

## THE UKIRT INFRARED DEEP SKY SURVEY (UKIDSS): DATA ACCESS

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As part of the UK accession to ESO, it was agreed that all astronomers in ESO member states would have access to the data from the UKIRT Infrared Deep Sky Survey (UKIDSS – <http://www.ukidss.org>). This exciting survey is 3 magnitudes deeper than 2MASS over 7 500 square degrees, as well as having small deep areas, all the way down to a one square degree Ultra Deep Survey to  $K = 23$ . UKIDSS is therefore the real equivalent to optical sky surveys such as those from the Palomar, UK and ESO Schmidt telescopes, and the SDSS (see *The Messenger*, 108, 31). A substantial fraction of the survey is in the southern sky. The survey is being carried out by the new UKIRT Wide Field Camera (WFCAM), which has just been commissioned – see the press release at <http://outreach.jach.hawaii.edu/pressroom/2004-wfcam/>). The survey starts in March and will take seven years. There will be a sequence of releases, each of which is available only to ESO astronomers (and a small additional list of individuals in Japan) for eighteen months,

following which the data become public worldwide.

Access to reduced data and survey products will be through a queryable science archive known as the WFCAM Science Archive (WSA: <http://surveys.roe.ac.uk/wsa>). The WSA link is not live until the first release, but you can try out the interface by using the SuperCOSMOS Science Archive (SSA: <http://surveys.roe.ac.uk/ssa>). During the ESO-proprietary period, you will need to register for a username and password to obtain access. However the WSA team do not expect to vet and authorise every astronomer in Europe who potentially might want access to UKIDSS, and furthermore this list will change from month to month. Rather, we will be agreeing a list of “community contacts” to whom we will delegate the task of producing a list of authorised local usernames. Ingesting these into the WSA database will be automated, so that updating these lists as people leave and join should be easy to do at fairly regular intervals. “Community” will normal-

ly mean one particular university or observatory, but could potentially mean any well defined group of astronomers.

We have set up a preliminary list of community contacts which can be found on the UKIDSS web site at <http://www.ukidss.org/archive.html>. If you think your organisation or department needs to be added, please talk amongst yourselves to choose a contact, and send an email to the UKIDSS registration team below. Note that this can be done at any time from now on – the list can grow slowly. As soon as we have an agreed initial list, we will send out instructions for registering your members.

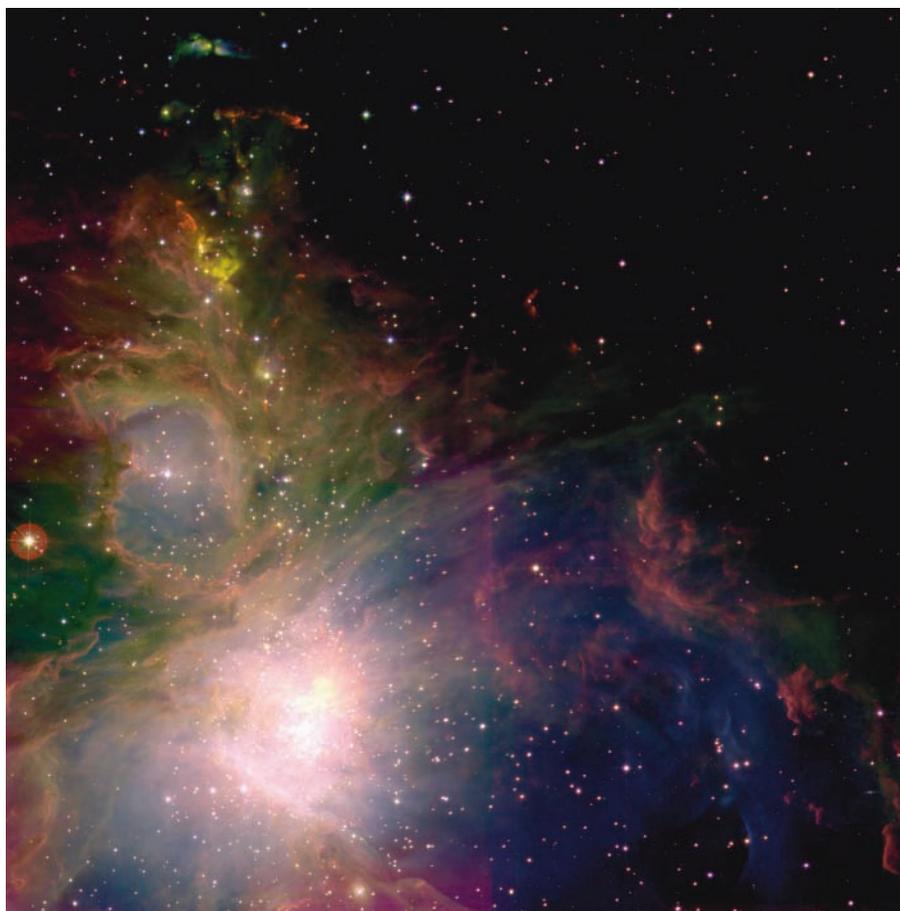
UKIDSS Registration Team:

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A central region of the Orion Nebula captured in the infrared by UKIRT's Wide Field Camera (WFCAM), courtesy of the Joint Astronomy Centre. (Data processing was by Chris Davis and Watson Varricatt). In a single exposure WFCAM can image a region the same area as the Full Moon.