

THE GALILEOMOBILE PROGRAM

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GalileoMobile is an itinerant science education program that is bringing astronomy closer to young people around the world since 2009 (<http://galileo-mobile.org/>). GalileoMobile acts in areas where outreach projects are scarce or non-existent. It is a purely non-profit initiative run by 22 volunteers (astronomers, educators and science communicators) from all over the world. The team seeks to promote cultural interaction among people beyond geographical borders and spread the message that we all live under the same sky.

GalileoMobile activities take place during the itinerant projects that are organized with the support of local collaborators in selected regions and which can last few days or weeks. During these expeditions, the GalileoMobile members visit schools and villages, offering astronomy-related activities to students and teachers. The stays at schools can last one or two days, depending on the needs of the region. GalileoMobile provides the places with educational material such as telescopes, the program handbook of activities, as well as on-going support, so that educators can pursue their activities after the visits.

A very special feature of GalileoMobile is the creation of a product in each expedition (so far, a documentary movie and a photo-book).

The team members of GalileoMobile are responsible to plan and execute the projects but also raise funds. In addition, the members develop the educational material and chronicle the activities by writing entries for the program blog and social networks.

The members use a collaborative editing platform and e-mails to organize the work flow. Three times a year, the group assembles for a two-day meeting when audio and video telecommunications are also used to bring people at different sites together.

The program was initiated in late 2008 to celebrate the International Year of Astronomy 2009 (IYA2009) and was designated as a Special Project within this framework (IYA2009 final report, pages 268-282). Today, GalileoMobile is continuing the efforts undertaken during the IYA2009, being sup-

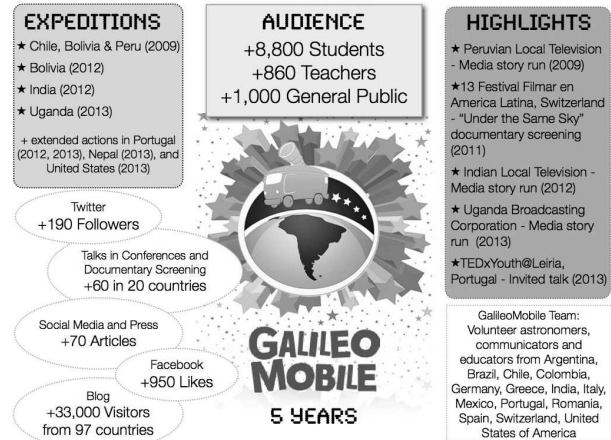


Fig. 1. Results of the GalileoMobile program in its five years of existence.

ported by “Universe Awareness” (UNAW). GalileoMobile also cooperates closely with the “Galileo Teacher Training Programme” (GTTP) and the “A touch of Universe” (ATU) project.

Over five years of existence, GalileoMobile has accomplished four projects: a two-month expedition to Chile, Bolivia and Peru in 2009; a pilot project to the Bolivian Amazon that lasted 6 days in 2012; a two-week expedition to the state of Karnataka in India in 2012; and a three-week project to the cities of Kampala and Mbale in Uganda in 2013. In total, more than 8,800 students, 860 teachers took part of GalileoMobile activities and over 1,000 people participated in GalileoMobile public events. In addition, initiatives have also been run by individual team members, who have promoted extended actions in Portugal, Nepal and United States. Table 1 shows the GalileoMobile estimated participation in each project and Figure 1 highlights the general results of five years of the program.

TABLE 1

| Project | Students | Teachers | General Public | Total |
|--------------------------------|----------|----------|----------------|-------|
| Chile, Bolivia and Peru (2009) | 1800 | 600 | 600 | 3000 |
| Bolivia (2012) | 960 | 50 | - | 1010 |
| India (2012) | 1680 | 102 | 420 | 2202 |
| Uganda (2013) | 4410 | 113 | - | 4523 |
| Total | 8850 | 865 | 1020 | 10735 |

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