

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Astronomy for the Blind and Low Vision: A Unique New Community Forum

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Astronomy for Equity (A4E) has launched a unique community hub to encourage inclusion of blind and low vision (BLV) people in existing astronomy outreach programs with the aim of bringing the wonders of the Universe to thousands of BLV people worldwide. The forum brings experts in BLV astronomy together with astronomy outreach and education groups, science communicators, and teachers to share resources and methodologies for making astronomy programs accessible to the BLV community.

Through touch and other senses, blind and low vision (BLV) people can experience the beauty of the night sky and the science behind celestial objects. Even with thousands of active public astronomy outreach and education programs worldwide, however, few programs are accessible to BLV audiences. But the sky is for everyone, even if you can't see the stars.



Left: Students in a school for the blind in India learn astronomy through tactile posters and models of the Moon and constellations.



Above: Blind individuals learn about the Earth's seasons during an inclusive amateur astronomy club outreach program. Credit: Associazione Pontina di Astronomia - APA-Ian



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“There are plenty of resources available and people with experience in bringing astronomy to BLV audiences”, said Mike Simmons, founder of A4E. “They’re not widely known or distributed, though, and few outreach programs even know they can include BLV individuals. This new community hub will fix that.”

Interest in astronomy is universal, and astronomers and enthusiasts conduct outreach programs in every country. Even among dedicated astronomy outreach professionals, however, interacting with BLV individuals is unknown territory.

The Astronomy for Equity BLV Astronomy Community Hub presents various aspects of BLV astronomy, such as 3-D printed resources and activities for the BLV community. An “Ask Anything” space provides a place to learn from experts in BLV astronomy. Videos, online meetings, and mentoring provide support and encouragement. A resource repository for beginners to BLV astronomy will be available for those just getting started. The community is open to all.

Astronomy for Equity is a US 501(c)(3) tax exempt nonprofit corporation that supports organizations worldwide that use supports organizations worldwide that work to improve the lives of marginalized, isolated, and unserved communities and individuals using astronomy, the science “lab” that is accessible to everyone, providing role models, inspiration, and hope.

Contact for more information:

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Webpages:

BLV Astronomy Community Hub:
www.astro4equity.org/blv

BLV Astronomy Program Information:
www.astro4equity.org/programs/astronomy-for-blind-and-low-vision

Astronomy for Equity Homepage:
www.astro4equity.org

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