



The Moon in the Classroom - A tool to engage students on the use of new technologies in school

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Abstract

As part of the educational projects promoted by the Global Hands-on Universe Association and in partnership with scientists and AWB (Astronomers Without Borders) we hope to create an annual program, using the Moon as the research object, to foster cooperation between the science community, amateur astronomers and schools.

1. Introduction

The Galileo Teacher Training Program (GTTP) is a project devoted to train educators on the use of hands-on resources and tools for science education with special focus on Astronomy and Space Science. During the last 10 years, with the support of Global Hands-on Universe partners around the globe, thousands of teachers and students were exposed to new methodologies and modern equipments. With the event of IYA2009 we had the opportunity to attract more collaborators and partners by promoting GTTP, with support of the International Astronomical Union (IAU), as a cornerstone of IYA2009. GTTP is now integrated as an official IAU educational program under the auspices of Commission 46.

1.1 The Moon as a tool for education

Within the scope of GTTP activities in 2009 a campaign devoted to explore the Moon and its potentialities were designed. The challenges involved numerous science topics for different age levels. In association with Astronomers Without Borders we aim to keep this as an annual program and elaborate on what was already achieved, to integrate real research in classroom. Solid ground already exists as we can build on previous experiences of cooperation between schools and scientists in a program devoted to study Mars.

Another best practice case we can build on is the IASC (International Asteroid Search Campaign). Within the scope of this campaign, students help NASA scientists in the confirmation of the orbit or detection of NEOs and Asteroids. We have growing evidence that involving students in research has a boost effect in terms of creating a positive attitude towards science topics.

2. Figures



Figure 1: Countries in Europe involved in GTTP/GHOU activities

3. Summary and Conclusions

GTTP has reached nearly 100 nations having representatives appointed in all continents. We hope to use this solid ground to start implementing global efforts towards bridging the gap between real science and science that is taught in schools. We hope to create an efficient methodology to reach educators in every participating country, engaging them in the promotion of cutting edge science activities in classroom, inspiring them, as tutors, and students by building on their expectations and skills.