

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

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PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIES FOR GLOBAL PROJECTS OF THE INTERNATIONAL
 ASTRONOMICAL UNION'S 100TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS (IAU100)

Abstract

In 2019, the International Astronomical Union (IAU) is celebrating its 100th anniversary. The IAU's mission is to promote safeguard astronomy in all its aspects, including research, communication, education and development, through international cooperation. The organisation currently has over 13,500 members who are active in professional research, education and outreach in astronomy. To commemorate this centenary milestone, the IAU has organised a year-long celebration (IAU100) to increase awareness of a century of astronomical discoveries as well as to support and improve the use of astronomy as a tool for education, development and diplomacy under the central theme "Under One Sky". Throughout 2019, thousands of activities for IAU100 have taken place at local, regional, national and global scales in over 100 countries.

This paper will discuss the various strategies used throughout the IAU100 celebrations in 2019 for public engagement. The paper's discussion will include the comparison of effective outreach strategies of five particular IAU100 projects to assess and evaluate their approach to engaging the general public. This includes the 100 Hours of Astronomy global project, during which more than 1200 astronomy activities were conducted across 86 countries worldwide from 10-13 January 2019. Similarly, the IAU100 coordinated global celebrations for the 50th anniversary of the moon landing in July 2019, which sought to engage the public worldwide by organising moon-related activities. These two global projects will be compared to the outreach strategy used for the Inclusive Astronomy initiative, particularly surrounding the Women and Girls in Astronomy project. The final projects that will be assessed and discussed is the Name ExoWorlds initiative, that offered the opportunity to all nations to each name one exoplanet, and the Dark Skies for All project, that aimed to raise awareness of the preservation of quiet and dark skies in conjunction with the the 2019 UNESCO International Day of Light. The author concludes by proposing recommendations for modern, effective and innovative means of public outreach for astronomy engagement activities conducted at large scales, including nationally and globally.