



IVOA Status

Fabio Pasian

Chair , International Virtual Observatory Alliance

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IVOA goals

- An alliance of projects for:
 - Developing interoperability standards
 - Enhancing communication
 - Fostering collaboration
 - Cultivating VO awareness and usage by the astronomical community



IVOA priority

- The IVOA is about enabling astronomical research → this is to be considered by IVOA as the 1st priority
- Noticeable change in approach, and pace, in the transition towards VO scientific operations
- Some practical actions:
 - v-Science plenary session (on Tuesday)
 - Take-Up Committee
 - Prioritisation Committee



Committees (1/2)

- Take-Up Committee

- Established during Trieste Interop
- M. Allen, **D. De Young**, E. Hatziminaoglou, A. Kembhavi, A. Lawrence, P. Padovani
- Focus on the needs of the astronomy community

- Prioritisation Committee

- Established during Strasbourg Interop
- C. Arviset, **D. De Young**, P. Padovani, D. Schade
- Prepares use cases and prioritises the development of standards (TAP/ObsDM)
- Draft resolution submitted yesterday to Exec



Committees (2/2)

- Liaison Committee
 - Follow-on to Trieste plenary and special sessions
 - C. Arviset, **D. De Young**, F. Genova, M. Ohishi, F. Pasian, N. Walton
 - Establish liaison with other disciplines (STP, Planetary Science, Particle Physics, Earth Science ...)
 - Link with Strategic Coordinating Committee on Data and Information (**SCCID**) within the International Council for Science (**ICSU**) → top level
 - Explore mutual problems and areas of interest → technical level



Status of standards

- See Christophe Arviset's report
- Many standards in the process of being approved (end of RFC, waiting TCG approval)
- ... too many ?



Issues (1/4)

1. Pace of promotion to standards
 - the “Panama Canal” effect
 - TCG **overwhelmed** with standards to be approved
2. Quality of documentation
 - some standards document have **inconsistencies**
 - most are **difficult to read** for a casual user
 - **Need to find an equilibrium point between pressure to deliver and quality checking**
 - Some solutions being discussed within Exec



Issues (2/4)

3. RFC docs (a) need more **explanatory material**, so non-WG members can sensibly read them, and (b) need more of a **sense of context** - both how they fit into IVOA, and how they are intended to be used.
- **Redesign of the IVOA pages, with the top level routing people in three/four directions:**
 - interested astronomers
 - those who want to deploy against standards
 - internal work
 - general-interest customers ?



Issues (3/4)

- Prioritisation has become a word of the IVOA vocabulary (remember when it was a nasty word?)
- New (?) paradigm:
 - a) the IVOA sets science priorities which in turn inform which standards get developed when.
 - b) standards get developed through the IVOA WGs
 - c) Those standards are then used to support the science priorities decided upon in a)

4. IVOA to have a **project**-like management?



Issues (4/4)

- IVOA has no funds of its own
- Need to have a “robust and enduring path to ensure that science driven developments will continue”
- Need to keep a balance between IVOA priorities and projects’ needs
- Discussions being carried out within Exec
- The success of any individual VO project relies on the success of the whole IVOA



Updated IVOA goals ?

- An alliance of projects for:
 - Developing interoperability standards
 - Enhancing communication
 - Fostering collaboration
 - Cultivating VO awareness and usage by the astronomical community
 - **Coordinate, prioritise and validate the implementation of standards, tools and services**



Thanks to:

- The Program Organizing Committee
- The Local Organizing Committee

- You all, for your attention!





Some events since Strasbourg

- Wide-Fast-Deep Surveys: New Astrophysics Frontier, Aspen, Colorado, USA, 14 Jun - 5 Jul 09
- Euro-VO AIDA Workshop “How to Publish Data in the VO”, ESAC, Madrid, Spain, 22-26 Jun 2009
- Earth and Space Science Informatics Workshop, UMBC, Baltimore, Maryland, 3-5 Aug 09
- IAU WG on Virtual Observatories (at IAU General Assembly), Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 4 Aug 09
- ADASS XIX, Sapporo, Japan, 4-8 Oct 09 (VO session)
- Workshop on High Performance Computing in Observational Astronomy: Requirements & Challenges, Pune, India, 12-16 Oct 09
- “VO days” in Europe: ESO (15 Oct 09), Switzerland, France, Italy, ...



Education to VO

- Educating (young) professionals:
 - User Workshops (possibly on one specific subject)
 - “Hands-On” Workshops on VO tools
- Educating “new generations of astronomers”:
 - In EuroVO-AIDA a number of research projects that can be carried out at high school (14-18 yrs old) and undergraduate levels, using data extracted from the VO and (simplified) VO tools
 - “Info sheets” in several languages
 - If interested, contact **Massimo Ramella**