

In Brief: Study backs Einstein notion on expanding universe

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Scientists have found new evidence that an idea Albert Einstein regretted ever having may be key to solving a big mystery: why the universe is expanding at an ever-faster clip.

That idea is the cosmological constant, sort of a repelling influence in empty space. Einstein inserted it in his [theory of general relativity](#) in 1917. He later called it the biggest blunder of his life. But today, many scientists believe it explains the ever-faster expansion of the universe.

In Thursday's issue of the journal *Nature*, French researchers report analyzing observations of pairs of distant galaxies. Their results fit with the idea that the [cosmological constant](#) is driving the expansion. But cosmologist Michael Turner of the University of Chicago said still more work is needed to confirm that idea.

More information: Christian Marinoni & Adeline Buzzi (2010) A geometric measure of dark energy with pairs of galaxies, *Nature* 468, 539-541 (25 November 2010) [doi:10.1038/nature09577](https://doi.org/10.1038/nature09577)

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