

INTERNATIONAL OBSERVE THE MOON NIGHT: AN OPPORTUNITY FOR GLOBAL OUTREACH. S. L. Tiedeken^{1,2}, A. Jones¹, M. Wasser^{1,2}, N. Whelley^{1,3}, S. Buxner⁴, M. Bakerman⁴, E. Joseph⁴, A. Shaner⁵, J. Fooshee⁶, B. H. Day⁷, P. Gay⁴, and V. White⁸, ¹NASA Goddard Space Flight Center, ²ADNET Systems, Inc., ³University of Maryland-College Park, ⁴Planetary Science Institute, ⁵Lunar and Planetary Science Institute, ⁶NASA Johnson Space Center, ⁷NASA Ames Research Center, ⁸Astronomical Society of the Pacific

Introduction: International Observe the Moon Night is an annual worldwide public engagement program that encourages observation, appreciation, and understanding of our Moon and its connection to planetary science and exploration. It is also a time to celebrate our personal and cultural connections to Earth’s nearest celestial neighbor. Every autumn, we ask people around the globe to observe the Moon in some way – whether that be from one’s own backyard, a local library, a large event at a university, a planetarium, or other locales. In doing so, participants become part of a worldwide collection of individuals united in admiring the Moon.

Anyone anywhere on Earth can participate by hosting or attending an event, or by joining in as individual lunar observers. By registering on the International Observe the Moon Night website, moon.nasa.gov/observe, event hosts and observers add themselves to a worldwide map of International Observe the Moon Night participants and receive additional event information and resources. Events can be registered as either public or private; public events allow everyone to see when and where the event will be held, potentially drawing larger audiences.

Global Event: Since the first International Observe the Moon Night was held in 2010, we have engaged with an estimated 1.4 million participants in all 50 U.S. states and 107 countries. It is incredible and inspiring to see how people around the world celebrate our nearest celestial neighbor and to learn how different cultures view the Moon.



Figure 1: International Observe the Moon Night 2019 participants in Damascus, Syria. Image credit: Nasser Alkadi, <https://flic.kr/p/2htghFu>

Each year, we strive to reach an even greater and more diverse global audience by reaching out to potential international partners. We focus on tailoring our efforts to best serve different audiences, whether they be national or international, so that we are better able to create a more accessible website and materials.

International Observe the Moon Night and SSERVI. SSERVI has long supported International Observe the Moon Night – since its inception, in fact. Members of SSERVI are leaders in lunar science and exploration and come from a wide variety of countries and backgrounds. This is a wonderful opportunity for all SSERVI teams around the world to participate in a global event together, and doing so will inspire a worldwide appreciation for the Moon and lunar science.



Figure 2: A popular International Observe the Moon Night social media graphic, available for public use.

International SSERVI teams are perfectly suited to increase engagement in International Observe the Moon Night around the world, as they can best share lunar science and exploration with their own communities. There are a variety of ways in which SSERVI teams can get involved in International Observe the Moon Night. We will offer a few recommendations for participating in the program, along with the benefits, and will highlight examples from recent events.

International Observe the Moon Night is sponsored by NASA’s Lunar Reconnaissance Orbiter (LRO) mission and the Solar System Exploration Division at NASA’s Goddard Space Flight Center, with many contributing partners.