

IAU Office for Astronomy Outreach 10th Anniversary: Astronomy for Everyone Through Access, Communication and International Cooperation

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Building on the unprecedented momentum created by the International Year of Astronomy in 2009, the IAU Office for Astronomy Outreach (IAU OAO) was launched in 2012 as a joint venture between the IAU and the National Astronomical Observatory of Japan. Over the last decade, the IAU OAO has helped to coordinate many large-scale international projects, such as Cosmic Light (2015), NameExoWorlds (2015, 2019, and now 2022), the largest in-person CAP Conference to date in 2018, the first virtual and hybrid CAP conferences in 2021 and 2022, respectively, the IAU 100 years celebrations (2019) and the first IAU Symposium on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (2019). The IAU OAO has accomplished all of this and more by building and relying upon an active network of experts – the IAU National Outreach Coordinators (NOCs) – as the backbone for the IAU’s international outreach implementation.

In 2022, the IAU OAO celebrates its ten-year anniversary: a celebration to honour the communities that have shaped the IAU’s outreach programmes into the successful initiatives we are proud to support today. This decade, we will expand our Annual Programmes, strengthen our skill-building projects with the recently formed Communicating Astronomy with the Public Trainings, build programmes that leverage astronomy to tackle issues that threaten the planet and our night skies, develop new programmes driven by the IAU Strategic Plan 2020-2030 and the emergent needs of our communities, and increase the opportunities for our NOCs to learn, share, and connect. These will all inform new online and hybrid

projects, drawing from our experience of establishing effective collaborations that heavily rely on remote relationships.

In addition, as announced during the IAU General Assembly in Busan this August, the IAU has relaunched a special edition of NameExoWorlds. This international competition will bring together professional astronomers and the wider public, including teachers, students, and amateur astronomers. In this way, NameExoWorlds 2022 embodies the OAO’s motto, Astronomy for Everyone, by providing all with the opportunity to name 20 of the first exoplanetary systems to be observed by *JWST*.

With international collaboration, sustainability, and the IAU Strategic Plan

2020-2030 at the strategic core of the IAU OAO, we are reshaping our actions and structures for the next decade. The IAU OAO has recently expanded to include a Director, Deputy Director, and International Outreach Officer, all of whom have a sense of shared responsibility to work with and for our communities.

We envision the IAU outreach communities as bridge-builders, facilitating access to information and reaching new partners – from professional astronomers to the general public – thus perpetuating our efforts to make astronomy accessible to everyone.

(This article was first published in IAU Catalyst #7 on 28 September 2022)



Figure 1. The IAU Office for Astronomy Outreach logo and motto: Astronomy for Everyone. Credit: IAU OAO