

# GalileoMobile, sharing astronomy with students and teachers around the world

**Sandra Benitez-Herrera and Patricia F. Spinelli**

Museum of Astronomy of Rio de Janeiro, Rua General Bruce, 586, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil  
email: [sandraherrera@mast.br](mailto:sandraherrera@mast.br)

GalileoMobile is a non-profit, itinerant, science outreach initiative that brings Astronomy closer to young people in areas with little or no access to outreach programs. We perform astronomy-related activities in schools and communities we visit and encourage follow-up activities through teacher training workshops and the donation of telescopes and other educational resources. GalileoMobile also extends its impact to a worldwide audience through deliverable products. Our work is shared worldwide through the production of documentaries, books and a wide range of Internet resources (OfficialWebsite - [www.galileo-mobile.org](http://www.galileo-mobile.org) - and Blog, Facebook page, Google+, Twitter, Youtube and Vimeo). GalileoMobile is an unprecedented initiative promoting science knowledge and the interaction beyond borders through Astronomy while raising awareness for the diversity of human cultures, conveying the message of “unity under the same sky”. We take advantage of the local astronomical culture of the visited communities to establish a dialogue between different ways of understanding the world and to share different types of knowledge (historic, scientific, anthropological...), encouraging a process of mutual learning.

GalileoMobile is composed of 13 volunteer team members and more than 30 collaborators from different countries. Several of our expeditions were initially motivated by the desire of one of our volunteers to bring GalileoMobile to their country of origin, in communities where they had witnessed first-hand the lack of access to science outreach programs. Since its creation in 2008, we have organised expeditions in Chile, Bolivia and Peru (2009), Bolivia (2012), India (2012) and Uganda (2013), Brazil and Bolivia (2014), Colombia (2014) and extended actions in Portugal (2012, 2013), Nepal (2013), Guatemala (2013), Dominican Republic (2013), the United States (2013) and Haiti (2014) reaching over 12,400 students; 1,300 teachers and 1,700 community persons. Our efforts and activities have been shared with the public in over 80 conferences and talks, including a TEDx talk. Today, we continue our efforts with the support of Universe Awareness (UNAWA) and the collaboration of Galileo Teacher Training Program (GTTP) and A Touch of Universe (ATU).

The Brazil-Bolivia (BraBo) expedition preceded the celebration of the International Year of Light (IYL2015) and thus the activities performed were also oriented to the understanding of astronomical observations as a manifestation of cosmic light. To support these efforts, the documentary “Light-Year” was recorded during the expedition which had both the aim to portray the encounter of the scientific and traditional interpretation and the presence of light through a beautiful manifestation. The BraBo expedition performed the activities in schools and communities developed during previous expeditions, and included four main innovations: (1) the implementation of GalileoMobile activities for visually impaired people; (2) the organisation of roundtable debates and Astronomy training to undergraduate students of local universities in the field of Natural Sciences, and (3) the visit to indigenous schools. Our new initiative for 2015 is the Constellation Project ([www.constellationproject.org](http://www.constellationproject.org)), which aims to

establish a South American network of schools committed to the long-term organisation of astronomical outreach activities amongst their pupils and local communities. This project has been supported by the Cosmic Light Project of the International Astronomical Union (IAU) and is being partially funded by the Office for Astronomy Development.