

Communicating Astronomy with the Public (CAP) Conference Goes Virtual in 2021

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The next Communicating Astronomy with the Public (CAP) Conference will be held online 24-27 May 2021. The free virtual conference will provide space for science communication professionals of all fields as well as professional and amateur astronomers to discuss how to best engage the public in astronomy during a global crisis, among other topics. CAP is also an excellent opportunity to learn from peers and make new connections.

In 2021 International Astronomical Union (IAU) Commission C2, Communicating Astronomy with the Public (CAP), will host an entirely virtual edition of its long-running Communicating Astronomy with the Public Conference (CAP Conference) series. Registration for the free conference is open through mid-May.

The CAP 2021 Virtual Conference will be held 24–27 May 2021, under the central theme ‘Communicating Astronomy with the Public in the Age of Global Crises’¹.

The topics to be discussed at the conference include:

- 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 and 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.

In addition, the SOC is planning two special sessions, for which abstracts are also invited:

- Legacy of the IAU100 Celebrations;
- Communicating Astronomy: The IAU Strategic Plan 2020–2030.

The conference will feature live online sessions for different time zones as well as recorded sessions where participants will be able to watch at their convenience and later engage in live discussions with the speakers and other participants. There will also be discussion forums and networking sessions for participants and speakers to reach out and engage with each other. Attendees will also have the opportunity to add their own topics for discussion during ‘unconference’ slots.

We invite professionals in science communication, informal education, and outreach, as well as professional and amateur astronomers, planetarium and science centre staff members, journalists, public information officers, and other creatives to attend the conference to meet peers, exchange ideas and discuss best practices.

The conference is free to all attendees thanks to The Kavli Foundation, which has provided a grant to strengthen public engagement programmes and scientific meetings of the IAU. Registration is however required in order to gain access to the streaming platform.

To stay up to date with the latest information on the Virtual CAP 2021 and future news and updates, please join the conference mailing list², follow us on social media³ with the hashtag #VirtualCAP2021, or send an email to cap2021@oao.iau.org.

Notes

¹ Virtual CAP 2021 Official Website: <https://www.communicatingastronomy.org/cap2021/> and IAU Announcement: <https://iau.org/news/announcements/detail/ann21007>

² Mailing List: <https://www.eso.org/lists/listinfo/capconferences>

³ Twitter: <https://twitter.com/CAPconference> and Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/CAPconference/>



Figure 1. Logo for the CAP 2021 Virtual Conference. Image Credit: Caterina Boccato/IAU Commission C2

Box 1. Important Dates

- Grant winners announcement & accepted works notified: 5 April 2021
- Submissions of presentations & posters: 5 May 2021
- Registration deadline: 15 May 2021
- Virtual CAP 2021: 24–27 May 2021