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## NEWS

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### **OAD 2017 Call for Proposals**

The 2017 OAD Call for Proposals is underway. Stage 1 of the call received a total of 114 proposals. The Task Forces scored these proposals with input from Regional Offices. By the end of June, 40 proposals were selected to move on to Stage 2. The OAD and Regions are currently working with these 40 teams to revise their Stage 2 applications. Revised applications will be submitted for review by the Task Forces, who will select the projects to be funded.

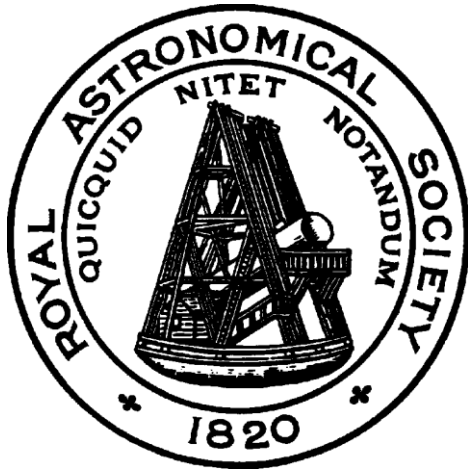
Read more on the [OAD website](#)



### **Regional Offices Meeting**

The regular face to face meeting of OAD Regional Offices took place in Ethiopia, as a side event of the Middle East and Africa Regional IAU Meeting (MEARIM). MEARIM included a special plenary session for OAD regional offices. Representatives of Regions also attended a meeting with the Ethiopian Minister of Science and Technology, at an event to sign an addendum to the agreement of the East African Regional Office (which is hosted in Ethiopia).

Read more on the [OAD website](#)



### **RAS-OAD Mobility Grant**

The Royal Astronomical Society, in partnership with the OAD, offers mobility funding for astronomy-related research, education, or development collaborations between the United Kingdom and countries where astronomy research is not well established. Selection will be based on the scientific and educational merits of the application and on the strategic impact of the visit to both the visitor and host. The deadline for application is 31 August 2017. [Apply here.](#)



### **Astronomy & Data Science Toolkit**

The OAD announces the launch of an alpha version of their new Astronomy & Data Science Toolkit. The overall objective of this toolkit is to provide a foundation for a “common language” between data science and astronomy communities. The toolkit aims to provide high quality teaching materials in the form of examples, courses and assessments which you are welcome to use for your teaching or perhaps when organising a workshop or a summer school. The OAD are looking for contributions to the toolkit from the community of scientists, graduate students and astronomers. The toolkit is available at:

<https://datascience.astro4dev.org/>



### **Farewell to Karabo Makola**

The OAD bid farewell to Karabo Makola, who spent a year as a DST/NRF intern leading OAD communications. During her time, she led the creation of the first ever OAD Yearbook, wrote a communication strategy for the OAD, represented the office at several events, organized exhibitions, taking part in outreach activities at Scifest etc. She

now takes up a position at the Cape Town Science Centre.



### **AstroSense update**

Dr Wanda Diaz spent time in the US where she attended several meetings and conferences related to the AstroSense project. She made [poster presentations](#) at the AASTCS5 meeting on Radio Exploration of Planetary Habitability and attended the IDATA project kickoff. She also presented her work at the International Symposium on Education in Astronomy and Astrobiology (ISE2A) in the Netherlands, and presented a lesson at the South Carolina Camp for the blind. AstroSense aims to improve universal access to Science and level the playing field.

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## REGIONAL OFFICES - UPDATES

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- **East African ROAD** has assigned Alemiye Mamo as acting director for the Regional Office.
- The Yunnan members of **East Asian ROAD** and **Chinese Language Center** organized and participated in public lectures, hands-on outreach activities, and fundraising activities at several primary schools and high schools in Zhaotong County, Yunnan, China.
- NUCLIO, cohost of **Portuguese Language Office**, organized two international competitions, Dark Skies Rangers Drawing Contest and Dark Skies Rangers Video Contest, to raise awareness of light pollution and the importance of using energy-efficient outdoor lighting.
- **South West and Central Asian ROAD** is co-organizing the UNESCO regional conference on “Astronomical Heritage of the Middle East” from 13-17 Nov 2017 in Yerevan, Armenia
- **Southern African ROAD** is organizing an AstroLab workshop from 6-11 November 2017 at the National University of Science and Technology in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe. It will be followed by GTTP (Galileo Teacher Training Program) a training from 13-17 November 2017.
- **West African ROAD** conducted the OAD funded project 'Hands on Basic Space Science Training for Primary and Secondary School Teachers' (HBSST) held from June 1-3, 2017 at NASRDA-Centre for Basic Space Science and June 5-7, 2017 at River State University of Science and Technology in Nigeria

More details on the [OAD website](#)

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## MEETINGS AND VISITORS

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- Prof Cheryl Walker and Dr Davide Chinigo from the Department of Sociology and Social Anthropology at Stellenbosch University visited the OAD to discuss collaborations. Prof Walker is the DST/NRF SARCHI Chair in The Sociology of Land, Environment and Sustainable Development
- Dr Eduardo Rubio from Guatemala visited the OAD in April. Dr Rubio is a project leader of one of the OAD funded projects (Guatemalan School of Astrophysics)
- Venugopal and Makola produced the OAD's contribution to the 2017 Global Astronomy Month Blog. This is an annual global event during April of every year.
- Govender was interviewed by the BBC as part of their World Service documentary on Astronomy.
- Makola, Venugopal and Wilson attended a science communication discussion at Stellenbosch University chaired by Dr Christophe Galfarde
- McBride, Venugopal and Govender attending the Fourth Middle East and Africa Regional IAU meeting in Ethiopia (22-25 May), which included a meeting of all OAD regions
- Wilson attended the Big Data Africa Summer School in Cape Town
- Govender held several meetings during a visit to Jordan to visit the Arab World Regional Office of Astronomy for Development
- Govender took part in an OECD meeting in Paris regarding the development of a framework for assessing the socio-economic impact of research infrastructures
- McBride and Govender delivered a talk at the NRF on the work of the OAD (12 June). During that trip, several other meetings were held at NRF, DST, SAIP, ICSU Africa and HarRAO.
- Euan Broderick, a self-funded intern from the UK, continued on the work done by a previous intern on the consolidation of OAD projects information, and assisting with OAD communications.

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## UPCOMING EVENTS

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### **West African International Summer School for Young Astronomers**

31 July - 06 August 2017

Accra, Ghana

<http://www.astrowestafrica.org/about>

### **Big Data in Astronomy: A Potential Tool For Social Innovation (BARiStA) workshop**

7-11 August 2017

Flic-en-Flac, Mauritius

<https://sites.google.com/ska.ac.za/barista/>

**ITCA Colloquium - Astronomy for STEM Education**

7-11 August 2017

Bangkok, Thailand

<http://www.narit.or.th/en/index.php/itca>

**Global Hands-On Universe (GHO�) Conference 2017 with the Galileo Teacher Training Program (GTTP) International Workshop 2017**

15-21 August 2017

Western Kentucky University, Bowling Green, Kentucky, US

<http://handsonuniverse.org/ghou2017/>

**World Space Week 2017**

4–10 October 2017

All around the world

<http://www.worldspaceweek.org/theme/>

**International Observe the Moon Night**

28 October 2017

All around the world

<http://observethemoonnight.org/>

**Regional AstroLab Workshop**

6-11 November 2017

Bulawayo, Zimbabwe

<http://southernafrica.astro4dev.org/>

**Astronomical Heritage of the Middle East**

13-17 November 2017

Yerevan, Armenia

<http://unesco.aras.am/index.php>

**.Astronomy (Dot Astronomy) 9**

14-17 November 2017

Cape Town, South Africa

<http://dotastronomy9.saa0.ac.za/>

**Communicating Astronomy with the Public - CAP2018**

24–28 March 2018

Fukuoka, Japan

<http://www.communicatingastronomy.org/cap2018/>

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Suggestions or comments on the OAD newsletter? Please send us an [email](#) and let us know!

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