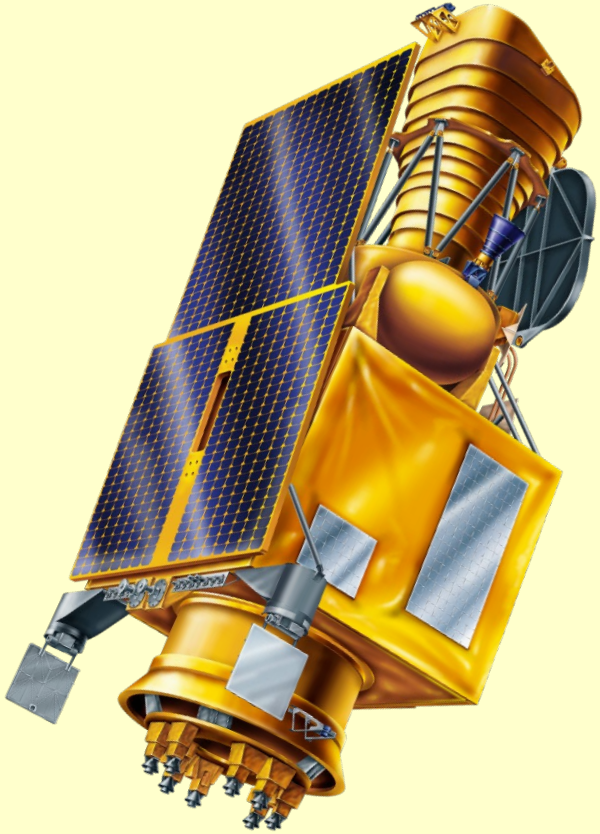
ULTRASAT: A Wide-Field UV Space Telescope

Revolutionize our understanding of the hot transient Universe



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Funding partners
ISA
WIS
DESY
NASA

Industry partners
IAI
Elop
Tower

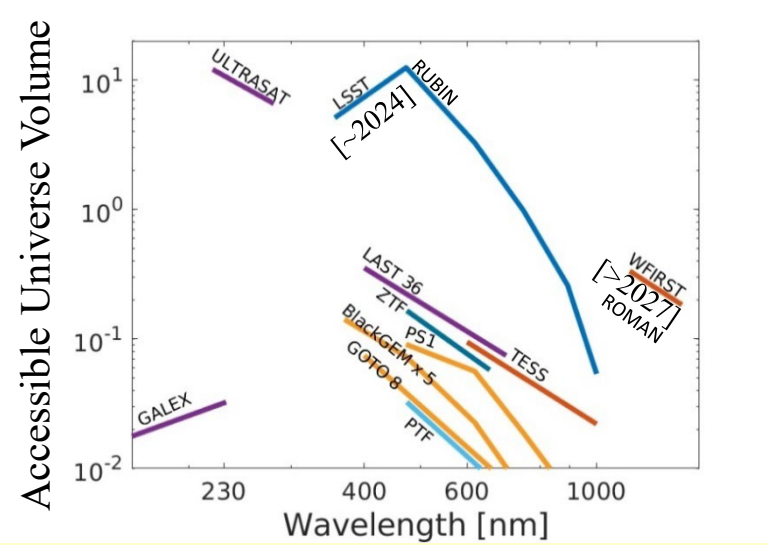
Eli Waxman | Weizmann Institute of Science

ULTRASAT's uniqueness

Key Properties

- Very large, 200 deg^2, field of view.
- High UV (230-290nm) sensitivity:
  1.5 x 10^{-3} ph/cm^2 s (900s, 5σ)
  [m = 22.5].

Transient detection rates of leading surveys



Key Capabilities

- Monitor an unprecedentedly large volume of the Universe.
- New window in wavelength (NUV) and in cadence (minutes - months).
- Real-time alerts to ground/space-based telescopes (GEO orbit), initiate world-wide follow-ups.
- ToO: Instantaneous >50% of the sky in <15 min for >3 hr.

ULTRASAT: Key Science Goals

EM counterparts to GW sources

Starting 2026: ~ 10 NS-NS merger events per year, ~100 deg^2 error boxes.

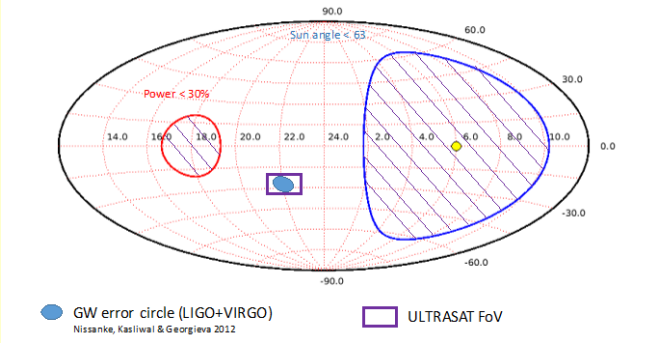
ULTRASAT will provide:

- Fast localization of NS-NS/BH mergers-
  Rapid, <15min, access to >50% of sky,
  Cover GW error box in a single image.
- UV light curves to measure ejecta properties.

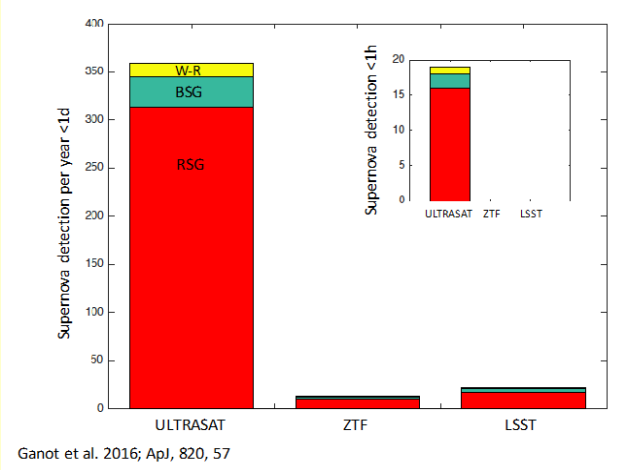
Deaths of massive stars

- High quality early high cadence UV data,
  Rapid alerts for follow-ups,
  100's of SNe including rare types.
- Measure properties of supernova progenitors.
- Map progenitors to supernova types.
- Reveal pre-explosion evolution and mass loss.

ULTRSAT's ToO access



Rates of early detections of SNe



Ganot et al. 2016; ApJ, 820, 57

First detection of GW from a NS merger [2017]

- Very nearby, ~ 120 million light years.
  Light detected after 0.5 day, UV bright.

- ULTRASAT is far superior to other searches
  - Identifying light by searching over all galaxies within GW error volume- will be prohibitive, at 1 Billion light years- 1000's of galaxies.
  - Detection in other bands (infra-red, radio) will be highly challenging.

- Heavy elements beyond Iron – produced,
  How heavy (Germanium or Gold) – uncertain.
  Earlier light detection, in particular in UV, will provide unique constraints.

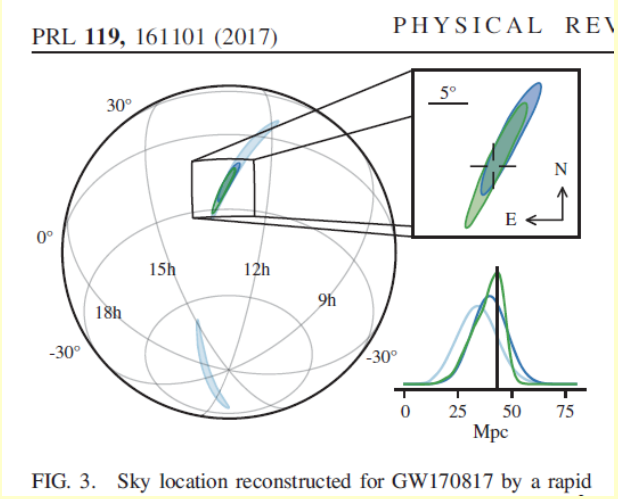
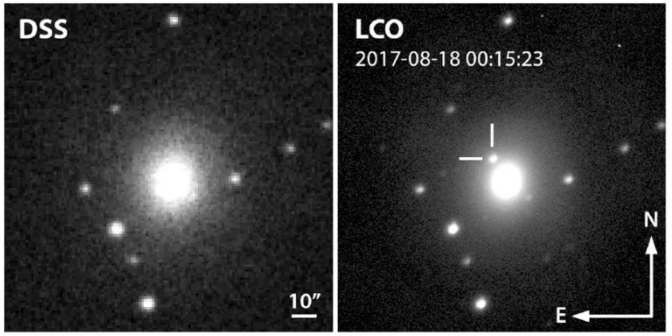


FIG. 3. Sky location reconstructed for GW170817 by a rapid



Strong support to ULTRASAT

ULTRASAT: A broad science impact

Source Type		# Events per 3 yr mission	Science Impact
Supernovae			
	Shock break-out and Early (shock cooling) of core collapse SNe	>40 >500	Understand the explosive death of massive stars
	Superluminous SNe	>250	Early evolution, shock cooling emission
	Type Ia SNe	>40	Discriminate between SD and DD progenitors
Compact Object Transients			
	Emission from Gravitational Wave events: NS-NS and NS-BH	~25	Constrain the physics of the sources of gravitational waves
	Cataclysmic variables	>25	Accretion and outburst physics
	Tidal disruption of stars by black holes	>250	Accretion physics, black hole demographics
Quasars and Active Galactic Nuclei			
	Continuous UV lightcurves	>7500	Accretion physics, BLR Reverberation mapping
Stars			
	M star flares	$>4\times10^5$	Planet habitability, magnetospheres
	RR Lyrae	>1000	Pulsation physics
	Nonradial hot pulsators, e.g., α Cyg, δ Scuti, SX Phe, β Cep etc. types	>250	Asteroseismology
	Eclipsing binaries	>400	Chromosphere and eclipse mapping
Galaxies and Clusters			
	All Sky Survey – galaxies	$>10^8$	Galaxy Evolution, star formation rate

Science goal: Planet habitability

- UV flares and Coronal Mass ejections around prime candidate stars for terrestrial planet searches (M-dwarfs/young Solar analogues)
  - Severely limit habitability,
  - May allow prebiotic chemistry,
  - May produce false positive biomarker signatures
    (O_3 from photo-dissociation of H_2O & CO_2).

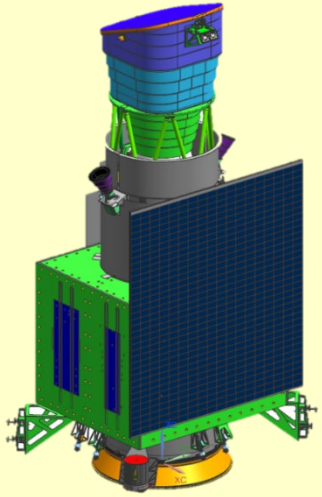
- Flares dominate UV output. Flare rates unknown.

- ULTRASAT will monitor ~10^6 stars
  - Determine NUV flare frequency and luminosity distribution
    as functions of both spectral subclass and stellar rotation period,
  - Determine best habitable planet candidates (e.g., from TESS)
    for expensive spectroscopic bio-marker searches, e.g. by JWST (extended).

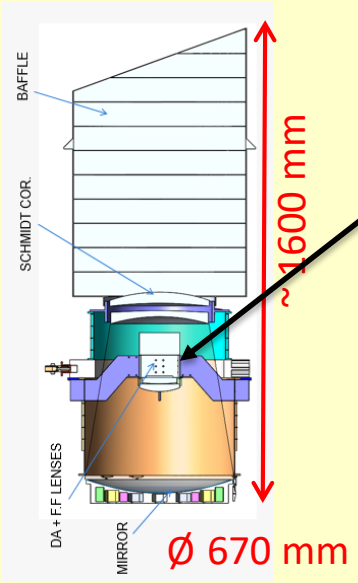
ULTRASAT: Implementation & Collaboration

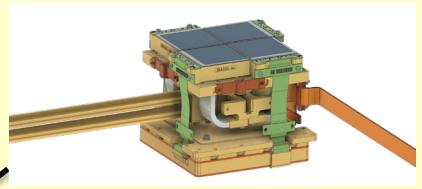
Management: Program Office @ WIS

Spacecraft: IAI



Telescope: Elop/Elbit





Focal Plane Array
DESY/Helmholtz
(Germany)

Sensor: Tower
(Israel)

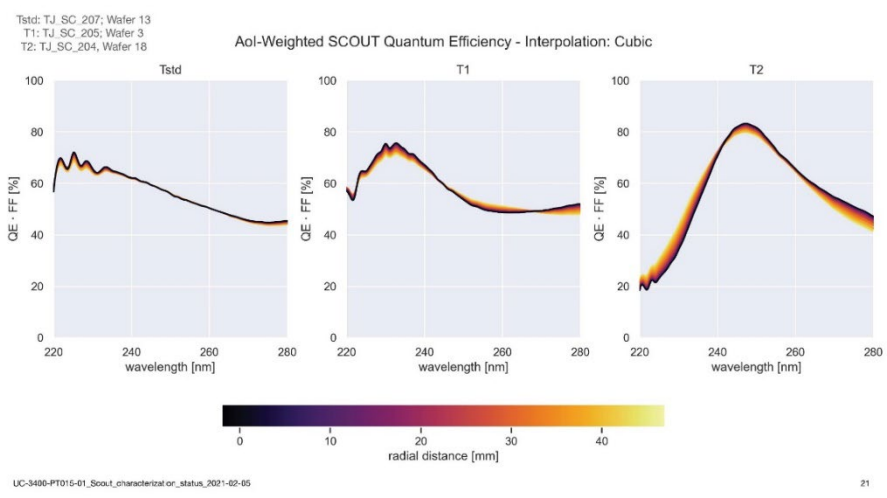
Hosted launch to GTO: NASA
(MoU negotiations near final stage)

Launch Q1 2026
>3.5 year science mission (6 year fuel)

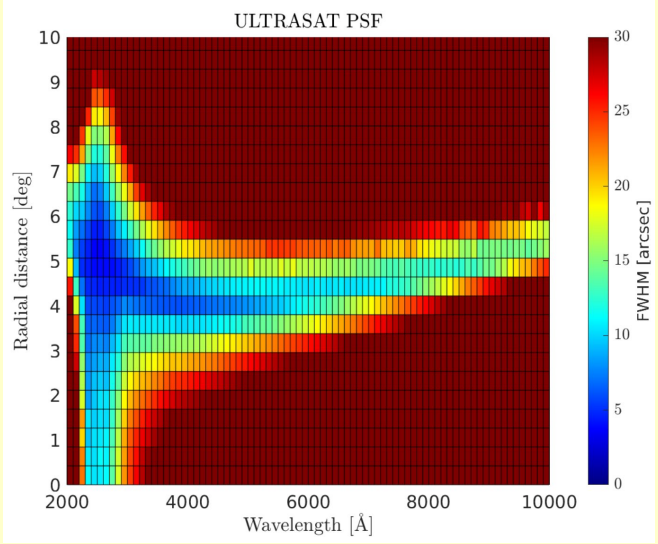
Dimentions: 1.5 x 1.7 x 3.4 (m^3)
Power: 500 W
Mass: 500 + 630 (Prop) kg

ULTRASAT: Key technology challenges

- CMOS sensor - UV QE>60% (Tower).



- UV optics performance across a wide FOV (WIS/Elop).



ULTRASAT
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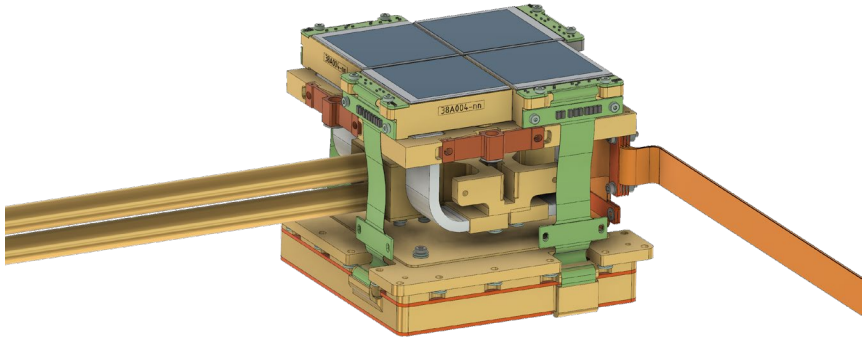
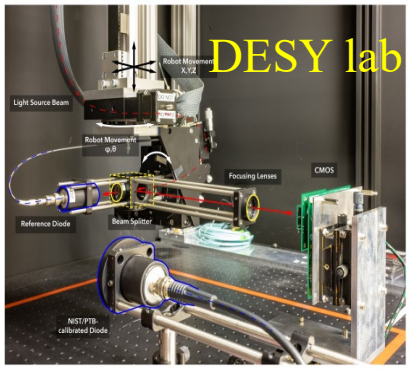
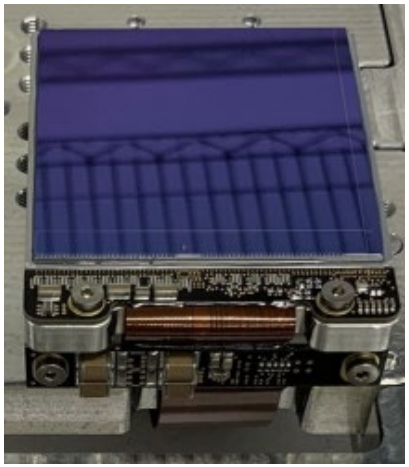
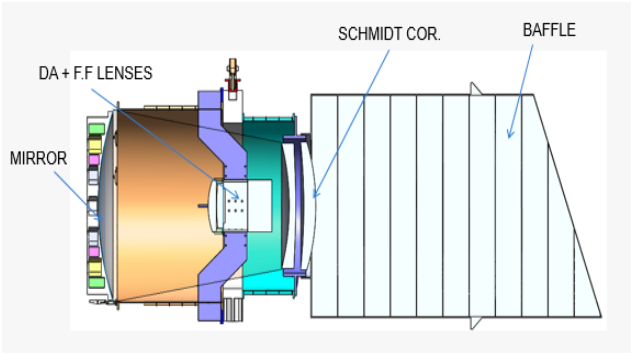
CMOS detectors produced by Tower, tested by DESY

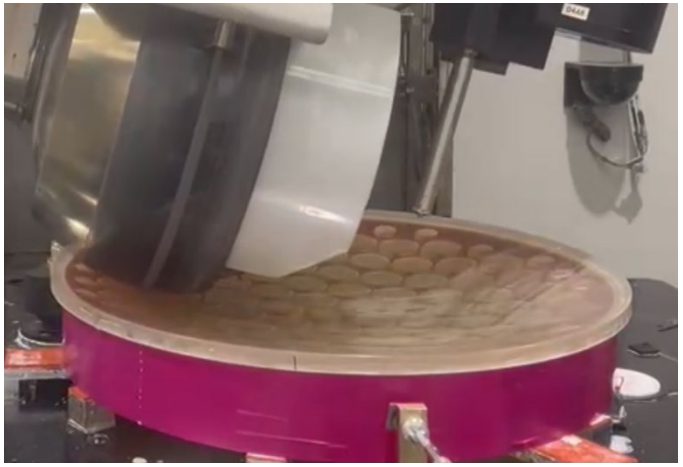






Mirror shaping at Elop





ULTRASAT
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Mission status

- The program is on track.
- Full teams have been assigned and are working.
- Major risks identified and managed:
  - Challenging time line,
  - Complex Interfaces,
  - Contamination prevention and control.

- Mission cost (including launch) approx. $110M.

ULTRASAT: Science Collaboration

Data policy: Alerts public in real time;
12 mon. proprietary period for all other data products.

- 13 Science Working Groups - WG members receive real time data access.
  Open to all (and already including most) Israeli astronomers.

- NASA Launch contribution-
  Science return: 8 US PIs (NASA funded) will join WG's,
  NASA project scientist: J. Rhoads.

- DESY Camera contribution-
  Science return: 3 DESY PIs in WG's.

- Rubin (LSST) collaboration-
  Science return: 6 US PIs in WG's.

ULTRASAT: Science impact

- Revolutionize our view of the hot transient Universe:
  - Discovery volume 300 X GALEX,
  - Continuous min-mon cadence at 22.5 mag in a new window (NUV),
  - Real-time alerts to ground/space-based telescopes.

- A broad impact:
  GW sources, SNe, variable and flare stars, AGN, TDEs, compact objects, galaxies.

- Groundbreaking science with an affordable satellite mission.