

Abstract for session S21: Gemini - Collaborations Pro-Amateurs

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Title: Interfacing Virtual Observatory tools for amateur astronomers

Abstract: In spite of the growing number of pro-am projects, the amateur community has not been using Virtual Observatory tools as much as expected, perhaps due to some complexities in their use. Here we interface VO tools with two widely-used softwares as an example of the intended use. First, JSON data for transients announced in Astro-Colibri are grabbed and imported into PRISM, an ASCOM-compliant software to manage observatories and data acquisition. The user can select the transient and the telescope will be automatically pointed to its direction, while the screen present Aladin images and ancillary data. Second, we implement a SAMP interface within SharpCap, a widely-used easy-to-use USB frame grabber tool.

We expect these tools to be the first steps towards the adoption of IVOA standards by the amateur community, enhancing and improving pro-am projects across a wide range of topics.