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Universe twice as bright—scientists

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Universe twice as bright—scientists

RESEARCH conducted by an international team of astronomers has come to the conclusion that the universe is actually twice as bright than was previously thought.

One of the team, Dr Simon Driver from St Andrews University, has discovered that dust is obscuring approximately half of the light that the universe is generating.

Dr Driver, of the school of physics and astronomy, is the lead author, and he said that for nearly two decades there had been argument about whether the light seen from distant galaxies tells the whole story.

"It doesn't, in fact only half the energy produced by stars actually reaches our telescopes directly, the rest is blocked by dust grains," he said.

While astronomers have known for some time that the universe contains small grains of dust, they had not realised the extent to which this is restricting the amount of light that we can see.

The dust absorbs starlight and re-emits it, making it glow.

It was known that existing models were flawed because the energy output from glowing dust appeared to be greater than the total energy produced by the stars.

The team used data from the Millennium Galaxy Catalogue, a state-of-the-art high resolution catalogue of 10,000 galaxies assembled by Dr Driver and his team.

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