

SPACE EDUCATION AND OUTREACH SYMPOSIUM (E1)  
Calling Planet Earth - Space Outreach to the General Public (6)

Author: Dr. Bruce Betts  
The Planetary Society, United States, bruce.betts@planetary.org

Ms. Jennifer Vaughn  
The Planetary Society, United States, jennifer.vaughn@planetary.org

THE PLANETARY SOCIETY'S GLOBAL PUBLIC OUTREACH PROGRAM

**Abstract**

For over three decades, The Planetary Society, an international non-profit, has worked to excite, inspire, engage, and educate the public about space exploration. Space outreach to the general public is a key part of The Planetary Society mission: Empowering the world's citizens to advance space science and exploration. At IAC, we will discuss several of our outreach activities, including lessons learned, focusing on efforts that have achieved various measures of success. We wish to share what we have learned with others in the space public outreach community, make them aware of our resources they can use, and also forge new collaborations.

Over the history of The Planetary Society, the outreach program has evolved, particularly with the evolution of technology. Though the Planetary Society member magazine *The Planetary Report*, continues to receive high marks and accolades from readers, much of the organizational outreach focus has shifted to a variety of electronic media. Our magazine and electronic media feature a mix of authors from professional scientists and engineers to staff members.

The Planetary Society has a range of activities including the following: web site (planetary.org) with long-term resources and with ever changing blogs from internal staff and guest blogs from others in space exploration and astronomy; a weekly international radio show, *Planetary Radio*, carried on 150 radio stations, Sirius/XM, and via podcast, that includes interviews with space professionals, space updates, an opinion piece, easy night sky information, random space facts, and a trivia contest; opportunities for people to send names and messages aboard spacecraft as part of our Messages from Earth program, including recent opportunities with the *Hayabusa 2* and *OSIRIS-REx* asteroid missions; naming contests, for example for spacecraft and asteroids going back to the *Magellan* spacecraft and recently with the naming of the *OSIRIS-REx* target asteroid, Bennu; several social media accounts, with followings of tens of thousands to millions on different social platforms including from the Society as a whole, as well as from individual staff members; competitions from essays, to art, to mission design; a free online Introduction to Planetary Science and Astronomy course through a multi-year collaboration with California State University Dominguez Hills; and recently, a greater focus on videos on space related topics including involving Planetary Society CEO, Bill Nye. The Planetary Society is also increasing and developing its volunteer network in an effort to directly reach more people around the world.