

Connecting Planetary Scientists with the Public

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The Lunar and Planetary Institute (LPI)'s education and public engagement team has been conducting professional development for planetary scientists, and is exploring the types of tools that will be useful for scientists in engaging the public. In 2020 we will provide new resources and opportunities to connect with audiences, both in-person and virtually.

Planetary Scientist Engagement Institute

In March 2019, working with the Volatiles, Regolith and Thermal Investigations Consortium for Exploration and Science (VORTICES) program, we conducted the first Planetary Scientist Engagement Institute for 23 participants. The program covered a variety of education topics, activities and discussion time to allow participants to share their experiences and insights. www.lpi.usra.edu/education/planet-sci-institute

- In an evaluation survey, participants rated how well the overall institute met their goals. All (100%) of responses were positive: 72% responded "extremely well," 22% responded "fairly well," and one simply stated "I was excited to know more, by the methods you use to share planetary sciences."
- Participants were also invited to rank how useful the overall institute was for their future public engagement efforts. All responses were positive, with 72% responding "extremely useful" and 28% responding "fairly useful."



Scientists discuss how they engage audiences during a Sharing Planetary Science Seminar at LPI.

Virtual Programs for Libraries

LPI is working with NASA@ My Library to assist scientists in delivering virtual programs to libraries, using a promising model developed by Portal to the Public. Scientists will connect with the public at libraries, giving presentations and guiding activities that the librarians will help facilitate for audiences. NASA scientists and engineers are invited to participate; LPI will provide tools and techniques for engaging audiences virtually. The virtual programs will be arranged and facilitated by LPI and NASA@ My Library staff.

Sharing Planetary Science Seminars

LPI's education and public engagement team conducts hour-long seminars, which began in February 2018. Seminars included current education research, and incorporated participants' own knowledge and experiences, through guided activities and facilitated discussions. Participants attended in-person or online. In evaluation surveys, all responses (100%) have indicated that at least one aspect of the seminars was valuable. www.lpi.usra.edu/education/scientist-engagement

2019-2020 Topics

Grabbing the Audience's Attention	Presenting to Culturally Diverse Audiences
Measuring Your Impact	Writing Popular Science
Giving Successful Press Interviews	

Connections with Audiences

LPI hosts a variety of public events and invite planetary scientists to participate as speakers and as activity facilitators. Our team connects scientists with requests for presentations, both locally and virtually, and provides opportunities for scientists to conduct activities during public events.

We are exploring ways to help scientists connect with different audiences, and to partner with organizations, particularly those serving audiences underrepresented in STEM.

Resources for Public Engagement

LPI works with scientists using a digital planetarium to give audiences live tours of the solar system and beyond, highlighting select planetary features. We have also created and revised a number of activities that our scientists have used with public audiences. www.lpi.usra.edu/education/explore



Planetary scientists and LPI education and public engagement staff use LPI's planetarium to engage diverse audiences, providing tours of planetary bodies and connecting it to ongoing planetary research.

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