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Popular Science : Popular Science in Astronomy

Andersen, J., Baneke, D., Madsen, C., Aarhus University, Aarhus, Denmark

The International Astronomical Union

Uniting the Community for 100 Years

- This book chronicles the International Astronomical Union on the background of 100 years of astronomy
- It describes how the Union has evolved from a closed club of astronomers to a vital force in modern society
- A central feature is its live personal interviews, with new photos, of many of the key actors since 1964

The International Astronomical Union (IAU) was founded in 1919, in the wake of the First World War, together with its sister Unions in related natural sciences. It will thus turn 100 years in 2019. Written by a mixed team of insiders and outsiders, this book presents the IAU in the changing context of the historical, scientific and technological development of astronomy during the past 100 years. While much important scientific progress took place already before 1945, the book naturally focuses on the accelerating evolution during the second half of the century. In the past few decades, the previously narrow IAU focus on organising professional astronomy has broadened to include societally relevant activities such as addressing the hazard of asteroid impacts, the planetary status of Pluto in the Solar System, and the hugely successful International Year of Astronomy. Most recently, it is spearheading a combination of science literacy and public outreach. The book will be of interest to professional astronomers as well as an astronomically interested general audience. The book features live personal interviews with as many of the key actors as still possible.

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