



SHE IS AN ASTRONOMER



IYA2009 Cornerstone Project

She is an Astronomer: celebrating success and seeking solutions

Dr Helen Walker

STFC Rutherford Appleton Laboratory
On behalf of the International Task Group



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



THE UNIVERSE
YOURS TO DISCOVER



INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF
ASTRONOMY
2009



Why do this?

SHE IS AN ASTRONOMER



UN Millennium Development Goals, Goal 3:

Promote gender equality and empower women

IAU/UNESCO IYA2009 Goal 7:

Improve gender-balanced representation of scientists at all levels and promote greater involvement by underrepresented minorities in scientific and engineering careers



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



THE UNIVERSE
YOURS TO DISCOVER



INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF
ASTRONOMY
2009

50% of world population is female

Website primary tool

www.sheisanastronomer.org



Some contributors

Women were invited to send in their profiles,

we have received over 50 replies.

Still growing



SHE IS AN ASTRONOMER
+ + +

Supporting the resolution

Resolution B4

on

Supporting Women in Astronomy

resolves

1. that IAU members should encourage and support the female astronomers in their communities,
2. that IAU members and National Representatives should encourage national organisations to break down barriers and ensure that men and women are given equal opportunities to pursue a successful career in astronomy at all levels and career steps.

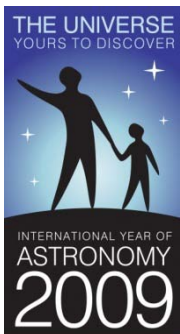


How can individual members support female astronomers?

- Be aware of attitudes, be actively inclusive and challenge inappropriate comment or behaviour
- Encourage 'good practice'
- Nominate them for awards, committees, promotions
- Mentoring, advice
- Invite women speakers

How can national organisations support women astronomers?

- Appropriate action (Baltimore charter, quotas, affirmative action, equal opportunities, flexible working, university places)
- Funding support (two-body problem, returners, childcare)
- Gather statistics
- Ensure committees have more than one female member
- Nominate them for awards
- Enforce 'good practice'



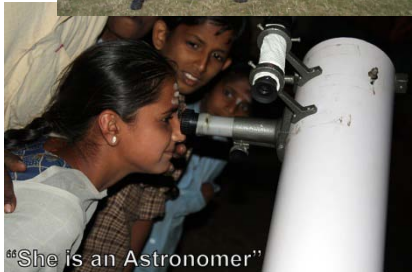


Things to remember

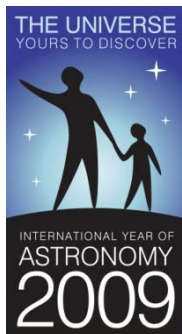
SHE IS AN ASTRONOMER



- It is not a leaky pipe – it is a labyrinth
- Lots of little problems
- One size does not fit all!



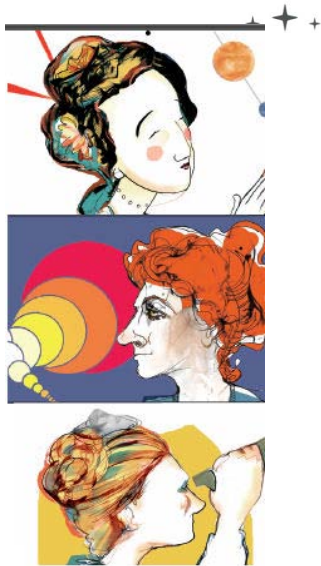
- Do not assume you know the answers
- Do not assume you know the problems
- Local answers to local problems
- Pick and mix





Suggestions from IAU

SHE IS AN ASTRONOMER



Spanish astronomers created a calendar celebrating female pioneers (now translated into English for 2010)

Romanian astronomers handed out IYA2009 badges on 8 March to women to celebrate International Women's Day.

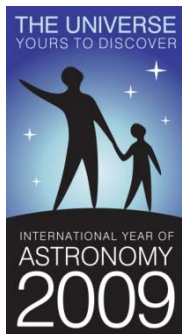
Germany and Australia are holding exhibitions celebrating female astronomers.

Italy, Belgium, Ireland and the UK held meetings featuring female astronomer speakers.

America held a workshop on inspiring young women to stay in astronomy.

Russia held a meeting to celebrate the work of their senior female scientists.

Australia and UK launched books about pioneering female astronomers.





SHE IS AN ASTRONOMER



Reaching out



Turkish astronomers visited schools to show the children that astronomers are female too.

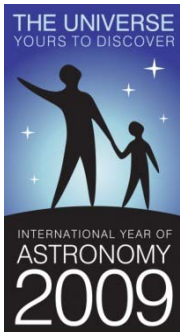
America held camps for girl scouts and photographers.

Korea included a female astronomer in their 'meet an astronomer in the classroom' programme.

India included three female astronomers in their film on astronomy to be sent to schools.

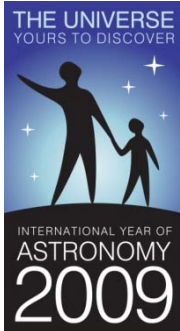
Saudi Arabia organised lectures describing the universe, especially for women.

Tunisia held a meeting on 7 March with lectures by women scientists.





SHE IS AN ASTRONOMER



London List

- Mentoring
- Training
- Give a talk/invite a female speaker
- USA held workshop to inspire women to stay in astronomy
- UK held a work-life balance meeting
- RAS created returner fellowship
- Nominate a women for an award

Keep a list on-line with a wide range of suggestions and links to resources



SHE IS AN ASTRONOMER



Climate change

From the question ‘what would support and encourage you?’

- **Good practice (and management issues)**
 - Honesty, Juno, mentoring, child care, awareness
- **Role models (keep adding new profiles)**
- **Job security (women get contracts not jobs)**
 - Career structure, openness, fair recruiting
- **Information (rights, opportunities, training)**
- **Meetings (keep having meetings, lunches)**