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The International Astronomical Union (IAU) is the largest association of professional astronomers with more than 12 000 members in nearly 100 countries worldwide and its mission is to promote and safeguard the science of astronomy in all its aspects - research, communication, education and development - through international cooperation.

IAU Strategic Goals for 2020-2030

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.



IAU Astronomical Union

The International Astronomical Union (IAU) was founded in 1919. Its individual Members — structured into Divisions, Commissions, and Working Groups — are professional astronomers from all over the world, at the PhD level, who are active in professional research, education and outreach in astronomy.

The IAU Offices

The IAU also works to actively promote research, development, education and public outreach.

In 2011 the IAU created the Office of Astronomy for Development (OAD), a joint venture with the South African National Research Foundation. The OAD coordinates projects that use Astronomy as a tool to address issues related to sustainable development.

The IAU has established in 2012 the Office for Astronomy Outreach (OAO), a joint venture with the National Astronomical Observatory of Japan. The work of the OAO is building bridges between the IAU, the global astronomy community and the general public to make the science of astronomy accessible to all.

The IAU has established the Office of Young Astronomers (OYA) in 2015, a joint venture with the Norwegian Academy of Sciences and Letters. The OYA runs the International Schools for Young Astronomers (ISYA) established in 1967. ISYA is IAU's training programme at the university level, intended for students with less opportunity to be directly exposed to up-to-date astrophysics.

In 2020, the IAU has established the Office of Astronomy for Education (OAE) in a joint venture with the Max Planck Institute for Astronomy. The OAE supports professional astronomers and astronomy educators worldwide to use astronomy for STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) teaching and education from elementary to high school level.

