

CAP Conferences Working Group

Report for 2020

Description

Working Group Name:

Communicating Astronomy with the Public (CAP) Conferences

Working Group Chairs: Oana Sandu, Ramasamy Venugopal, Lina Canas

Working Group OC Members: Lars Lindberg Christensen, Dennis Crabtree, Doris Daou

Working Group Members:

- Thierry Botti
- Sze-leung Cheung
- Lars Lindberg Christensen
- Dennis Crabtree
- Doris Daou
- Samir Dhurde
- Pamela Gay
- Kevin Govender
- Angela Patricia Perez
- Kaz Sekiguchi
- Helen Sim
- Jin Zhu

Rick Feinberg (current C2 President) and Pedro Russo (former C2 President) participate in the group as well.

Note:

The IAU Office for Astronomy Outreach (OAO) has been collaborating with the C2 commission and contributing significantly as co-organiser of the CAP Conferences for several years. In 2019, the C2 Commission [signed an MoU](#) with the OAO that officialised and strengthen this collaboration:

- *4. The OAO IOC shall serve as co-chair of the C2 CAP Conference Scientific Organising Committee (SOC).*
- *6. If C2 establishes a WG that involves an area where the OAO is active, the IOC or another representative from the OAO shall serve as an ex-officio member of that C2 WG OC and, if appropriate, as co-chair of any associated SOC.*
- *7. The OAO shall promote each CAP Conference to the community through the OAO Newsletter, through its network of National Outreach Coordinators (NOCs), and through its social media, mailing lists, and other promotional vehicles.*

Purpose

The main goal of this Working Group is to organise a Communicating Astronomy with the Public (CAP) Conference roughly every two years.

The Working Group:

- Organises the call for hosting the CAP Conference.
- Selects the winning bid.
- Acts as the Scientific Advisory Committee of the conference, establishing the theme and sub-themes of the conference, evaluating the abstracts and supervising the selection of invited speakers.
- The Chair/Co-Chairs are also involved in the overall organisation of the conference.

Objectives

In 2020 the Working group has accomplished the following:

- **Objectives with regards to the group itself:**

- Attracted three new members in order to increase the group's diversity of expertise;

- **Objectives with regards to the conference:**

- The WG had selected Australia as the host of CAP 2020. By February 2020 we had opened abstract submissions (<https://www.iau.org/news/announcements/detail/ann20006/>) and selected as main theme of the conference "Communicating Astronomy for a Better World: Environment, Culture and Peace" with the following sub-themes:

- Current Challenges in Astronomy Communication
- Best Practice in Public Outreach
- Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Empathy in Communicating Astronomy
- The Media's Role in Astronomy Communication
- Using Multimedia, Social Media, Immersive Environments and other Technologies for Public Engagement with Astronomy
- Astronomy and Climate Change
- Astronomy Communication to Promote Peace
- The Role of Astronomy in Bridging Cultures
- Communicating Astronomy in the Asia-Pacific Region
- Legacy of the IAU100 Celebrations
- Communicating Astronomy: the IAU Strategic Plan 2020–2030

- As the pandemic unfolded, the WG together with the LOC postponed the conference, finally setting on September 2022 as the most likely date when a face to face conference can be organised again.

- In the meantime, the WG quickly readjusted and started planning a CAP2021 Virtual edition of the conference:
 - A call was issued for a Virtual Organising Committee.
 - Research for a platform to host the virtual conference was done. In the end we selected Hopin with support from the IAU Office of Astronomy Education.
 - A theme was identified for the conference: Communicating Astronomy with the Public in the Age of Global Crises with the following sub-themes:
 - Nontraditional Ways of Communicating Astronomy During a Pandemic;
 - Communicating Climate Change through Astronomy;
 - Communicating Astronomy and Its Relevance in a Post-Factual Society;
 - Anti-Science Actions, Disinformation & Fake News;
 - Promoting Diversity and Inclusion through Astronomy Communication;
 - Current Challenges in Astronomy Communication;
 - The Media's Role in Astronomy Communication;
 - Using Multimedia, Social Media, Immersive Environments and Other Technologies for Public Engagement with Astronomy;
 - Communicating Astronomy Across Different Regions.
 - Legacy of the IAU100 Celebrations
 - Communicating Astronomy: The IAU Strategic Plan 2020–2030
 - With the help of IAU Fundraiser Genevieve Marshall, a sponsorship was attracted from the Kavli Foundation which will make the conference free to all participants
 - The WG decided also to provide grants for internet access

For the next period, the Working group will finalise CAP 2021 Virtual, start organizing CAP 2022 and issue a call for CAP 2024.

● **Objectives going forward:**

- Open abstract submission for 2021 edition, and create conference programmed with accepted entries
- Open grant call
- Select 5 invited speakers
- Train and coordinate VOC
- Develop visual identity for the conference and other promotional activities
- Update website
- Support the live 2021 event
- Evaluation of 2021 conference and recommendations for the next edition (second half of 2021)
- Decide the theme and dates of the CAP 2022 conference (October 2021)
- Collaborative work between SOC and LOC for the organisation of the 2022 edition (October 2021 – September 2022)
- Evaluation of conference and recommendations for the next edition (second half of 2022)

- Continue to improve the inclusion, diversity and equity of the conference, after having appointed a Working Group Member responsible for supervising and promoting these principles in the way the conference is organised (2021 – 2024);
- Strengthen the “green conference” principles we have started to integrate (2022);
- Open a call for the next CAP conference edition, after CAP2022 (2023);
- Start the organisation of the next CAP Conference (2023 – 2024).
- Connect the CAP Conference with the CAPjournal, in such a way that the best contributions presented at the conference are included in the CAPjournal, in a special edition or as part of the regular editions.