

Brief Status Report on the International Year of Astronomy 2009

Reproduced, with minor editorial changes, from IAU Information Bulletin n° 102

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Key Words

International Year of Astronomy 2009
IYA2009 Cornerstone Projects
IYA2009 Network

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As of 12 August 2008, an impressive 122 National Nodes, representing 118 countries and 26 organisations, have signed up to participate in the IYA2009. This is an unprecedented network of engaged astronomy communicators and educators. A total of around 140 nations are expected to join the IYA2009 before the Year starts. Astronomy, education and science outreach related organisations are also welcome to participate in the IYA2009. So far 26 such organisations have signed up.

The IAU welcomes suggestions for so-called "Single Points of Contact" from countries that are not as yet involved. The IYA2009 Secretariat is particularly keen to establish contact with the following countries, based on the report on the state of astronomy development by country, compiled by John Hearnshaw (IAU Commission 46: Worldwide Development of Astronomy Programme Group¹): Albania, Andorra, Azerbaijan, Brunei, Barbados, Korea DPR, Lebanon, Liechtenstein, Mauritius, Monaco and San Marino.

Resources

Over the past few months the Secretariat has generated an abundance of resources to spread word of the IYA2009 among members of the general population. These include everything from trailers to brochures

Summary

The International Year of Astronomy 2009 (IYA2009) is a global collaboration between nations and organisations for peaceful purposes – the search for our cosmic origin, a common heritage that connects everyone. The science of astronomy represents millennia of collaborations across all boundaries: geographic, gender, age, culture and race, in accordance with the principles of the UN Charter. This report outlines the status of the principal projects and activities that make up the Year.

to presentations, many of which are easily accessible through the astronomy2009 website. Some of these online resources include: IYA2009 Trailer, IYA2009 Brochures, IYA2009 Power Point Presentations and IYA2009 Logo and Branding.

IYA2009 Cornerstone Projects

The International Year of Astronomy 2009 is supported by eleven Cornerstone projects. These global programmes are based on specific themes that collectively represent the means to achieve the IYA2009's primary goals. The Cornerstone projects are key to the success of IYA2009. Several Cornerstones are underway and have dedicated websites.

- 100 Hours of Astronomy: www.100hoursofastronomy.org
- The Galileoscope: www.galileoscope.org
- Cosmic Diary: www.cosmicdiary.org
- Portal to the Universe: www.portaltotheuniverse.org
- She is an Astronomer: www.sheisanastronomer.org
- Dark Skies Awareness: www.darkskiesawareness.org
- Astronomy and World Heritage: <http://whc.unesco.org>

- Galileo Teacher Training Program: www.galileoteachers.org
- Universe Awareness: www.unawe.org
- From Earth to the Universe: www.fromearthtotheuniverse.org
- Developing Astronomy Globally: www.developingastronomy.org

Conclusion

1 January 2009 will mark the beginning of the IYA2009 in the eyes of the public. However this immense worldwide science outreach and education event began more than six years earlier, with IAU's initiative in 2003. The IYA2009 aims to unite nations under the umbrella of astronomy and science, while at the same time acknowledging cultural differences and national and regional particularities. Never before has such a network of scientists, amateur astronomers, educators, journalists and scientific institutions come together. When the IYA2009 officially kicks off in Paris on 15 January 2009, it is estimated that more than 5000 people will be directly involved in the organisation of IYA2009 activities across the globe.

Notes

1. http://iau46.obspm.fr/spip.php?article53&lang=enspip.php?article53&artsuite=0#sommaire_1