

COMMISSION C2

COMMUNICATING ASTRONOMY WITH THE PUBLIC (CAP)

PRESIDENT
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Okpala**

Ex-Officio Members:

Lina Canas followed by Kelly Blumenthal, OAO Representative
Lucia Marchetti, IPS Liaison
Kaoru Kimura, IPS President

COMMISSION C2 WORKING GROUPS

Div. C / Commission C2 Functional WG **CAP Conferences**
Div. C/ Commission C2 WG **Communicating Climate Change Through
Astronomy**
Div. C/ Inter-Commission C1-C2-C3-C4 WG **Astronomy in Culture**

TRIENNIAL REPORT 2021-2024

by Oana Sandu Barbulete (President)

1. Activities of IAU Commission C2 During 2021-2024

IAU Commission C2 is a think/do-tank that convenes the astronomy communication community and seeds initiatives to explore new ways to communicate astronomy with the public.

It works in close collaboration with IAU Office of Astronomy Outreach (OAO), Office of Astronomy for Development (OAD) and the Office for Astronomy Education (OAE).

Our primary target audience are professional or amateur communicators of astronomy.

While the IAU OAO focuses primarily on engaging the public, IAU C2 focuses primarily on engaging astronomy communicators.

Our primary mission is to advance the profession of astronomy communication and support professionals. Our mission has several directions:

- Formalisation To endorse standards, best practices and requirements for public communication.
- Professionalisation To encourage and enable a much larger fraction of the astronomical community to take an active role in explaining what we do (and why) to our fellow citizens.
- Recognition Act as an international, impartial coordinating entity that furthers the recognition of outreach and public communication on all levels in astronomy.
- Collaboration To encourage international collaborations on outreach and public communication.

We support the overall IAU mission by supporting communicators of astronomy worldwide.

C2 depends critically on the involvement of professional astronomy communicators that can be astronomers but often are not (Public Relations specialists, graphic designers, movie producers etc) so we tend to have a higher proportion of Associates than most other IAU bodies.

During this triennium, IAU Commission C2 reached 356 members and had three Working Groups (WGs).

The Communicating Astronomy with the Public Conference WG has evolved to a functional WG starting this triennium. The CAP Conference WG is the longest, most prolific WG of the commission that continues to serve the community of professional astronomy communicators.

Two working groups were proposed during the triennium, resulting from the collaboration of the IAU Office of Astronomy Outreach (OAO) and Commission C2.

The Communicating Climate Change through Astronomy WG proposal was accepted.

The CAP Journal WG proposal was rejected by the SC of the Division, nevertheless the C2 and the IAU Office for Astronomy Outreach would like to officially state and recognize the important contributions from the C2 members to the publication, as both contributors and as peer reviewers.

Another WG proposal was considered but not formalised, the Public Engagement Training WG. Independently the C2-OAO collaborative framework was established and several trainings have been conducted. These trainings are open to all IAU C2 members and the OAO.

The OAO has a network of National Outreach Coordinators (NOCs) throughout the world, many of whom are neither professional astronomers nor IAU members but many of whom have led IAU outreach activities and/or other astronomy outreach programs in their respective countries. We continued to endorse the OAO on inviting these active members to join the IAU as Associates.

Early in 2019 C2 entered into Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) with two partner organizations: the IAU OAO and the International Planetarium Society (IPS). Through these documents the partners pledge to promote each other's activities where there are common goals and other organizational synergies. The memos also describe specific roles that one or more representatives of the partner organizations will play in each other's activities.

Among other provisions, the C2-OAO MoU specifies that the OAO IOC shall serve as an ex-officio member of the C2 OC and as a co-chair of the CAP Conference Scientific Organizing Committee (SOC); that the President of C2 shall participate in a minimum twice-yearly teleconference among the IOC, the OAO Supervising Director (SD), and the IAU Assistant General Secretary (AGS) to facilitate the exchange of ideas and information; and that the *CAP Journal*'s editorial board shall include the President of C2 or another member of the C2 OC (other than the IOC, of course).

The key provisions of the C2-IPS MoU are that C2 will appoint a member to serve on the IPS Council/Board (Lucia Marchetti agreed to serve in that role), and that the IPS will appoint a member to serve on C2's OC (Kaoru Kimura agreed to serve in that role); and that each organization will have an opportunity to organize a session or provide a speaker at the other's regular conference, i.e., the CAP Conference and the biennial IPS Conference.

During this triennium the MoU was reviewed and renewed.

The President of C2 serves as an ex-officio member of the Division C SC, and in that role he has participated in some activities of the Division SC.

Throughout the triennium, the C2 OC met on several occasions to discuss ways to engage with the C2 members and advance our profession.

We ran a survey among our members to better understand their profile, their needs and their expectations from C2 OC. The survey had 69 valid responses and the data showed the following main conclusions, with respective action items discussed by the OC and to be carried out going into the new triennium. See next chapter.

FUTURE PLANS 2024-2026

It is proposed that the commission C2 is renewed in the new triennium as it serves a critical function and meets a core objective of the IAU: fostering the development of astronomy communicators, be it coming from IAU members or the wider community.

The plans of C2 in the new triennium revolve around the conclusions of the survey we ran among our members which expressed their expectations of C2:

- Call for interest in a rubric WG, one that creates a standard by which science communication and outreach efforts are worldwide quantified and recognised. This is considered a priority of the commission going forward and we plan in the new triennium to suggest a new WG focused on this topic. As the international body in astronomy, the IAU, and specifically commission C2 is the best placed authority to develop such a global system.
- Call for interest in a training WG, one that uses the experience of existing communication professionals to train other members
- Call for interest in a WG to support other commissions' communication. This is another essential activity through which IAU C2 members could support the work of other commissions.
- Call for mentors needed
- Promote and maintain list of jobs in astronomy communication
- Email out when the CAPjournal has a new edition to further promote this product.

2. Working Group Report

2.1 CAP Conferences FUNCTIONAL WG

CO-CHAIRS: Samir Dhurde, Ramasamy Venugopal, Lina Canas

WG MEMBERS: Ángela Patricia Pérez Henao, Ilídio André Costa, Thierry Botti, Kazuhiro Sekiguchi, Jin Zhu, Helen Sim, Farseem Mohammedy, Vinicius Oliveira, Dongni Chen, Eleni Thomai Chatzichristou, Samir Dhurde, Avivah Yamani, Lina Canas, Ramasamy Venugopal, Sze-leung Cheung, J.E. Chase, Pamela L Gay, Kimberly Kowal, Arcand Lars Christensen, Ankit Bhandari, João Retrê, Niruj Mohan Ramanujam, Kelly Blumenthal

The main focus of WG activities in the current triennium were:

The finalisation of the organisation of the first virtual CAP conference, held 24–27 May 2021, under the central theme Communicating Astronomy with the Public in the Age of Global Crises. Thanks to generous support from The Kavli Foundation, which provided a grant to strengthen the IAU's public engagement programmes and scientific meetings, CAP 2021 was free to all attendees. The event included 16 plenary talks, 163 oral presentations, 4 panel discussions, 5 workshops, and 75 digital posters. The recorded talks, panel discussions and video posters can now be watched on the CAP YouTube channel. A total of 863 participants tuned in for the keynotes and plenary talks while 699 participants joined the 40 parallel sessions for oral presentations, workshops, and panel discussions. More than 550 participants viewed and interacted with the e-posters. The networking sessions were also popular with more than 500 participants making use of the one- on-one networking feature on the conference platform.

The organisation of the 2022 Communicating Astronomy with the Public Conference. Originally planned for September 2020, the conference had to be postponed due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The CAP Conference was instead held in hybrid format from 12-16 September 2022, hosted by Macquarie University in Sydney, under the theme: communicating astronomy for a better world. There were 111 participants in-person in Sydney and a further 133 online, in total representing 43 countries.

The management of the host selection process for CAP conference in 2024, which resulted in selecting Toulouse, France as the host. The organisers had received 10 Letters of Intent from which 6 teams were invited to submit a full proposal.

The organisation of the 2024 Communicating Astronomy with the Public Conference, which will take place by the end of the triennium.

The call for hosting CAP 2026 has been issued.

2.2 Communicating Climate Change through Astronomy WG

CHAIR

Canas, Lina

WORKING GROUP MEMBERS

Blumenthal, Kelly (Junior Member)

Canas, Lina

Dalgleish, Hannah (Junior Member)

Milli, Julien

Pommier, Mamta

Rector, Travis

Waller, William

WORKING GROUP ASSOCIATES

Filipecki Martins, Suzana

Following the IAU call on the international astronomy community to develop and implement specific actions to help achieve the aims of the 2016 Paris Agreement [2] on climate change, the OAO and Commission C2 wanted to strongly encourage and support teaching and communicating about the Earth's climate and the consequences of human activity, and we wanted to urge our national and individual members to address climate change in connection with their scientific, educational, outreach, and other societal activities.

With this C2 Working Group, we wanted to identify and bring together under Commission C2 the IAU members that wish to contribute with their expertise on climate change awareness by helping to identify resources for astronomers/communicators, that are willing to give talks to the general public (via Meet the IAU Astronomers! programme) and create presentations and give training to fellow astronomers.

The focus of the WG was to (1) identify and increase membership in the working group from the IAU membership as a whole; (2) identify and gather sample resources to kickstart the first

meet-ups of the WG and (3) establishing a network of collaboration outside the IAU with other advocate institutions.

The WG officially started its activity in September 2023. Following the call issued to IAU members to join the WG, only seven members have expressed an interest. Given that so far interest has been low, the WG has relied on the OAO implication and the OAO Steering Committee has not found the WG to be a priority going forward, it is proposed to discontinue this WG.

2.3 Inter-Commission C1-C2-C3-C4 WG Astronomy in Culture

CHAIR: Steven Gullberg

CO-CHAIR: Javier Mejuto

ORGANISING COMMITTEE:

Beatriz Garcia (Argentina), Steven Gullberg (USA), Duane Hamacher (Australia), Jarita Holbrook (UK), Alejandro Martin Lopez (Argentina), Javier Mejuto (Honduras), Rosa M. Ros (Spain)

WORKING GROUP MEMBERS:

The WGAC continues to grow and presently has 118 members - 69 Working Group Members and 49 Working Group Associates.

A separate 16-pages long report for this inter-commission WG is attached separately. Over this triennium this WG has evolved so much that a proposal for a dedicated commissioned was put forward.