



# The IAU

Ready for the Next 100 Years

*The mission of the International Astronomical Union (IAU) is to promote and safeguard astronomy in all its aspects — including research, communication, education and development — through international cooperation.*



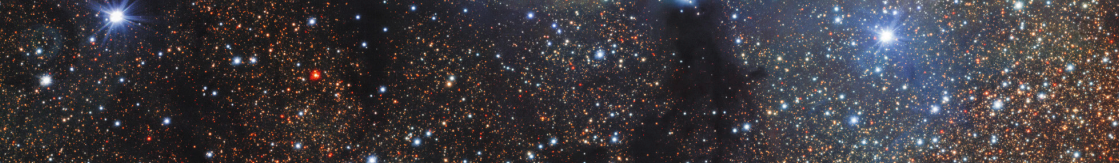
*International School of Young Astronomers held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in 2017.  
Credit: IAU*



Founded in 1919, the IAU is supported by national academies of science and equivalent organisations in 79 countries. In parallel, the membership body is consisting of more than 12000 Individual Members — professional astronomers from all over the world at the PhD level and beyond, who are active in professional research, education and outreach. The Union is structured into Divisions, Commissions and Working Groups, in which individual members take an active part. A key activity of the IAU is the organisation of scientific meetings and its IAU Symposia publications. Among the other tasks of the IAU are the definition of fundamental astronomical and physical constants, unambiguous astronomical nomenclature, and informal discussions on the possibilities for future international large-scale facilities. In addition, the IAU serves as the internationally recognised authority for assigning designations to celestial bodies and surface features on them. Furthermore, the IAU strongly supports actions on non-discrimination and universality of science, as codified by the International Council for Science (ICSU).



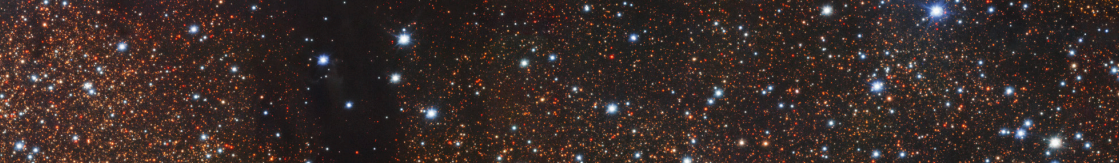
Opening ceremony of the XXVIII IAU General Assembly in Beijing, August 2012.  
Credit: IAU



The IAU also works to promote astronomical research, education, and public outreach actions, as well as using astronomy as a tool for development all around the world. Appointed by the United Nations, it was the implementing agency for the International Year of Astronomy 2009 (IYA2009), which involved 148 countries and reached an estimated 815 million people across the world. As a lasting legacy of the IYA2009, the IAU has subsequently created three offices: (i) the Office of Astronomy for Development (OAD), a joint venture with the South African National Research Foundation, established in 2011; (ii) the Office for Astronomy Outreach (OAO), in partnership with the National Astronomical Observatory of Japan since 2012; and (iii) the Office for Young Astronomers (OYA), in cooperation with the Norwegian Academy of Sciences and Letters since 2015. Through the OAD and its regional nodes across the world, astronomy is used as a vehicle to support the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.



*National Workshop on Astronomy & Astrophysics, Nepal, funded by OAD. Credit: OAD*



Through the OAO and its network of national outreach coordinators, the IAU promotes public awareness of astronomy, coordinates and manages international outreach campaigns, and maintains the relationship with amateur astronomers. Through the OYA, the future generation of astronomers is nurtured, most notably by regularly organising International Schools for Young Astronomers. The IAU plans to create a fourth Office of Astronomy for Education (OAE) to stimulate and develop standards for the teaching of astronomy at the elementary to high school level worldwide, and to also use astronomy as a tool for education in a wide variety of disciplines. The relation between these offices is illustrated below.

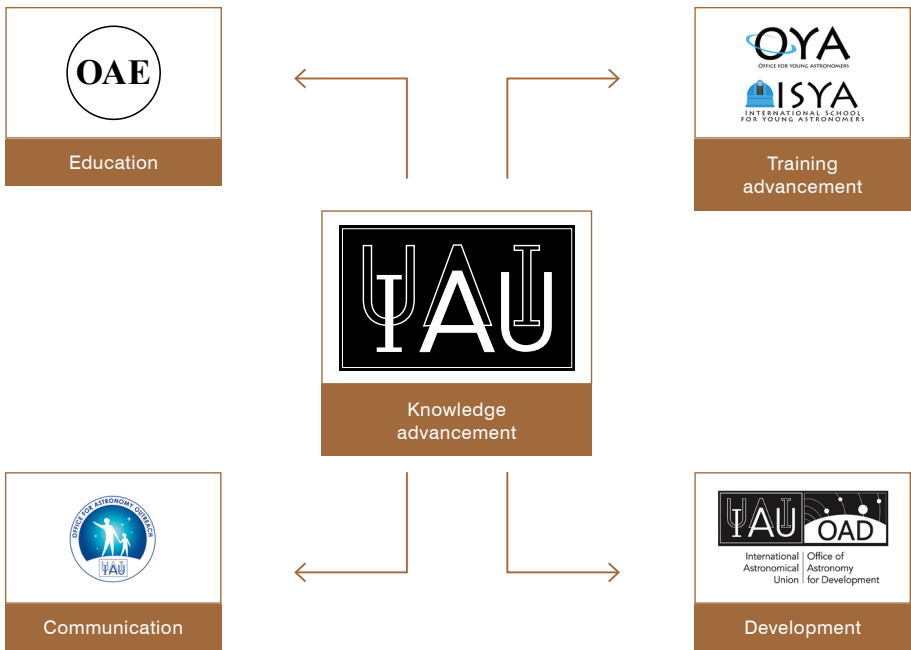


Diagram with relations between the IAU offices.



## A new IAU Strategic Plan

The new IAU Strategic Plan 2020–2030 will be presented to the XXX General Assembly in Vienna in August 2018 for approval. Its main goals for the coming decade are:

### Goal 1

| The IAU leads the worldwide coordination of astronomy and the fostering of communication and dissemination of astronomical knowledge among professional astronomers.

### Goal 2

| The IAU promotes the inclusive advancement of the field of astronomy in every country.

### Goal 3

| The IAU promotes the use of astronomy as a tool for development in every country.

### Goal 4

| The IAU engages the public in astronomy through access to astronomical information and communication of the science of astronomy.

### Goal 5

| The IAU stimulates the use of astronomy for teaching and education at school level.

Details can be found in the full document posted at:  
<https://www.iau.org/static/education/strategicplan-2020-2030.pdf>

## Under One Sky — the IAU turns 100 years

In 2019, the IAU will celebrate its 100th anniversary (IAU100). To commemorate this milestone, the IAU is organising a year-long celebration to increase awareness of a century of astronomical discoveries and technological progress as well as to support and improve the use of astronomy as a tool for education, development and diplomacy under the central theme “Under One Sky”. The centennial celebrations aim to stimulate worldwide interest in astronomy and science and will involve the global astronomical community, national science organisations and societies, policy-makers, students, families and the general public. For more information on activities, see <https://www.iau.org/iau100>.

On the occasion of the IAU Centenary, Springer Verlag will publish a book on the history of the IAU, authored by Johannes Andersen, David Baneke and Claus Madsen, with the title “The International Astronomical Union: Uniting the Community for 100 years”. The book will describe the development of the IAU in the context of the overall evolution of astronomy and will also contain interviews with key actors within the Union.

Furthermore, the IAU Symposium 349, taking place during the XXX IAU General Assembly in Vienna, will address the many aspects of the fascinating history of the IAU during its 100 years of existence.



*IAU100 Logo.*



## Support the International Astronomical Union

Your generous donations will allow the IAU to increase its contributions to its general actions as well as enhance its support to astronomy for development programmes, outreach, education and communications actions or the programme of activities for its centennial celebration in 2019.

See [www.iau.org/donate](http://www.iau.org/donate) for more information.