



George Helou

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Dr. George Helou is the Executive Director of the Infrared Processing and Analysis Center, and a member of the faculty in the Physics, Math and Astronomy Division, at the California Institute of Technology (Caltech) in Pasadena, CA. He is also Director of the NASA Herschel Science Center, and Deputy Director of the Spitzer Science Center. He divides his time between research in astrophysics and administration of science operations of NASA astronomy missions.

George was born and educated in Lebanon, graduating in 1975 from the American University of Beirut with a B.S. in Physics with High Distinction and a Teaching Diploma in Science Education. He obtained a M.Sc. in 1977 and a Ph.D. in Astrophysics and Radio Science in 1980 from Cornell University. He held appointments at the Arcetri Astrophysical Observatory and at Cornell University before joining Caltech in 1983. He has published over two hundred articles in professional journals and proceedings, lectured at over forty international conferences, and held visiting positions at several European Universities including Paris, Leiden and Florence.

He has been closely associated scientifically with the Infrared Astronomical Satellite (IRAS, 1983, USA/UK/Netherlands), the Infrared Space Observatory (ISO, 1995-98, European Space Agency), and currently of the Spitzer Space Telescope, an infrared astronomy mission launched by NASA in August 2003. His awards include the NASA Public Service Medal (2004), the NASA Exceptional Achievement Medal (2001), the NASA Exceptional Service Medal (1992), the Dudley Award (1982), the Arcetri International Fellowship (1980) and the Philip K. Hitti Prize for Academic Excellence (1975). He is a member of the American Astronomical Society and of the International Astronomical Union.

George's research centers on understanding galaxies, in particular how they turn gas and dust into stars, and how the first generation of stars and galaxies came about and evolved into today's Universe. He has used for his research some of the largest and most advanced telescopes in the world, including the Arecibo 300 meter radio telescope in Puerto Rico, the Very Large Array radio telescope in Socorro, New Mexico, the Hale 200 inch telescope on Palomar Mountain, the Keck 10 meter telescopes on Mauna Kea, Hawaii, in addition to the space observatories mentioned above.