


The sky is the limit fifteen years of literacy in astronomy

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Abstract. EnDiAs is an argentine group of astronomy fans founded fifteen years ago, whose goal is the public dissemination of Astronomy through Non-Formal Education. We consider that the sky is a World Heritage and everyone should have access to its observation and study. This paper shows the activities carried out by EnDiAs to fulfill its goal.

Keywords. Non-Formal Education, Astronomy Fans

1. Our history

EnDiAs (Teaching and Public Communication of Astronomy) was founded in 2005 by Lic. Hipólito Falcoz, at the National Observatory of Cosmic Physics of San Miguel, in order to communicate astronomy within the field of non-formal education. Non-Formal Education provides the possibility of continuing to build knowledge, throughout life, by personal choice and self motivation.

This framework implies the design of activities, processes and means, based on explicit training goals, although not linked to the granting of degrees typical of the formal educational system.

In order to fulfill its goals, EnDiAs has developed a lot of activities in different contexts, among which we can mention the frequent observational outings to different locations in the province of Buenos Aires, the delivery of open courses for the entire community at San Miguel and Moreno (two towns in Buenos Aires province where our educational centers are located), the teacher training courses in General Roca, Río Negro (Escudero *et al.* 2009). and San Salvador de Jujuy, Jujuy (Escudero *et al.* 2014), the telescope construction workshops, the stands and the talks at several Book Fairs, the participation in numerous congresses, seminars, workshops, etc.

The main goal of EnDiAs is astronomy literacy, hence the emphasis on teaching courses. Currently, the courses offered to the community are: Basic Astronomy (for those who are starting on the path of discovering the universe and have the vocation of Astronomy fans), Modern Astronomy (in-depth development of topics related to the evolution of chemical elements in stars and the structure of the universe), Children's Astronomy (for Primary Education children, between 8 and 11 years old, who have a literacy base) and Cultural Astronomy (for those who are interested in perceptions, conceptions and practices related to the firmament that were and are manifested in the symbolism and in the material culture of different societies. Topics covered include positional astronomy,

archaeoastronomy, ethnoastronomy, astronomy in the visual arts, philately, vexillology, numismatics, and science fiction literature and cinema).

Although the covid-19 pandemic prevented the realization of the observational outings and face-to-face courses, EnDiAs continued its activities with the community through radio interviews and online talks, and the Basic Astronomy course was given through YouTube. Only the Telescope Construction Workshop started in 2019 was suspended, because it must be carried out in person. We hope to restart it soon.

We considered it of great importance to continue our activities for the communication of Astronomy during 2020 and not abandon our bond with the community in such difficult times, because the observation and knowledge of the stars made it possible for us to free ourselves from worries for a few moments and to find ourselves a space of freedom watching the sky, despite the forced confinement. In addition, it kept us active and prepared to continue with normal activities when the pandemic ends, which we hope will be as soon as possible.

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We proudly celebrate 15 years working on Scientific Literacy in Astronomy through Non-Formal Education, in the communities of San Miguel and Moreno, to move towards a better world.

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