



OFFICE OF ASTRONOMY FOR DEVELOPMENT

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NEWS

**Annual Call for Proposals**

The 2015 Call for Proposals is now live! The IAU has earmarked €110 000 for OAD projects to be selected in 2015 and implemented in 2016. This is an open call for project proposals, with individual project grants ranging from about €500 to about €15,000.

This year a new format for the call is being used to streamline the applications process and allow for greater interaction with the OAD. The deadline for submitting applications for the Call is on 15 September 2015.

**OAD at the IAU General Assembly**

The OAD and OAO are currently hosting a joint booth at the IAU GA 2015 in Honolulu, Hawaii. For those who are attending the conference, drop by at booth 329! In the second week of the General Assembly the OAD will also be hosting the Focus Meeting on Astronomy for Development (FM20).

**OAD Review Results Published**

The external review report was extremely complimentary of OAD activities with strong recommendations for continuation and modest expansion. The full review report and management response are available on both the NRF and OAD websites.

**OAD Regional Offices**

Agreements for new regional offices are set to be established in the coming weeks (1) in Colombia for the Andean region of South America; (2) in Armenia for the South West Asian region; (3) in Portugal for the Portuguese language globally; and (4) in Jordan for the Arab region and Arabic language.

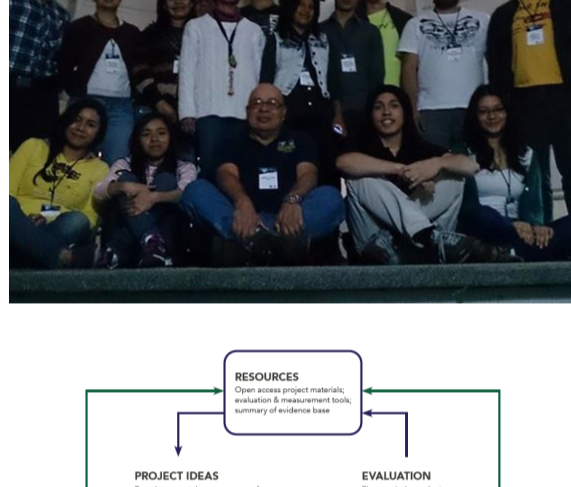
PROJECT UPDATES

**OAD Mentorship Programme**

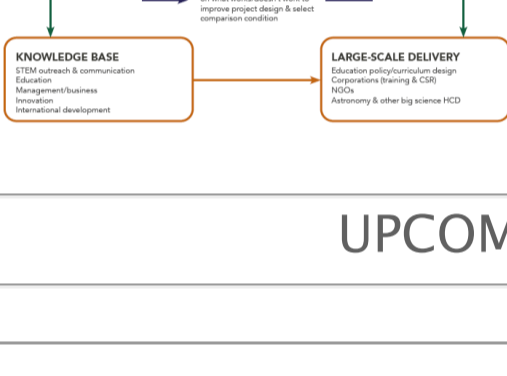
The OAD Mentorship Programme is a new OAD project to help mentors and mentees find each other, in the same country or across the world. Mentors and mentees are able to sign up online and specify their expectations and availability. Ultimately the programme will also provide participants with training materials and mentoring tools to help mentors and mentees develop mentorship skills to get the most out of the programme.

**Robotic Telescopes**

OAD Fellow Ramasamy Venugopal released a list of Robotic Telescopes and corresponding specifications. This resource is meant to facilitate greater access to telescopes and is a part of the expansion of the AstroLab project for universities.

**OAD AstroVARSITY project**

The OAD joined several partners to work towards the development of an open access textbook for astronomy. Although the process could be lengthy, there is widespread support of the principle.

**OAD Impact Cycle**

The OAD believes that in order for astronomy-for-development activities to be effective, a scientific approach is needed. The OAD Impact Cycle aims to enhance the OAD's project design, selection and delivery to support continual improvement and potential expansion.

UPCOMING EVENTS

**IAU General Assembly, August 3 - 14 2015, Honolulu, Hawaii**

The 29th General Assembly (GA) of the International Astronomical Union (IAU) is currently taking place in Honolulu, Hawaii.

At the GA important decisions are made, covering everything from establishing coordinate systems to naming celestial objects. Discussions are held on key topics that enable astronomy to move forward. The OAD will host a Focus Meeting on Astronomy for Development during this General Assembly.

**GA Focus Meeting: Astronomy for Development**

13 - 14 August: [Focus Meeting: Astronomy for Development](#). This Focus Meeting is about the global developmental impact that all aspects related to astronomy can deliver. It focuses on impact at university and research level; children and school level; and public outreach level. The interdisciplinary nature of this meeting makes it relevant to all IAU Divisions and the professional astronomy community in general.

**UNAWAVE International Workshop 2015**

Universe Awareness is hosting their 2015 International Workshop from 5 - 9 October in Leiden the Netherlands. The workshop is organised in close collaboration with the European Space Agency. For the workshop programme and to register, click [here](#).

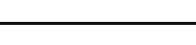
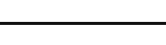
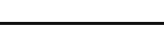
Other upcoming events:

- **Global Hands-On Universe Conference** (GHOU 2015) takes place in Honolulu, Hawaii from 4 to 5 August 2015. The conference will cover wide range of topics such as; International Year of Light, real research in classrooms, evaluation of impact, trends in science education and more. The conference is organised by the US-HOU, with the support of Institute for Astronomy – University of Hawaii.
- **The Galileo Teacher Training Program** (GTTP) international workshop will be held as a part of GHOU 2015 conference, in Honolulu, Hawaii from 8 to 9 August 2015. The two-day workshop will include wide range of topics from; enquiry based learning, asteroid search campaigns, big ideas of science in the classroom, using astronomy software in the classroom, and more. Teachers and educators are invited to register [here](#).

MEETINGS AND VISITORS

- Last June the OAD hosted the staff from the IAU Office for Astronomy Outreach (OAO). These are sister offices and this was the first important collaborative meeting between the OAD and the new staff at the OAO. The week-long visit included several meetings and visits to other facilities.
- Richard Atkinson of the British High Commission visited the OAD in April 2015, following his recent appointment as Science and Innovation Officer
- The OAD joined the SAO in hosting a delegation from Zambia concerning potential collaborations in the development of astronomy in Zambia
- The project leader of the first Guatemalan School of Astrophysics (GUASA) visited the OAD both to meet in person and to discuss possibilities for expansion of the project
- Adi Eyal from Code for South Africa (Code4SA) visited the OAD to discuss potential collaborations on using programming and data skills for development
- The OAD Director joined the IAU Executive Committee meeting, held in April 2015 in Padova, Italy, remotely, to present the work of the OAD
- OAD Project Officer attended the Africa GS5 Gender Summit in Cape Town
- The OAD was invited to present an exhibition at the DST Budget Vote in Parliament in May 2015
- OAD Director and Project Officer attended a meeting with ICSU and CODATA at the SKA Africa Project Office in Cape Town – this meeting explored potential collaborations around big data.
- OAD Director attended the Astronomy Town Meeting in Umhlanga, Kwazulu-Natal to present on the review of the OAD and engage in the discussions on astronomy in South Africa.

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



International Astronomical Union

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