



European Organisation
for Astronomical
Research in the
Southern Hemisphere

Organisation Européenne
pour des Recherches
Astronomiques
dans l'Hémisphère Austral

Europäische Organisation
für astronomische
Forschung in der
südlichen Hemisphäre

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Dear Andy,

this letter is to help take forward joint planning between the UK and ESO on Virtual Observatory matters. I have read the outline of your new proposal for the VOTC:UK project and it fits in very well with our understanding of how Euro-VO should work - that ESO (together with ESA) should provide community support, and make ESO archives VO compatible, whereas the VOTC provides basic infrastructure software and technology support. We are confident this will work well, given our past experience of working with the AstroGrid project.

I realise that your 2010 funding is uncertain, but it would be good to begin some more concrete planning, as some of this needs doing during 2009, and other parts can be firmed up during the year.

The work areas we have discussed include:

1. Upgrading and deploying Registry technology, and especially working together with us and ESA colleagues on getting new Registry related standards onto the IVOA agenda;
2. Providing technical and tutorial support to the user workshops we will be running, approximately once per year;
3. Working with us to deploy an ESO VOspace service. The first version of the VOspace protocol is now ready, so an initial version could be a 2009 job, but we expect considerable developments and improvements over the coming years;



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4. Sharing development of science user tools, and integrating VO components into ESO web pages. This may need development of a server side version of the "Astro Runtime" API that AstroGrid built. We are also interested in VO compatible proposal tools. ESO has already put some effort into this area, but we are aware that there is also UK interest, so some joint work makes sense.

Obviously we both need some time to build these projects into our workplans and allocate resource, but I can tell you that the ESO personnel involved will include myself, Evanthia Hatziminaoglou, and Alberto Micol.

Hopefully we will both be at the IVOA Interop workshop in Strasbourg in May and can take plans forward in more detail then.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Paolo Padovani'.

Paolo Padovani