

Astronomy Archives Users Survey 2019

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Astronomy Archives User Group Meeting, 1st October 2020



- Survey initiated by the AAUG in **Recommendation 2019-02-13/03**:
The AAUG observed that the astronomy archives have undergone major developments in the last years, most notably the design of ESASky and the advent of two new mission archives, eHST and Gaia. The last User Survey dates 2011 and does not take account of these recent developments. The AAUG, therefore, deems it timely to carry out a new User Survey to gather the response of the scientific community to the efforts that have been undertaken by ESA to enhance the archives. The AAUG invites ESA to take the necessary steps for the implementation of such a survey in short time. The AAUG will support ESDC in defining the design of the User Survey and its channels of distribution. An announcement of this initiative at the ESDC lunchtime session at EWASS 2019 seems appropriate

- Survey opened on 17/06/19 (ready for EAS 2019) closed on 30/09/19
- Advertised to all subscribers of the ESDC newsletter: 2987 (in Oct `19), announced at EAS 2019 Astronomy Archives lunch session, announced to ESDC stakeholders, Herschel newsletter, @esascience twitter, Spanish astronomical society (SEA), archives home page, top header of ESASky....

- Received 210 responses
- Response rate of about 7% (subscribers of the ESDC newsletter: 2987 in Oct `19)
- Initial results were presented to the AAUG in meeting 3 (15/10/19) (see also <https://www.cosmos.esa.int/web/esdc/user-survey-results>)

- At the end of meeting 3 the AAUG gave **Recommendation 2019-10-15/02**: *The AAUG is pleased to see that the User Survey was completed successfully. The variety of profiles of the participants demonstrates the broad appeal of the ESA Astronomy Archives from academics (the majority of survey participants) to school teachers and amateur astronomers. The AAUG noticed that PhD students and post-docs are underrepresented with respect to staff astronomers. Ways should be studied to enhance the reach of this presumably important group of archive users.*

The overall level of satisfaction manifested by the survey participants is very high. The individual responses express great appreciation of the recent development efforts by the ESDC, highlights being e.g. the ESASky tool and ADQL queries.

The AAUG deems the development of the ESA Astronomy Archives to be proceeding at an impressive pace. The AAUG recommends ESA that the features identified by the users through the survey as requiring improvements should be considered in the further development of the Astronomy Archives and ESASky.

The following actions were raised in meeting 3:

- 2019-10-14/05 D. Baines to distribute the user survey preliminary results document and spreadsheet to the ESA missions whose archives are in the survey, including ESASky. -> **Done**
- 2019-10-14/06 D. Baines to provide a summary of the user survey results online -> **Done** <https://www.cosmos.esa.int/web/esdc/user-survey-results>
- 2019-10-14/07 D. Baines to create an in-depth report on the user survey results and send to all stakeholders. -> **In progress, report sent to AAUG for comments**
- 2019-10-14/08 D. Baines to compile a ratio for each mission relating the number of people responding per archive to the survey with the number of archive users. -> **Done, sent to AAUG and added to the user survey report.**

- This summer ESA (ESDC) asked the AAUG to provide some high level actionable recommendations based on the results from the survey (*in addition to those given in recommendation 2019-10-15/02*).

For meeting 5, to be discussed now.