MMT and Magellan Telescope Project) and two 8.4-m mirrors (Large Binocular Telescope).

FRONT COVER: Spiral galaxy M101, taken with the Steward Observatory 90” prime-focus camera. The excellent sensitivity of this camera in the ultraviolet (shown in blue) captures very young stars far out on the edges of the galaxy.