

Bridges between cultures: Astronomy as universal language

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To commemorate the UNESCO International Day of Light (IDL), NASE proposes to carry out experiences of great educational interest and big impact. Although the IDL is May 16th, the activities can be performed between March and September equinoxes.

Throughout history, Astronomy marked the lives of human beings in diverse ways. The approach to the starry sky was important from the ritual and daily ceremonial point of view and occupied a good part of the activity of all people on Earth. Although we have fragments of knowledge of the peoples of the past, we know that astronomy allowed us to establish patterns that became part of universal culture: compass, clock, calendar, intangible heritage of humanity, according to the UNESCO declaration of 2007. Bridges between cultures, is the annual proposal of the Astronomy Education Network in the School (NASE) associated with the UNESCO call for May 16th, the International Day of Light. This activity aims, hand in hand with universal astronomical themes,

ancestral knowledge, discoveries of the modern era and great challenges of science dedicated to the study of the “light” that arrives from the Cosmos, to reestablish the links that identify us as a species. The idea started in 2018 and the invitation to people all over the Globe is to perform a simple activity which connects them with the nature, using astronomical instruments.

The topics along the years were: detecting the invisible, measuring the power of the Sun, working with the parallel Earth, determining the Latitude (Ros & García 2022; Figure 1) and looking for micrometeorites (Ros & García 2023; Figure 2).

Every year, more than a hundred teachers participate, several hundred reports are sent from more than 200 students (5-18 and college), who come from more than 25 countries around the world.



Figure 1. Determining the latitude, Iran, 2022



Figure 2. Looking for micrometeorites, China, 2023

The indicators that allow evaluating the impact of the activities proposals and the testimonies of participants who constitute diverse audiences that come, many times for the first time, to the discipline that, without a doubt, confirm that astronomy is a universal language, which even allows us to write our stories in and thanks to the stars.

■ References

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