

International
Astronomical
Union | Office of
Astronomy
for Development

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NEWS



Funded Projects for 2016

The OAD's Fourth Annual Call for Proposals has concluded and 18 projects have been selected to receive funding in 2016. A total of €111,704 will be granted to the funded projects. The Task Forces reviewed the applications and submitted recommendations to the Steering Committee, which approved the final list of projects.

Read the [IAU Press Release](#) for more details.



South-West Asian Regional Office Inauguration

The SWA Regional Office was officially inaugurated on 13 October at Byurakan Observatory in Armenia. A regional Astronomy meeting with representatives from various countries was also conducted. The Armenian-Iranian Astronomy workshop was organized to strengthen scientific relations.

Read more on the [SWA regional office website](#)



West African Regional Office Inauguration

The West African Regional Office was inaugurated on 25 November in Enugu, Nigeria. A meeting of the regional country coordinators was held prior to the event. The inauguration coincided with the first Nigerian Astronomy and Space Science Forum.

Read the [IAU Press Release](#) for more details.



Arab Regional Office and Arabic Language Center Inauguration

The Arab Regional Office and Arabic Language Expertise Center was inaugurated on 02 December in Jordan, Amman. It is hosted at the Arab Union for Astronomy and Space Sciences (AUASS) which is located at the Royal Jordanian Geographical Centre (RJGC).

Read the [IAU Press Release](#) for more details.

PROJECT UPDATES



Astronomy Workshop

OAD Collaborators Laure Catala and Sudhanshu Barway conducted an Astronomy workshop at the University of Zululand in South Africa. It was part of an ongoing project to build capacity within the Physics department of this "Historically Disadvantaged Institution".

Read more about the [AstroVARSITY project](#).

OAD One World Project

The OAD is working with international organisations to conduct a service evaluation of South African Astronomical Observatory outreach activities in Cape Town. The outreach activities expose children to the "Pale Blue Dot"



theory, with the aim of promoting the development of broader social identities. Over 900 primary school students have so far participated in the outreach activities.



Assessing Summer Schools

Data collection and processing were completed on a project being run by the OAD East Asia Regional Office with support from the OAD. The project explores how summer schools and workshops can efficiently develop high-quality assessments of students' baseline levels of preparation for summer schools and measure post-school learning gains.

REGIONAL OFFICES – HIGHLIGHTS

- **Andean region** will host at least 2 NASE-IAU workshops in Chile during the 1st semester of 2016, in a collaboration between Universidad de Antofagasta and Universidad de Chile
- **East African ROAD** is part of a working group established to draft the Ethiopian Space Policy. The Regional Office is a vice-chair and in charge of reviewing international space policies
- **East Asian ROAD** runs regular activities: monthly physics days at schools for children of migrant families, as well as monthly science cafes for the general public. Both activities are done under a joint umbrella with the UK Institute of Physics.
- **Portuguese ROAD** has received the endorsement of the Ministry of education and UNESCO. The formal inauguration will be held in May 2016
- NARIT, the host of the **South-East Asian ROAD**, initiated a program to commemorate HRH Princess Sirindorn by donating 10-inch reflecting telescopes to schools and universities in Lao PDR. NARIT will facilitate the Ministry of Science and Technology of Lao PDR in building its national observatory and planetarium
- **Southern African ROAD** hosted visiting professor Jayant Murthy for 1 month. He gave lectures and workshops on 'Introducing Data Analysis in the University System' to students of Copperbelt University in Zambia
- **West African ROAD** organized an Astronomy workshop for secondary, primary school teachers and students in Nigeria, in collaboration with Brian Sheen from Roseland Observatory, UK

MEETINGS AND VISITORS

- Dr. Wanda Diaz is visiting the OAD to continue her work with the Athlone School for the Blind in Cape Town. She is assisting the school in the development of a Science curriculum.
- Russ Taylor from the University of Cape Town and founding director of the Inter-University Institute for Data Intensive Astronomy (IDIA) visited the OAD to discuss potential collaborations in the “big data” domain
- Prof Dan McIntosh from University of Missouri at Kansas City visited the OAD. He has extensive experience in teaching introductory astronomy to students from socio-economically deprived backgrounds in the US and runs a NASA-funded bursary programme that uses astronomy to stimulate interest in science and to facilitate access to university in inner city schools.
- Anja Fourie, Director of Scifest Africa, visited the OAD to discuss potential future collaborations
- The OAD was represented at the Mexico-South Africa workshop on Astronomy in October 2015
- Silvia Verdolini, OAD Visiting Fellow, attended two workshops on the development of a curriculum-related Astronomy resource run by the South African Department of Science & Technology
- Eli Grant represented the OAD at the [World Science Forum](#) in Hungary. She participated in the Young Scientists programme that developed strategies on how professional science communities can work together to support the achievement of the 4th Sustainable Development Goal, "Quality education for all"
- The OAD conducted a panel discussion entitled “Astronomy for Development” at the first [Science Forum South Africa](#), which took place on 8-9 December
- The OAD attended the first BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa) Astronomy Workshop in Cape Town
- The OAD met with representatives from the [MIT Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab](#) team, JPAL Africa, who are based at UCT. Possibilities were explored for future collaboration on project assessment and training in development for OAD community

UPCOMING EVENTS

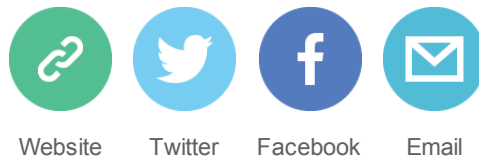
OAD Regional Offices Workshop

Mar 02 - 04 2016, Cape Town

Communicating Astronomy to the Public CAP Conference

May 16 - 20, 2016, Medellin, Colombia

IAU Symposium 326: Research in Astronomy Education



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