



## ASI Symposium 006: Communicating Astronomy in India - 2026

### ASI SCAI-26

Inter-University Centre for Astronomy and Astrophysics, Pune  
22-24 January, 2026

Website: <https://events.iiap.res.in/event/352/overview>

Livestream: <https://www.youtube.com/@ASIOfficial>

#### 22 January 2026 : Thursday

8:30 AM - 11:30 AM	<b>Registration</b> Foyer of Chandrasekhar Auditorium  <b>Venue:</b> Chandrasekhar Auditorium		
9:30 AM - 10:00 AM	<b>Session 1 : Inauguration of ASI SCAI-26 (draft)</b>  1. Welcome by LOC Chair 2. Welcome Address by ASI President 3. Welcome Address by Director, IUCAA 4. Welcome Address by Centre Director, NCRA-TIFR 5. Recorded messages from Directors IIA and ARIES 6. About ASI SCAI-26 by SOC Chair  Samir Dhurde (IUCAA) Devendra Ojha (TIFR) S. Srianand (IUCAA) Yashwant Gupta (NCRA) Annapurni Subramaniam (IIA) & Manish Naja (ARIES) Niraj Mohan Ramanujam (IIA)		
10:00 AM - 10:30 AM	<b>Session on Prof. J.V. Narlikar and his science communication legacy</b> Ajit Kembhavi (IUCAA) , Ashish Mahabal (Caltech) and Arvind Paranjype (Nehru Planetarium), Anchor: Samir Dhurde (IUCAA)		
10:30 AM - 10:50 AM	<b>About IUCAA SciPoP</b> SciPoP Team		
10:50 AM - 11:00 AM	<b>Logistics information</b> Samir Dhurde (LOC Chair, IUCAA)		
11:00 AM - 11:20 AM	<b>Tea Break</b> Foyer of Chandrasekhar Auditorium		
<b>Session 2 : Plenary Talks</b> <b>Venue:</b> Chandrasekhar Auditorium Chair: TBD			
11:20 AM - 11:40 AM	<b>Eighty-One Years of Inspiring Astronomy: The Journey of Jyotirvidya Parisanstha</b> Atharva Pathak (Jyotirvidya Parisanstha)		
11:40 AM - 12:00 PM	<b>From Hobby to Career: Astronomy Communication and Outreach by the Astro Club, Fergusson College, Pune</b> Raka Dabhade (Fergusson College)		
<b>Session 3 : Parallel Talks</b>			
Session 3a : Amateur astronomers and organisations <b>Venue:</b> Bhaskara 3 Chair: TBD			
Session 3b : Planetarium shows and public outreach at planetaria <b>Venue:</b> ACE Lecture Hall Chair: TBD			
12:10 PM - 12:25 PM	<b>Astronomy clubs in Vadodara-History and present scenario as well as contribution of amateur astronomers</b> Atman Desai (The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda, Vadodara)	12:10 PM - 12:25 PM	<b>Interweaving Cultural Astronomy and Science Communication in Informal Science Education</b> Lal Rinkim (Mizoram Science Centre)
12:25 PM - 12:40 PM	<b>Three Decades of Celestial Outreach: Inclusive Astronomy Engagement by Astronomy Club Vadodara</b> Bhargav Joshi (The Amateur Astronomers Association of Vadodara)	12:25 PM - 12:40 PM	<b>Storytelling the Skies: Integrating Common Knowledge and Local Culture in Developing Planetarium Shows</b> Jayant Ganguly (Regional Science Centre and Planetarium Calicut)
12:40 PM - 12:55 PM	<b>Access to astronomy and open scientific thinking for underprivileged learners - Vatsalya Society</b> Kartikey Gupta (Vatsalya Society)	12:40 PM - 12:55 PM	<b>Samanta Chandrasekhar- the forgotten traditional astronomer of Odisha</b> Sudipta Saha, Regional Science Centre Bhubaneswar
		12:55 PM - 1:10 PM	<b>Live Discovery in the Dome: Using ZARTH for Real-Time Astronomy Outreach</b> Ashish Mahabal (CalTech, USA)

1:10 PM - 2:00 PM	<b>Lunch Break</b> Venue: Chittaranjan Recreation Centre						
<b>Session 4 : Posters and Demonstrations</b> Venues: Bhaskara-3 Foyer & ACE Foyer							
2:00 PM - 2:55 PM	Setting up and viewing posters and demonstrations by all						
<b>Session 5 : Parallel Talks</b>							
Session 5a : Novel hands-on activities and demonstrations Venue: Bhaskara 3 Chair: TBD		Session 5b : Outreach based on history of astronomy in India Venue: ACE Lecture Hall Chair: TBD					
3:00 PM - 3:15 PM	<b>Radio Meteor detection using Home Built SDR based Radio Telescope</b> Ram Mohan (Association of Bangalore Amateur Astronomers)	3:00 PM - 3:15 PM	<b>Astronomy awareness for laypersons from a cultural approach</b> Shylaja B S (Jawaharlal Nehru Planetarium, Bengaluru)				
3:15 PM - 3:30 PM	<b>Developing a science popularization program in a university, for diverse students in National Capital Region (NCR)</b> Avik Dasgupta (SGT University)	3:15 PM - 3:30 PM	<b>Using Calendars for Astronomy Outreach</b> Alok Mandavgane (Aryabhat Foundation, Bhopal)				
3:30 PM - 3:45 PM	<b>Hands on Astronomy</b> Jagadeeswaran Mani (Tamilnadu Astronomy & Science Society)	3:30 PM - 3:45 PM	<b>Celestial Heritage: Astronomy Outreach Through Architecture, City Planning, and the Night Sky</b> Harshit Tiwari (Yatharth Labs)				
3:45 PM - 4:00 PM	<b>Tea Break</b> Venue: Foyer of Chandrasekhar Auditorium						
4:00 PM - 5:00 PM	<b>The IAU and the astronomy communication ecosystem</b> (IUCAA Colloquium, All are welcome) Kelly Blumenthal (Office for Astronomy Outreach, International Astronomical Union, Japan) Venue: Chandrasekhar Auditorium						
6:00 PM - 7:30 PM	<b>The Brightest Pulsars In The Universe</b> (Chandra Public Lecture, All are welcome) Duncan Lorimer (West Virginia University) Venue: Chandrasekhar Auditorium						
7:45 PM - 9:30 PM	<b>Dinner</b> Venue: Chittaranjan Recreation Centre						
End of Day							

## Day 2 : 23 January 2026 : Friday

	<b>Session 6 : Plenary Talks</b> Venue: Chandrasekhar Auditorium Chair: TBD				
9:30 AM - 9:50 AM	<b>Using dark and quiet skies, astro-tourism, for public engagement</b> Dorje Angchuk (Indian Institute of Astrophysics, Hanle, Ladakh)				
9:50 AM - 10:10 AM	<b>Inspiring Learning in Underprivileged Children Through Astronomy</b> Tejpreet Kaur (IIT Kanpur)				
10:10 AM - 10:30 AM	<b>Hands on activities in understanding basics of astronomy</b> Usha Kulkarni (Independent science communicator, Dharwad)				
10:30 AM - 10:55 AM	<b>Tea Break</b> Venue: Foyer of Chandrasekhar Auditorium				
<b>Session 7 : Parallel Talks</b>					
Session 7a : Institutional astronomy communication Venue: Bhaskara 3 Chair: TBD		Session 7b : Astronomy in school education Venue: ACE Lecture Hall Chair: TBD			
11:00 AM - 11:15 AM	<b>25 Years of Celebrating National Science Day at the Giant Metrewave Radio Telescope</b> Divya Oberoi (National Centre for Radio Astrophysics, Pune)		11:00 AM - 11:15 AM		
	<b>Basic astronomy concepts with physical models</b> Ravindra Godbole (Independent science communicator)				

11:00 AM - 11:15 AM	<b>Activity-Based Demonstrations for Astronomy Outreach in Resource-Limited Environments</b> Chrisphin Karthick (Indian Institute of Astrophysics, Bengaluru)	11:00 AM - 11:15 AM	<b>Bringing Astronomy and Science to the public using "The Velogyaneshwari" Bicycle</b> Rupesh Labade (IUCAA, Pune)
11:15 AM - 11:30 AM	<b>From Local Outreach to National Recognition: A Case Study in Building a Sustainable Astronomy Ecosystem in Ratnagiri</b> Babasaheb Sutar (RPG College of Arts & Science And RVJ College of Commerce, Ratnagiri)	11:15 AM - 11:30 AM	<b>Engaging Students with Astronomy through Hands-on Activities and Science Projects</b> Aravindaraja D (Directorate of School Education)
11:30 AM - 11:45 AM	<b>Communicating the Whispers of the Universe</b> Saurabh Salunkhe (IUCAA, Pune)	11:30 AM - 11:45 AM	<b>Print vs. Digital: Analyzing the Chekhumuki Model for Astronomy Outreach in Rural and Urban India</b> Priya Shah Hasan (Maulana Azad National Urdu University, Hyderabad)
11:45 AM - 12:00 PM	<b>The scope of SCOPE: IIA's bridge to the public</b> Vikranth Pulamathi (Indian Institute of Astrophysics, Bengaluru)	11:45 AM - 12:00 PM	<b>From Cosmos to Climate Action: Connecting Astronomy to Environmental Stewardship</b> Vidhya Ramamoorthy (Naavi)

#### Session 8 : Parallel Talks

Session 8a : Using digital tools and AI for communicating astronomy <i>Venue: Bhaskara 3</i> Chair: TBD		Session 8b : Astronomy communication in regional languages <i>Venue: ACE Lecture Hall</i> Chair: TBD	
12:00 PM - 12:15 PM	<b>CosmicVarta: From Science Writing to AI-Powered Outreach</b> Robin Thomas (Cosmic Varta)	12:00 PM - 12:15 PM	<b>Communicating Science in Vernacular at Planetaria</b> Guruprasad B R (Jawaharlal Nehru Planetarium)
12:15 PM - 12:30 PM	<b>OMG : One Million Galaxies - A citizen science project to classify galaxies based on morphology</b> Atharva Pathak (IUCAA, Pune)	12:15 PM - 12:30 PM	<b>Communicating the Cosmos in Assamese: Navigating Strengths and Challenges in Regional Astronomy Outreach</b> Kamal Kumar Tanti (MSSV Nagaon, Assam)
12:30 PM - 12:45 PM	<b>VASCSC's Initiatives in Digital Resources for Astronomy Learning</b> Masoom Jethwa (Vikram A. Sarabhai Community Science Centre, Ahmedabad)	12:30 PM - 12:45 PM	<b>Regional language as a tool for astronomy outreach: Experiences from Kannada science communication</b> Pavan Gramapurohit (Indian Institute of Astrophysics)
12:45 PM - 1:00 PM	<b>Astronomy for Beginners: Designing Bite-Sized YouTube Lectures for Conceptual Learning</b> Akshat Singhal (Homi Bhabha Centre for Science Education, Mumbai)	12:45 PM - 1:00 PM	<b>Experiences of Communicating Astronomy in Regional Languages and Non-Urban India</b> Snehith (Bangalore Astronomical Society)
1:00 PM - 2:00 PM	<b>Lunch Break</b> <i>Venue: Chittaranjan Recreation Centre</i>		

#### Session 9 : Parallel Talks

Session 9a :Pseudo-science, misinformation, and promoting scientific temper <i>Venue: Bhaskara 3</i> Chair: TBD		Session 9b : Astronomy in school education (contd.) <i>Venue: ACE Lecture Hall</i> Chair: TBD	
2:00 PM - 2:15 PM	<b>The Challenges of Teaching Astrobiology: Navigating Enthusiasm, Ethics and Evidence</b> Pallavi Kajrekar (JK Centre for Astrobiology, The University of Edinburgh)	2:00 PM - 2:15 PM	<b>Teaching the shape of earth and day/night cycle at upper primary level: A 'Knowledge rich' approach to curriculum using history of science</b> T.V. Venkateswaran (IISER Mohali)
2:15 PM - 2:30 PM	<b>Dispelling the shadow of superstition during the 2025 Total Lunar Eclipse - a campaign led by IIA.</b> Prasanna Deshmukh (Indian Institute of Astrophysics, Bengaluru)	2:15 PM - 2:30 PM	<b>Science to Sustainability: Empowering Lives Through Space Science and Astronomy</b> Sachin Bahmba (Space Foundation)
Session 9c :Science and astronomy journalism <i>Venue: Bhaskara 3</i> Chair: TBD			
2:30 PM - 2:45 PM	<b>Birthing a science story</b> Anjali Marar (The Indian Express)	2:30 PM - 2:45 PM	<b>Reaching for the Sky: A Multi-Lingual and Multi-Tiered Approach to School Astronomy Outreach</b> Durva Sonawane (Fergusson College, Pune)
2:45 PM - 3:00 PM	<b>The Beyonder's Newsletter: A case study of Astronomy and Space journalism</b> Sibsankar Palit (LIFE-To & Beyond Foundation)	2:45 PM - 3:00 PM	<b>Exploring Moon Phases through Roleplay: Insights from Vigyan Pratibha Classrooms</b> Mukul Mhaskey (Homi Bhabha Centre for Science Education, Mumbai)

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Session 10 : Posters and Demonstrations</b>  <b>Venues: Bhaskara-3 Foyer &amp; ACE Foyer</b></p>			
3:00 PM - 3:45 PM	Viewing posters and demonstrations by all		
3:45 PM - 4:15 PM	<b>Tea Break</b> <b>Same venue as poster sessions</b>		
<b>Session 11 : Flash talks for posters and demonstrations</b> <b>Venue: Chandrasekhar Auditorium</b> <b>Chair: TBD</b>			
4:15 PM - 5:30 PM	<b>Flash talks</b> 1 minute per poster and demonstration		
5:30 PM - 6:00 PM	<b>Open Session</b>		
7:30 PM - 9:30 PM	<b>Dinner</b> <b>Venue: Chittaranjan Recreation Centre</b>		
9:30 PM - 11:00 PM	<b>Special Skywatch</b> <b>Venue: IUCAA Kund</b>		
End of Day			
<b>Day 3 : 24 January 2026 : Saturday</b>			
<b>Session 12 : Plenary Talks</b> <b>Venue: Chandrasekhar Auditorium</b> <b>Chair: TBD</b>			
9:30 AM - 9:50 AM	<b>Audio Overviews in NotebookLM as a tool for making Multi-Lingual Podcasts: Enabling astronomy outreach in regional languages</b> Yogesh Wadadekar (National Centre for Radio Astrophysics, TIFR, Pune)		
9:50 AM - 10:10 AM	<b>Breaking the Chain of Misconceptions: Impact of Teacher Training Workshops on Astronomy Understanding</b> Moupiya Maji (Formerly at IUCAA, Pune)		
10:10 AM - 10:30 AM	<b>Reimagining Astronomy Education with the Spacetopia Learning Ecosystem</b> Mila Mitra (STEM & Space)		
10:30 AM - 10:55 AM	<b>Tea Break</b> <b>Venue: Foyer of Chandrasekhar Auditorium</b>		
<b>Session 13 : Parallel Talks</b>			
<b>Session 13a : Inclusive, equitable, and ethical practices</b> <b>Venue: Bhaskara 3</b> <b>Chair: TBD</b>			
11:00 AM - 11:15 AM	<b>Bringing the Universe Closer: A Journey of Inspiring Curiosity in Villages and Tribal Regions through Astronomy Outreach</b> Abhishek AS (Gravity Science Foundation, Chamarajanagar)	11:00 AM - 11:15 AM	<b>Bridging Science and Society: Astronomy Education through Theatre</b> BS Shubha (Indian Institute Of Astrophysics, Bengaluru)
11:15 AM - 11:30 AM	<b>Astronomy communication for diverse communities</b> Syed Najamul Hasan (Maulana Azad National Urdu University, Hyderabad)	11:15 AM - 11:30 AM	<b>Designing Wonder: Transforming School Astronomy through Experiential Engagement</b> Sonal Thorve (WOW Astronomy)
11:30 AM - 11:45 AM	<b>Promoting Women-led Astropreneurship: Perspectives from the "C-STERC Women AstroPreneurs' Collective" (CWAPC)</b> Anupama Pradeepan (C-STERC Techno Science, Coimbatore)	11:30 AM - 11:45 AM	<b>GMRT Online National Science Project Competition &amp; Exhibition</b> Nilesh Chhadawelkar (Indian Institute of Knowledge, Pune)
11:30 AM - 11:45 AM	<b>Rural Libraries as astronomy centres - IIA's experiment with 5888 Arivu Kendras</b> Yashaswini K S (Indian Institute of Astrophysics, Bengaluru)	11:30 AM - 11:45 AM	<b>Integrating Experiential Astronomy and Amateur Radio Communication in School Education: A Multidisciplinary Model for Public Engagement and Scientific Temper</b> Mahesh MB (Excel Public School, Mysuru)

Session 13c : Large scale campaigns, building networks and communities <b>Venue: Bhaskara 3</b> Chair: TBD		11:45 AM - 12:00 PM	Stars Over Hills: Empowering Teachers and Students through Astronomy Outreach in the rural school communities of Uttarakhand Aasheesh Raturi (DIBNS, Dehradun)			
11:45 PM - 12:00 PM	<b>IIA COSMOS-Mysuru: How to build a district-wide Astronomy education and outreach program from the ground up</b> Amoghavarsha N (Indian Institute of Astrophysics, Bengaluru)	Session 13d : Using dark and quiet skies, astro-tourism <b>Venue: Bhaskara 3</b> Chair: TBD				
12:00 PM - 12:15 PM	<b>Elevating Amateur Astronomy: Science Projects for Sustained Engagement</b> Aniruddha Deshpande (Jyotirvidya Parisansth, Pune)	12:00 PM - 12:15 PM	<b>Dark Skies and Sustainable Livelihoods: Institutionalising Astro-Tourism through Policy and Capacity Building in the Andaman &amp; Nicobar Islands</b> Anupama Pradeepan (C-STERC Techno Science and Open Space Foundation)			
12:15 PM - 12:30 PM	<b>Propagating Scientific Temper Across India: The Outreach Activities of Aryabhat Foundation</b> Kartikey Dixit (Aryabhat Foundation, Bhopal)					
<b>Session 14 : Posters and Demonstrations</b> <b>Venues: Bhaskara-3 Foyer &amp; ACE Foyer</b>						
12:15 PM - 1:00 PM	Viewing posters and demonstrations by all					
1:00 PM - 2:00 PM	<b>Lunch Break</b> <b>Venue: Chittaranjan Recreation Centre</b>					
<b>Session 15 : Breakout Sessions</b> <b>Venues: There different venues</b>						
2:00 PM - 3:00 PM	<b>Breakout Session 1: Topic TBD</b> <b>Venue: Bhaskara 3</b>					
2:00 PM - 3:00 PM	<b>Breakout Session 2: Topic TBD</b> <b>Venue: MVS Lecture Hall</b>					
2:00 PM - 3:00 PM	<b>Breakout Session 3: Topic TBD</b> <b>Venue: ACE Lecture Hall</b>					
<b>Session 16 : Plenary Talks</b> <b>Venue: Chandrasekhar Auditorium</b>						
3:10 PM - 3:30 PM	<b>Summary of breakout sessions by moderators</b>					
<b>General Discussion and the Way Forward</b>						
3:30 PM - 4:45 PM	1. ASI Vision Document & the ASI POEC 2. General Discussion	Niruj Mohan Ramanujam (SOC Chair & Indian Institute of Astrophysics) Moderated by Niruj & Div?				
4:45 PM - 5:15 PM	<b>Feedback and Closing Session</b>					
5:15 PM - 6:00 PM	<b>Tea Break</b> <b>Venue: Foyer of Chandrasekhar Auditorium</b>					
7:30 PM - 9:30 PM	<b>Dinner</b> <b>Venue: Chittaranjan Recreation Centre</b>					
End of Day						
<b>Day 4 : 25 January 2026 : Sunday</b> <b>(GMRT Trip)</b>						

6:45 AM	Assemble outside NCRA Reception
7:00 AM	Depart for GMRT
Around 6:00 PM	Arrive at NCRA, Pune
End of Symposium	