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Developing Astronomy Globally
Cornerstone Project
International Year of Astronomy 2009



Partners for the International Year of Astronomy 2009



Call for Proposals and Project Brief

18 March 2009

Introduction

The vision of International Year of Astronomy 2009 (IYA2009), initiated by the International Astronomical Union (IAU) and UNESCO, is to help the citizens of the world rediscover their place in the universe through the wonders of astronomy. It serves as an opportunity to highlight the impact of astronomy and basic sciences on daily life and helps people to better understand how scientific knowledge can contribute to a more equitable and peaceful society. The International Year of Astronomy 2009 is endorsed by the United Nations and the International Council of Science (ICSU).

Goals of IYA2009

The major goals of IYA2009 are to:

1. Increase scientific awareness.
2. Promote widespread access to new knowledge and observing experiences.
3. Empower astronomical communities in developing countries.
4. Support and improve formal and informal science education.
5. Provide a modern image of science and scientists.
6. Facilitate new networks and strengthen existing ones.
7. Improve the gender-balanced representation of scientists at all levels and promote greater involvement by underrepresented minorities in scientific and engineering careers.
8. Facilitate the preservation and protection of the world's cultural and natural heritage of dark skies in places such as urban oases, national parks and astronomical sites.

Developing Astronomy Globally

To celebrate IYA2009 globally, 11 cornerstone projects have been chosen as well as a number of special projects and events. One of the cornerstone projects is entitled “Developing Astronomy Globally” (DAG)

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and the focus is on developing regions of the world that may not have strong astronomy communities (www.developingastronomy.org).

The main goals of this cornerstone are to:

- Use the momentum of IYA2009 to stimulate the establishment and enhancement of regional structures/networks around the world that would focus on the development of astronomy. These structures would support current and future development work of the IAU and other programmes.
- Ensure sufficient reach and benefit of IYA2009 and other cornerstones to developing regions.

Call for Proposals

The IAU and UNESCO has earmarked a certain amount of funding to support IYA2009 related projects and activities in developing regions. This call for proposals comes via the DAG cornerstone and is thus targeted at providing seed funding and basic support in order to stimulate astronomy activities in developing regions. Note that although this funding is aimed specifically at “developing countries”, exceptions with appropriate motivation will be accepted – the main concern simply being who the beneficiaries would be. Proposals should also be in alignment with the IYA2009 goals and more specifically the DAG goals listed in this brief.

Recognizing that many countries do not have any astronomy activities at all these small grants (up to 1000 Euro) are intended to simply act as a stimulus to support organizations who are enthusiastic about getting astronomy going in their countries. Efficient use of these funds to demonstrate potential within a country would result in a greater ability to fund raise and grow astronomy activities.

Some examples of ways in which grants can be spent:

- purchase of small telescopes for outreach activities
- travel and subsistence for outreach activities such as stargazing or public talks
- astronomy training workshops for potential outreach implementers
- astronomy workshops for relevant government officials
- stimulating regional co-operation through neighbour-country interactions
- creating or strengthening astronomy networks through meetings
- facilitate the implementation of other cornerstones/special projects
- production/reproduction and distribution of astronomy education materials
- production of International Year of Astronomy banners and posters

Applications for funding are invited only via IYA2009 national nodes (each country should have an official point of contact who has been registered with the IYA2009 secretariat – full list of national nodes available on <http://www.astronomy2009.org/organisation/nodes/national/> – if your country does not have a national node, please contact us for information on setting one up).

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Funding Conditions

- 1) A country is only eligible to submit proposals if it has completed the Global Astronomy Survey and self evaluation (see www.developingastronomy.org/response.php to check if your country has completed it).
- 2) Funding will be limited to a maximum of 1000 Euro per proposal
- 3) Only one proposal per country will be selected.
- 4) The proposal has to be submitted through the country SPoC (single point of contact)
- 5) Only completed application forms will be considered
- 6) Successful applicants will be required to sign a Terms of Reference and abide by the grant's reporting criteria

Selection Criteria

The following criteria will be considered in the selection of projects.

- 1) Alignment with the goals of IYA2009 and DAG.
- 2) Quality and relevance of content.
- 3) Innovativeness and creativity of approach.
- 4) Clear timeline indicators.
- 5) Cost effectiveness of the project including a detailed budget.
- 6) Potential to raise funding from other sources
- 7) Range of stakeholder participation (e.g. partnerships with IYA2009 Cornerstone and Special projects/universities/industry/government)
- 8) Degree of impact of the project with potential for sustainability.

Proposal Evaluation

The proposals will be reviewed and evaluated by the DAG Task Group in consultation with the IAU IYA2009 EC WG.

Proposal Requirements

All proposals must be submitted in completed application forms and sent by email to ln@sao.ac.za or (failing email) by fax to +27214473639 (marked for the attention of Lolan). It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that the proposal has been received in order. All proposals received will be acknowledged by email.

Closing Date

The deadline for submitting proposals is close of business on **3rd April 2009**.

All applicants will receive feedback regarding the decision during April 2009.

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