

VERITAS GUIDELINES FOR SCIENTIFIC COLLABORATION

1. Introduction

The VERITAS collaboration recognizes the importance of collaborative efforts as a fundamental way to maximize the contribution of VERITAS and other instruments to the advancement of gamma-ray astrophysics and science in general. Accordingly, the VERITAS collaboration is open to concerted efforts that make use of the combined data obtained by VERITAS and other individuals or groups.

This document provides general guidelines for scientific collaboration with VERITAS. It is intended as a tool to facilitate the formulation of collaborative agreements with other groups by outlining VERITAS' general policies regarding data property and publications, and by establishing a preferred mechanism for the formulation of such agreements.

2. Scientific Collaboration – Basic principles

- All VERITAS data and analysis tools are proprietary to the VERITAS collaboration. As part of a concerted collaborative effort with external partners, VERITAS data will be shared in high-level form, such as lightcurves and flux spectra. VERITAS will also contribute expertise in multiwavelength modeling and theoretical interpretation.
- Data and analysis results collected in the framework of the collaborative effort have to be treated as strictly confidential, not to be distributed outside the involved parties.
- The existence of joint agreements and their specifics (such as source lists, campaign duration, trigger thresholds, etc.) will become public knowledge only if agreed upon by all participating parties.

- In general, joint agreements will be non-exclusive. VERITAS may make separate agreements with multiple groups on well-defined efforts. These efforts can be for a specific campaign or for more generic, long-term agreements. These agreements will follow data confidentiality guidelines.
- VERITAS will respect the wishes and requirements that other groups/experiments might have in making these agreements, provided that they are consistent with VERITAS' own requirements.

3. General Policy for Joint Publications

Authorship: Lead authorship and task assignment for joint publications will be decided between the VERITAS Science Board and the outside groups on a case-by-case basis. It should be clear however, that all VERITAS data published for the first time must be included in a collaboration publication, and thus, authorship of the paper is open to all members of the VERITAS collaboration. This further requires that the papers will be made available for collaboration-wide discussion prior to publication.

Data Rights: Each group reserves the right to publish their own data without information obtained through the ongoing collaborative agreement. If a group chooses to do so, they must communicate their intentions to the other groups. Combined work must be published with all contributing groups.

4. Process Outline

Initial Contact: All interested groups are encouraged to contact VERITAS. The initial contact should be made to Rene Ong (rene@astro.ucla.edu) or Henric Krawczynski (krawcz@wuphys.wustl.edu) who will serve as points of contact between VERITAS and other collaborations. They will also convey the details of the proposed collaboration to the VERITAS Science Board for consideration.

Agreement: Final approval of the agreement (on behalf of VERITAS) resides with the VERITAS Science Board.

The agreement should include the following considerations:

- A plan for communicating during all phases of the collaborative work.
- A mechanism for sharing data and/or models between groups.
- Definition of tasks and identifying key people responsible for these tasks in each group.
- A timeline for completion of analysis and other milestones.
- Publishing the results of the collaborative work (see publications policy section).

Conflict Resolution: In the event that a conflict arises during the collaborative work that cannot be resolved by the involved people, the issue will be taken to the governing bodies of the participating groups for joint resolution. For VERITAS, the ultimate decision rests with the Spokesperson.