

51st IAA SYMPOSIUM ON THE SEARCH FOR EXTRATERRESTRIAL INTELLIGENCE (SETI) –
The Next Steps (A4)
SETI 2: SETI and Society (2)

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FIFTY YEARS OF SETI IN THE IAF DIGITAL LIBRARY

Abstract

The IAF Digital Library is a mine of gold.

Available since 2021, it covers seventy years of progress in all fields related to Astronautics.

In particular, the IAF Digital Library also covers fifty years of progress in SETI, the Search for Extra-Terrestrial Intelligence. Born in 1959 with the seminal paper by Giuseppe Cocconi and Philip Morrison (NATURE, vol. 184, no. 4690, pages 844- 846, Sept. 19, 1959) SETI became an observational branch of Astronomy as early as 1960 with the work of Frank Drake, Jill Tarter, and many more astronomers still waiting for a fair recognition of their work.

In addition, the far-sighted creation of the SETI Committee by the International Academy of Astronautics (IAA) in the early 1970s funneled most SETI papers into what is now the IAF Digital Library. That happened since, every year after about 1970, most SETI scientists flocked to attend the two SETI Sessions part of the International Astronautical Congress (IAC), exchanging their learning and thus fostering progress.

We would like to infer at least three conclusions:

1) Historians of SETI now have the IAF Digital Library to dig into. Popular descriptions of the seventy years of SETI progress could be published and attract widespread attention even among non-technically-trained readers.

2) Young SETI researchers should explore the IAF Digital Library to enrich their philosophical and technical SETI background. Only then will they be able to make good progress towards the future of SETI research.

3) The discovery of a host of exoplanets is now transforming SETI in the search for Technosignatures by virtue of space missions like TESS and more. Then, exploring the IAF Digital Library is the best way to merge classical SETI learning with current and future scientific space missions.