

New thesaurus created for the astronomy community

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The American Institute of Physics (AIP) and IOP Publishing (IOP) have jointly announced the gift of a new astronomy thesaurus called the Unified Astronomy Thesaurus (UAT) to the American Astronomical Society (AAS) that will help improve future information discovery for researchers.

The AAS will make the UAT freely available for development and use within the astronomy community, while ensuring the thesaurus remains relevant and useful. Further development of the UAT will be undertaken by the John G. Wolbach Library at the Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics in collaboration with the Astrophysics Data System (ADS) and the International Virtual Observatory Alliance (IVOA) to enhance and extend the thesaurus to ensure that it continues to meet the needs of the astronomy community.

Adoption of the thesaurus within the ADS will result in better linking with the majority of [astronomy research](#) journal articles through a common vocabulary, thereby greatly improving the accuracy of information discovery.

The creation of the UAT is a result of the combination of two separate initiatives to develop thesauri as part of semantic enrichment projects by AIP and IOP. The donation of this useful tool to the AAS will help expose relationships within content across multiple publishers and service providers for the benefit of the community as a whole.

The thesaurus will be used in semantic technologies to enable researchers to execute faster, more accurate information searches and ultimately improve the discoverability of research. With many thousands of resources being published each year in the field of [astronomy](#), these kinds of tools are vital to ensure that researchers continue to be able to find relevant information quickly and ultimately improve the discoverability of research. This applies as much to data, web services and other resources, as it does to the bibliographic resources to which thesauri have traditionally been applied.

The work to combine the thesauri has been carried out by Access Innovations Inc, a privately held company that specializes in information management and database creation products and services.

Chris Biemesderfer, Director of Publishing at AAS said of the gift "It's both generous and foresighted for AIP and IOP to donate this work to the community, at a time when so much attention is focused on enabling semantic capabilities in scholarly research and communication. The AAS is grateful to the publishers for the timely contribution. It's exciting for the development team to receive a product that is as well thought through as this thesaurus, and the Society is proud to support the research community through partnerships like the UAT."

Mark Cassar, Publisher at AIP said, "Information discovery and retrieval are essential to advance research in all the physical sciences. This thesaurus will give astronomers and astrophysicists a more comprehensive language tool to improve data searches across disciplines. AIP is pleased to play a role in this collaboration and looks forward to seeing the benefits of UAT within the research community."

Graham McCann, Head of Product Management and Innovation at IOP said, "This is an exciting and ambitious collaboration that will have real long-term benefits for researchers. IOP's investment in semantic

enrichment is a great example of how publishers serve the scientific community by underpinning the scholarly communications process using the very latest technologies."

Provided by Institute of Physics

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