

Best practices, in outreach and education, from the Italian National Institute for Astrophysics

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Abstract

In this talk I would like to give an overview of several best practices implemented by science communicators working in the National Institute of Astrophysics (INAF). The main goal is to discuss and identify some selected activities which can be effective in dissemination of Planetary Defense knowledge.

The main activity of INAF is to perform scientific research in various fields of Astrophysics. The Institute also contributes to advanced education, assists in the dissemination of knowledge and implements project of education and outreach of Astronomy. This work, towards general public and schools, is done thanks to the network of science communication professionals (at least one person in each INAF Institute) that have implemented different kind of approaches, using different languages and methods, in order to disseminate astronomical knowledge in the most proper way according to the different targets.

What I'll try to do is to identify, among the numerous ones, those that fit better to planetary defence arguments. One example for all is the science comedy for boys and girls between 8 -12, *Martina Tremenda nello Spazio*. Martina Tremenda is a fictional character created in 2014 by one of us (S. Sandrelli) to build a coherent narrative framework which includes **science labs, games and other informal activities organized by INAF under the collective name of Astrokids**. While Martina is a typical first name from Italy, her surname Tremenda means “naughty, mischievous, scamp, impudent” and it rhymes with “merenda”, which is the typical afternoon snack time for kids. Martina is red-haired, she has five pigtails, she is unconventional and able to build her own pedal spaceship. In addition, Martina and the spaceship are able to travel around the universe with no limit – not

even the speed of light. Some of you may recognize in Martina some of the main characteristics of Pippi Longstocking, Astrid Lindgren’s character (International Andersen Prize, 1958), while her ability to move around is inherited from *Giovannino Perdigiorno* (something as Little Johnnie Timewaster), the character created by Gianni Rodari (Int. Andersen Prize, 1970). We believe she can be helpful also in giving kids a positive example that defies some gender-related prejudices, which tend to become more and more marked among kids aged 10-13.

1. Figures



Figure 1: The actress who impersonates Martina Tremenda.



Figure 2: Children are very reactive in this kind of public engagement



Figure 3: The poster of the play