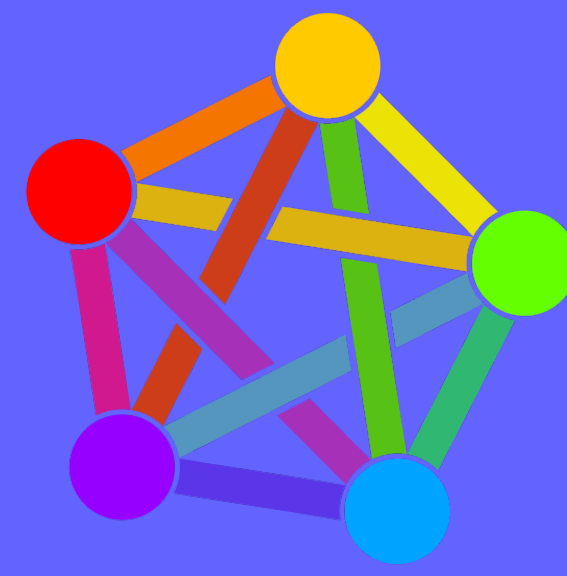


Reclaiming digital sovereignty

One toolset and one community at a time



Discover #ag2025goerlitz in the Fediverse

Astronomy in the Fediverse: Science communication on the microblogging platform Mastodon is showcasing the potential of ActivityPub-powered new social media

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New social media

The Fediverse is a decentralised social network built on the ActivityPub and a few other protocols where a multitude of services, running on myriads of instances (independent servers), federate with each other and enable connections between any of their users, not unlike e-mail. The microblogging platform Mastodon, the photo-sharing platform Pixelfed and the video-sharing platform Peertube are among the best-known Fediverse services. Mastodon [1] in particular offers a rather charming alternative for what was once "Academic Twitter". Since the "Twitter migration" in 2022 [2], the physical sciences and mathematics have shown adoption and persistence in its usage significantly above average [7].

Communicators in universities and in science organisations (e.g. Max Planck, Leibniz, Helmholtz) as well as in professional associations (e.g. EGU) have a significant leverage to uphold the value of, and actively promote, digital sovereignty and take advantage of network effects. They are in a position to spearhead and encourage the digital relocation of scientific communities [4] [6] [5]. The AG is an active participant in this, too.

The astronomical community

Social media activities afford researchers a level of exchange with each other well beyond traditional formats, and with this exchange being publicly visible, add an extremely valuable extra dimension to science communication and outreach.

The astronomical community has a long track record of pioneering and running its own research support infrastructure (e.g. ArXiv, ADS) and is pursuing efforts to make a variety of resources available in an open and distributed manner both globally and nationally (e.g. PUNCH4NFDI).

New social networks seamlessly fits this imperative of basing interactions on the principles of openness and transparency, not-for-profit and in the public interest, community-driven, and using free and open source software. Communities can reclaim digital sovereignty of their social media activities by organizing in the Fediverse: "The fediverse is not a place, it is the means to build a place. It's the means to build a million different places." [3]

The best way to get started as an individual is via <https://fedi.tips>. Once set up, you can find the growing community via this starter pack <https://fedidevs.com/s/NjA2/>.

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