

IVOA Exec Meeting:TM93

Tuesday, Sep 15, 2020 @ 14:30 UTC

Notes: JE

Original: 23Sep20

Updated: 24Sep20 – inputs from Exec (few typos); also added updates from MS, FP

Distribution to exec@ivoa.net

Present:

Mark Allen	mark.allen@astro.unistra.fr	MA	Euro_VO
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Bruce Berriman	gbb@ipac.caltech.edu	BB	USVAO/NAVO
Chenzhou Cui	ccz@bao.ac.cn	CC	China-VO, Exec Chair
Patrick Dowler	patrick.dowler@nrc-cnrc.gc.ca	PD	TCG Chair
Janet Evans	janet@cfa.harvard.edu	JE	TCG V Chair
Pepi Fabbiano	gfabbiano@cfa.harvard.edu	PF	USVAO/SAO
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Priya Hasan	Priya.hasan@gmail.com	PH	Shristi Astronomy (Guest)
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Regrets:

Enrique Solano	esm@cab.inta-csic.es	ES	SVO
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Glossary:

NOVA – Argentina Virtual Observatory	http://nova.conicet.gov.ar
ArVO - Armenian VO	http://www.aras.am/Arvo/arvo.htm
AstroGrid - UK VO initiative	http://www.astrogrid.org
Aus-VO - Australian Virtual Observatory	http://aus-vo.org.au/
BRAVO - Brazil Virtual Observatory	http://www.lna.br/bravo/
China-VO - Chinese Virtual Observatory	http://www.china-vo.org
ChiVO – Chile Virtual Observatory	http://www.chivo.cl
CVO - Canadian Virtual Observatory	http://www1.cadc-ccda.hia-ihp.nrc-cnrc.gc.ca/cvo/
ESA-VO – European Space Agency Virtual Observatory	https://www.cosmos.esa.int/web/esdc
Euro-VO - European Virtual Observatory	http://www.euro-vo.org
GAVO - German Astrophysical Virtual Observatory	http://www.g-vo.org
HVO - Hungarian Virtual Observatory	http://hvo.elte.hu
JVO - Japanese Virtual Observatory	http://jvo.nao.ac.jp/index-e.html
OV-France - VO-France	http://www.france-vo.org
RVO - Russian Virtual Observatory	http://www.inasan.ru/eng/rvo/
SA ³ – South Africa Astroinformatics Alliance	http://www.sa3.ac.za
SVO - Spanish Virtual Observatory	http://svo.cab.inta-csic.es
UkrVO - Ukraine Virtual Observatory	http://www.ukr-vo.org/
USVOA – US Virtual Observatory Alliance	http://usvoa.cfa.harvard.edu
VO-India - Indian Virtual Observatory	http://vo.iucaa.ernet.in/~voi/
VObs.it - The Italian Virtual Observatory	http://vobs.astro.it/
IVOA - International Virtual Observatory Alliance	http://www.ivoa.net

Agenda:

1. Roll Call and Agenda
2. CODATA initiatives on units of measure - R Hanisch
3. Minutes of [TM92](#)
4. Review of Exec [ACTIONS](#)
5. Project Reports [Significant Events Only]
6. Overall CSP report
7. Overall TCG Status
8. Approval of new IVOA Recommendation(s) [Standing Item]
 1. Time Domain IG - D Morris (V Chair) - (5/2020) No renewal left
 2. Theory - Chair (G Lemson) requests a V Chair (not filled)
 3. Solar System IG - Babbette Cecconi Chair (5/2020) Eligible for 1 year extension
9. IAU-OAD project "Astronomy from Archival Data" partnership with IVOA
10. Request for an [ivoa.net](http://documents.ivoa.net) subdomain (documents.ivoa.net)
11. Future Interop meetings - Northern Fall Virtual Meeting (Wk of Nov 16)
 1. Draft of Email #2 on Fall meeting in TCG section below - w/ week plan suggestion
12. AOB
13. Date of next Exec meeting
14. Review of New Action Items

NEXT EXEC MTG: Oct 24, 2020 @14:00 UTC

1. *Roll Call and Agenda*

The names were recorded and the agenda reviewed.

2. CODATA initiatives on units of measure - R Hanisch (NIST)

R Hanisch was invited to the Exec meeting after the following correspondence with members of the Exec. The email summarizes the gist of the contact and presentation and is included below.

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Email from R Hanish (9/9/2020)

The following message was recently distributed to the international scientific unions of the ISC from Simon Hodson (CODATA) and Heide Hackmann (ISC). To date there has not been a reply from the IAU (I think Francoise is the point of contact), so I am reaching out given the IVOA's prior work on units of measure. We would love to have the IAU and IVOA participate in discussions going forward.

Embedded summer email to IVOA contact:

In 2018, the [General Conference of Weights and Measures](#) took the momentous decision to redefine the International System of Units (SI) based on exact values of the [fundamental physical constants](#). Nevertheless, the current state of the digital representation of units of measure (DRUM) across domains remains a significant problem: one that inhibits science and imposes avoidable difficulties for the reuse and interoperability of data. Much information is available for annotation of units for humans, however, there is no universally accepted source or even notation for how to represent and store units of measures in digital systems. This is a fundamental problem for global science, both within and across domains! It presents a major obstacle for the integration of large, heterogeneous datasets, for the implementation of systems that support Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, and Reusable (FAIR) data.

[CODATA](#), the Committee on Data of the International Science Council ([ISC](#)), has recently established the [DRUM Task Group](#) to help address the issues outlined above, to build consensus and to develop guidelines for good practice in the digital representation of units of measure.

In light of the objectives of this Task Group, and in relation to other developments relating to the Digital-SI, the ISC and CODATA secretariats are kindly seeking your support and the engagement of the IAU towards the DRUM initiative.

**Should you be interested to support this initiative, kindly forward a relevant contact by Friday 31 July 2020 who will act as a liaison between your organization and the CODATA DRUM task group as well as the Bureau International des Poids et Mesures (BIPM) regarding issues related to units of measure. Since the issue of units of measure is of global importance, kindly consider the issue of diversity when nominating your contact point.**

The respective contact point will be invited to participate in activities, including several online meetings and a workshop in 2021, to make the case for the wider systematic development and application of DRUM. In addition, the contact point will be invited to share with us relevant use cases for the development of fit-for-purpose analysis-ready data.

Ultimately, the initiative aims to support international scientific unions and associations, and their membership, to implement the outcomes of this process. Additionally, we aim to develop a funding proposal(s) to obtain resources for an initiative to develop an infrastructure to help harmonise digital and standardised representations of units of measure, both through the Digital-SI and reaching beyond those units directly encompassed by the SI System.

Please find more background information on this initiative in the attached document. Please send your nominations to Simon Hodson ([simon@codata.org](mailto:simon@codata.org)) and Asha Law ([asha@codata.org](mailto:asha@codata.org)). Should you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact Simon ([simon@codata.org](mailto:simon@codata.org)).

Thank you for your consideration, we very much look forward to your support.

With best regards,  
Sent by Asha on behalf of  
Simon Hodson

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Executive Director, Committee on Data of the International Council for Science  
(CODATA)

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#### Exec meeting Notes:

- The request is for IVOA to respond to the global initiative to join Units of Measure.
- One driver was the Mars mission where a units of measure conversion led to a failure of the mission.
- RH noted that there is a Virtual Workshop in February and welcomed IVOA involvement. It includes plenary and breakout sessions.
- MA noted that Françoise received the letter over the summer and was in contact with the IAU. Further action is coming.
- PW noted that the IAU represents the astronomy community.
- **CC said he was happy to write an email stating that the IVOA has a strong interest to act as a bridge. RH and other Exec members responded that was a good idea.**
- RH summarized the request:
  - For the IVOA to participate in the Feb meeting.
  - For CODATA - person with expertise in Units of Measure become the IAU ambassador.
- CC noted he would discuss with TCG if there was a person they could suggest to serve.
- There was a reference to a NIST UMIS web page ... I think it is the following:
  - <https://app.swaggerhub.com/apis-docs/stuchalk/nist-umis/1.0.0>

### **3. Minutes of TM92**

The minutes from TM92 were reviewed and accepted.

### **4. Review of Exec ACTIONS**

#### **Action TM92.1:** CC to email Exec about acceptance of nIVO in IVOA – **Working**

CC reports that he contacted Yan Grange after last meeting. They are working on an nIVO website.

#### **Action TM92.3:** CC to email Exec about new WDS person of contact in IVOA. – **DONE**

JJ is the IVOA person of contact.

## 5. Project Reports [Significant Events Only]

Several Exec member presented highlights:

- FP (VObs.it) noted that the transfer of the RofR was completed with coordination with CADC; JE acknowledged the transfer from SAO with thanks
- JJ (CADC) noted he was requested to present the IVOA Roadmap at an upcoming WDS meeting. He focused on Radio Astronomy & User Apps – 2 min YouTube video – He offered to send the link.
- SOT (Aus-VO) Working VO services; Grant proposal simulations with SimDM – In touch with Gerard Lemson

## 6. Overall CSP report

BM highlighted that he was following Astropy coordination and Radio IG kickoff

## 7. Overall TCG Status

PD noted the following:

- WG/IG have been supporting virtual meetings as follow-up to the May Interop
- Assessing the implementation of Data Models – request for more implementations prior to review; may still need more project participation
- Fall Interop Planning – TCG meeting on Sep 22; hold details for agenda topic below

## 8. IVOA term expirations / Committee replacements

The following terms that have expired as of May 2020 were discussed :

- Time Domain IG - D Morris (V Chair) - (5/2020) No renewal left (**\*\*Action: JE/Exec asked DM to stay till a replacement found – He responded Yes**)
- Theory - Chair (G Lemson) requests a V Chair (not filled) (**\*\*Action: Exec to fill**)
- Solar System IG - B Cecconi Chair (5/2020) Eligible for 1 year extension (**\*\*Action: Approved; CC to contact Baptiste with news**)

## 9. Approval of new IVOA Recommendation(s) [Standing Item]

N/A

## 10. IAU-OAD project "Astronomy from Archival Data" partnership with IVOA

P Hasan was invited to the Exec meeting after the following correspondence with CC and members of the Exec. The email summarizes the gist of the contact and request of the committee.

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We recently applied for a regular IAU-OAD project Astro Sprint which would be a kind of continuation of the activities of Astronomy from Archival Data which is also an IAU-OAD project. One of the referees of our proposal suggested that we can start a partnership with IVOA so that our project may become a regular part of your activities. Would that be possible?

<https://shristiastro.com/astronomy-from-archival-data/>

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CC provided more context in the following email on 9/15:

Vanessa McBride from the IAU OAD office contacted with me. She hopes IVOA can support IAU OAD on remote teaching and learning. Vanessa joined the OAD in January 2017. At the OAD she acts as a link between the professional astronomer community and the development community.

Her message brings me a new idea about the collaboration between the two organizations. Maybe we (IVOA) can build up a partnership with the IAU OAD officially. And then the OAD granted projects can take IVOA as their partner and support organization.

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PH attended the meeting and presented her project and request in person to collaborate with the IVOA as a more formal partner toward efforts in Education in the VO. Access to people and resources and to make proposals with the IVOA.

Notes from discussion after PH left the meeting:

- MA noted that PH has been successful and that IVOA members have presented at their meetings (e.g., M Taylor & CDS)
- MA asked – What do we get by having the IVOA as a more formal partner? CC in response noted that there would be no official agreement; that the IVOA logo on the Astronomy from Archival Data website and more acknowledgement and visibility of the IVOA.
- PW noted that the partnership may help PH to say she's associated with the IVOA when proposing for funding and that linking with IVOA may increase the profile of the IVOA as well. Can only see good, not harm.
- FP noted that he is in complete agreement with PW and noted that an issue with today's discussion goes back to the IVOA not having a formal agreement as an organization. It is a visibility issue and we can't offer more than our logo. The same thing came up in Open Universe. In conclusion FP said that needs to discuss again the possibility for the IVOA to become a formal organization, e.g. a Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) or similar. PW noted that it would help with the IAU as well.
- FP described the NGO details and CC noted that it wasn't easy to achieve. SG suggested that block chain tokens and working with Astropy may help overcome this problem.
- CC concluded that for today the Exec would agree to support the request of PH. **That the Exec should reply with a positive answer and ask that they acknowledge the IVOA support on the Web site and materials.** FP added, the Exec would foster the collaboration with PH actively in the IVOA. Encourage her to talk to the TCG and working groups. Use the standard connection between groups and requirements. He supports her approval.
- A follow-up email from Ajit to the Exec was received on this topic on 9/16:

Dear Chenzhou and Exec,

I have a few points to make on the Priya and OAD related discussion:

As was discussed, an endorsement by the IVOA will help Priya greatly when she looks for funds. Also important is the participation by IVOA people in the lectures and other sessions. Several IVO people have contributed so far, it will be wonderful if that can continue. A grant is absolutely necessary if face-to-face meetings are to be conducted (after the pandemic). While video talks can be carried out even without grants for a while, grants help greatly, especially beyond the short term. While Priya and Najam Hasan are on the faculty of their University and their salaries are paid, they have very little research support from the University and are wholly dependent on grants.

It will be wonderful if the IVOA can join hands with the OAD. It needs to be kept in mind that OAD stands for Office for Astronomy **for** Development. So their mission is to work through astronomy and astronomers for general development. Most projects have a developmental component. Data and data Analytics can be important for many projects, where IVOA can help. Spreading data related skills in the developing world will be one big step for their rapid development. I am presently on the OAD steering committee, and was its Chair for three years, which was a very educative experience for me. Perhaps the IVOA Education IG can become the IVOA and Education and Development IG!

With kind regards,  
Ajit

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Irina responded to the email on 9/16 from Ajit with the following:

Ajit,

I didn't understand the Exec general position in this question yesterday, and hope it will be attained.

If the individual letters of support are needed for Priya grant, please, write.

For instance, I am ready to prepare such a letter, not being involved in her project, but signing it as the National Representative of Ukraine in the IAU, altogether with Prof. Ivan Andronov who is responsible for IAU OAD from Ukraine.

Best regards,  
Irina Vavilova

### **11. Request for an *ivoa.net* subdomain (*documents.ivoa.net*)**

FP presented the topic, pointing to the Vobs.it report for this meeting, and noted that it involved the mechanism to browse email and the IVOA document area. There would be a new lower level domain that would affect ways documents were treated and that the search for docs would be easier and cleaner. By using the subdomain it would streamline documents and be a helpful way to support users. PD asked if it was a subdomain or a DNS entry?

***The Exec gave an OK and they directed that it should be discuss at the TCG for final technical details.***

### **12. Future Interop meetings - Northern Fall Virtual Meeting (Wk of Nov 16)**

Here are the basic notes on the Interop from the Exec discussion:

- The meeting will be Tue-Thu (3 days) with an Opening and Closing session; Meeting will really start very late Monday in Victoria and one time zone will go over to early Friday.
- There will be no opening Plenary
- We will ask for community participation and include smaller timeslots (~15 min)
- TCG encouraged to settle dates, and schedule asap with IVOA community

### **13. AOB**

MS (ChiVO) updated the Exec of a recent foundation, known as Data Observatory, was created in Chile (\$20Mil). A partnership that not many understood proposed the development of a Cloud in Astronomical data generated in observatories installed in Chile. The General Comptroller of the Chilean Republic declared illegal the creation of this foundation, because the process was not public nor transparent and now work stopped. Still deciding next step, but may be a new public and transparent call will come.

### **14. Date of next Exec meeting**

The next Exec meeting will be Oct 27 @14:00 UTC

### **15. Review of New Action Items**

**Actions-93-1:** CC coordinate IVOA response to CODATA request

**Actions-93-2:** JE contact D Morris on continuing to hold Timing IG V Chair until a replacement found. – **DONE (Yes)**

**Actions-93-3:** CC contact B Cecconi on his extended chair of Solar System IG by the Exec

**Actions-93-4:** PD discuss technical details of ivoa.net subdomain with TCG

**Actions-93-5:** CC communicate IVOA relationship with PH of Astronomy from Archival Data and the IAU OAD