

Terms of Reference  
IVOA Exec Standing Committee on Science Priorities  
(Amended as approved by the IVOA Exec 2 March 2010, TM35)

05 May 2010

Background

VO projects worldwide are now moving from the development of infrastructure into the operations era. In order for such projects to remain viable, it is essential that VO projects become more closely aligned with the needs of the astronomical research community, and the metric of success of the IVOA and the national VO projects will be wide utilization of VO products and services by astronomers worldwide. The IVOA is the organization that is capable of facilitating the communication and coordination among VO projects that is needed in the operational era to implement the services required by the research community.

The IVOA Take-Up Committee has begun to focus IVOA efforts in this area by assisting in the creation of “Science Sessions” at Interop meetings, developing science use cases, identifying urgently-needed services, and suggesting paths for implementation of these services in close collaboration with the TCG. However, to date these efforts have been ad hoc in nature, and in order to establish within the IVOA a continuing emphasis on take-up by the astronomy community, this document establishes the Terms of Reference of a standing committee of the IVOA Executive, the Standing Committee on Science Priorities.

Operation of the Standing Committee on Science Priorities

1. This Committee shall replace the former ad hoc IVOA Take-Up Committee. Its membership and internal governance will be determined by the Chair of the IVOA Exec in consultation with the Chairs of the IVOA TCG and the former Take-Up committee, the IVOA Exec Vice-Chair, and others as needed. The Chair of the IVOA TCG shall be a member ex-officio of this committee.
2. The primary objective of this Committee is to identify research needs of the worldwide astronomy community that can benefit from VO related tools and services, and to take action within the context of the IVOA to assist in placing such tools and services into the research community.
3. In pursuit of this objective the Committee will consult as widely as needed and is expected to develop plans to vigorously encourage the creation and implementation of needed tools, services, and other activities. These plans, after endorsement by the Executive, will be carried out in close collaboration with the TCG. It is likely that such activities will often draw upon the expertise of several Working Groups or Interest Groups. Any resources required for Committee activities will be negotiated among the relevant parties on a case by case basis.

Note: Additional material on the operation of this committee is found in item 3 of the “Draft Take-Up Prioritization Path for the IVOA” document dated November 2009. This item was approved by the IVOA Exec at its 11 November 2009 meeting (FM 34S) as reported in the minutes of that meeting.

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