

History of the LISA Conference series: A Retrospective and Forward Look

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Agenda

- How it all started
- Host institutes LISA 1-10 conferences
- What makes the LISA community special? (incl. photo gallery)
- Evolution of topics / Role of astronomy librarians
- The Future of LISA
- PAM Award and Forward Look LISA 11

How it all started

- 1st meeting: 110th Colloquium of the IAU (International Astronomical Union), Washington, DC, USA, 26 July -1 August 1988
- Realized after lots of discussing, lobbying, convincing by librarians and astronomers: Brenda Corbin (USNO), Robyn Shobbrook (AAO), George Wilkins (RGO), Gart Westerhout (USNO)...
- Not officially called LISA “I” as nobody knew there would be another meeting.
- Marion Schmitz attending 1st LISA meeting and LISA 10



From left to right: Suzanne Laloë, Pascal Dubois, François Ochsenbein, Jean-Louis Halbwachs; Wayne Warren and Joyce Watson at the 20th General Assembly of IAU in Baltimore, in 1988 (following the LISA I meeting)

The first connection from the US to France took place on July 28, 1988, to allow American astronomers to access SIMBAD on the occasion of a meeting of the American Astronomical Society (AAS) in Baltimore. The photo above was taken during this demo!

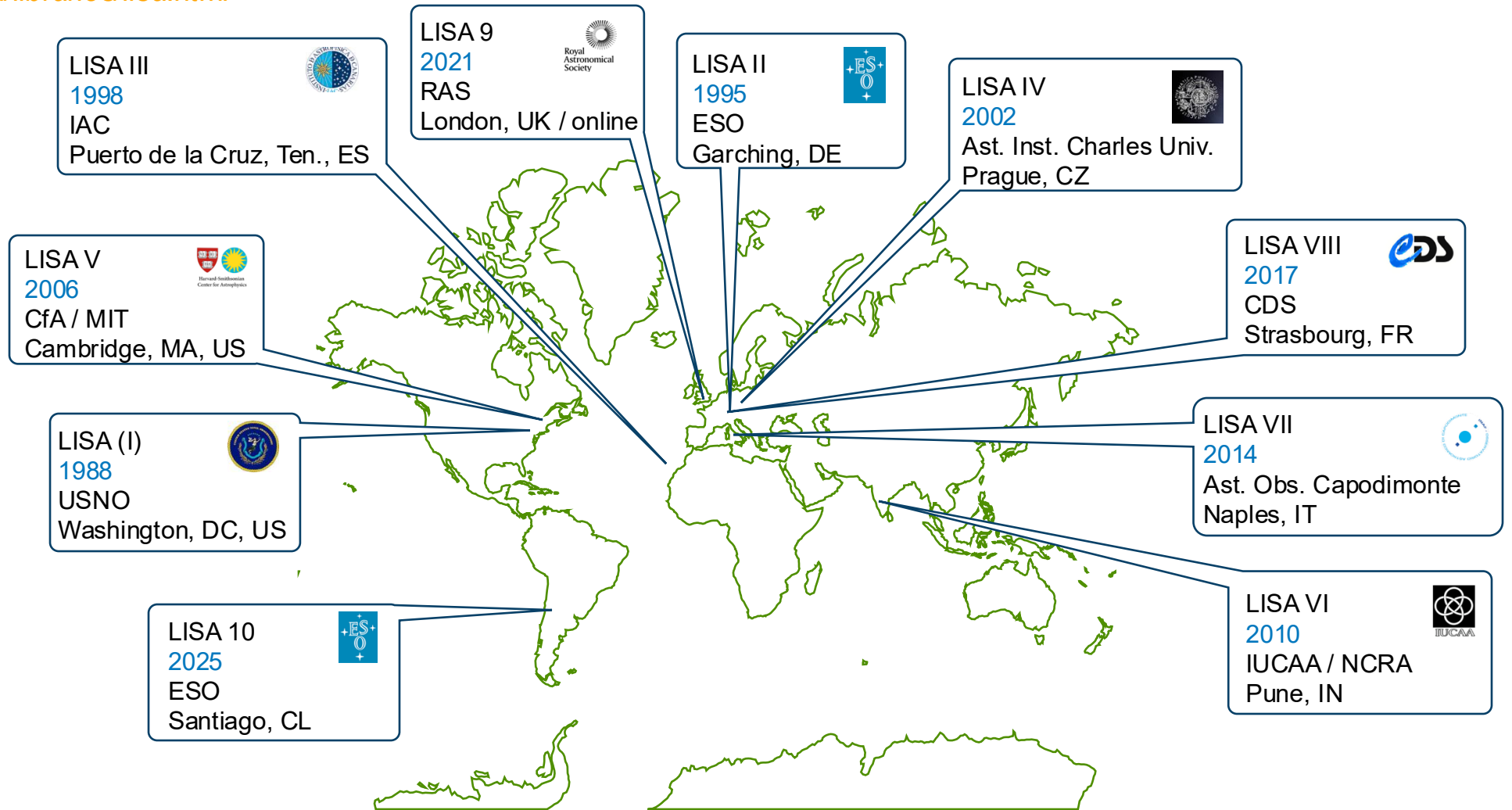
Proceedings of IAU Colloquium 110 (LISA I):

« The principal purpose of IAU Colloquium No. 110 was to **provide an opportunity for librarians of astronomical observatories and institutions to meet to discuss common problems** and ways of stimulating greater cooperation between libraries in different countries. Others who were concerned with the provision of astronomical information were also invited to attend so that there could be wide-ranging discussions on most aspects of astronomical documentation. In the planning of the program, particular attention was given to **new developments in the use of computers and telecommunication networks**, but the needs of librarians and astronomers in institutions without access to such facilities were not overlooked. The original concept of a largely informal workshop had to be modified considerably **when it was found that the number of participants would be two to three times larger than had been expected**. Nevertheless, the program allowed time for general discussions, and these proved to be lively and useful. »

Host institutes of LISA 1-10 conferences

<https://www.eso.org/sci/libraries/lisa.html>

LISA		
I	120	26
II	121	26
III	101	23
IV	106	25
V	115	22
VI	77	17
VII	93	21
VIII	106	22
IX	184	21
10	78	15



What makes the LISA community special?

- Astronomy librarians geographically widely distributed, but well connected
- Virtual (email) collaboration started very early (1990s)
- In-person meetings greatly enhance feeling of community and connection
- For many years enabled and supported by the Friends of LISA (FoL) Committee



Friends of LISA IV Committee outside the Carolinum at LISA IV, Prague, CZ.
Left to right: Brenda Corbin, Ellen Bouton, Ron Enders, Marlene Cummins
(Photo from Ellen Bouton)

Photo Gallery



LISA II
May 1995
Germany
Garching bei München
European Southern Observatory



LISA III
April 1998
Spain
Puerto de la Cruz
Instituto de Astrofísica de Canarias and...
Mr Peacock



LISA IV
July 2002
Czech Republic
Prague
Astronomical Institute Charles University



LISA V
June 2006
Cambridge MA
USA
John G. Wombach
Library, Harvard
Smithsonian Center
for Astrophysics and
Libraries of the
Massachusetts
Institute of
Technology



LISA VI
February 2010
India Pune
Inter-University Library and National Centre for Radio Astrophysics
(NCRA) Library Centre for Astronomy and Astrophysics (IUCAA)



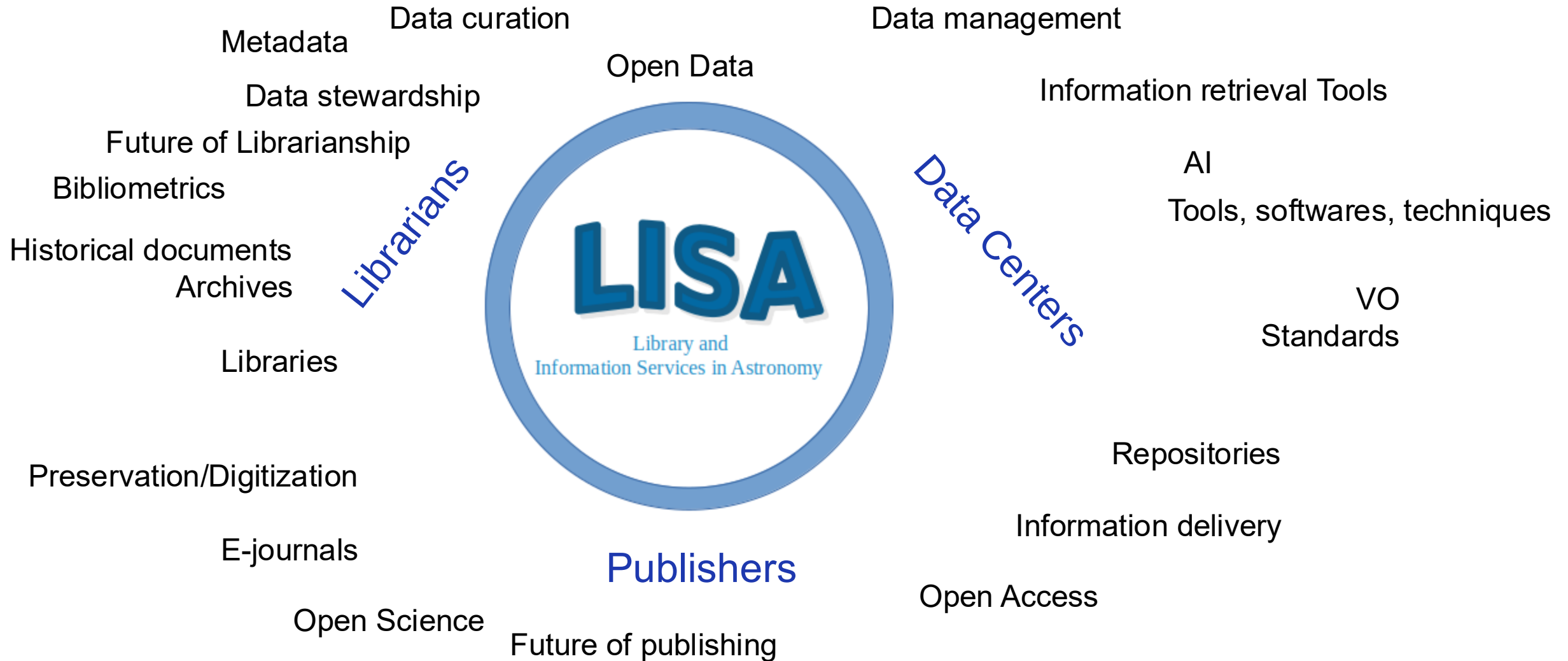
LISA VII
June 2014, Italy, Naples
Astronomical Obs. Capodimonte, INAF Library and
INAF – SBAS Historical Archives Service in collaboration with
University of Naples “Parthenope” and Science & Technology Dpt.



LISA VIII
June 2017, France, Strasbourg
Centre de Données Astronomiques de Strasbourg (CDS)



Evolution of topics / Role of Astronomy Librarians



Evolution of topics / Role of Astronomy Librarians (2)

- Astronomy librarians take on many different roles:
 - “*System independent non-database specific information retriever*”
(Sarah Stevens-Rayburn, former STScI librarian)
 - Advisors, facilitators, data curators, collaborators, mediators, advocates, builders, initiators...
- Responsibilities continuously evolve due to the environment:
 - internet, techniques, e-publishing, Virtual Observatory, OA/OS, multidisciplinary science...
- LISA = Library and Information **Services** in Astronomy (not Systems!)
But knowledge of software, systems, and tools is crucial
- Information sharing, collaborative work and exchange of best practices are crucial!

The Future of LISA

- Quote from LISA Conference paper [2006ASSL..343..285C]:

*“Astronomy librarians constantly try to **keep up with these and other changes**, and they work hard to learn the **new skills and techniques needed for new models of service**. LISA meetings from the beginning have **assisted librarians and data providers in their efforts**. The LISA conferences have been very successful, and it is hoped that future meetings will continue to foster even more cooperation and resulting benefits. **LONG LIVE LISA!**”*

- Considerations for future meetings:
 - Cadence of meetings? Every 3-4 years? In-person, online, hybrid?
 - Volunteers needed to host conference
 - Governance: LISA Organizing Committee? LISA logo?
 - Purpose and management of (Friends of) LISA funds? (currently stored at ESO thanks to ESO Finance)

IOP Publishing

SPIE. DIGITAL LIBRARY



edp sciences

Science
AAAS

PAM Award

Acknowledgement from the Physics-Astronomy-Math (PAM) librarians' community of the Special Libraries Association (SLA)



2014: Awarded at LISA VII, Naples, Italy

2017: Handover ceremony during LISA VIII, CDS, Strasbourg, France



2021: LISA IX at RAS, London, UK. Fully online, no award ceremony



LISA 10