

# Astronomical Activities in Japan: NOC report

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**Abstract.** The astronomical activity in Japan is quite impressive in all aspects. The role of the national outreach contact/coordinator (NOC) would be to engage them with the international activities. At the NameExoWorld 2015 campaign, many amateur astronomers were included, but the citizens weren't. We have to include more citizens at the future activities using additional method.

**Keywords.** Communicating Astronomy with the Public, Public observatories, NameExoWorlds campaign

## 1. Overview of Astronomical activity in Japan

Japanese people have been engaged the astronomical activity very well. There are more than 300 planetariums, and also are many public observatories with star gazing telescopes having larger than 1.0 meter aperture (Table 1). These facilities are very good place to meet together with astronomy fans. Every research institutes make efforts in educating and popularizing astronomy and space sciences. Two domestic monthly commercial-based astronomy magazines are published, as well as the other science magazines written in Japanese. Under such situation, the role of NOC would be concentrate to connect them with the international activities.

**Table 1.** The list of telescopes in Japan having larger than 1.0 meter aperture whose main purpose is public star gazing.

aperture (cm)	Observatory name	Nickname	city/prefecture and area
200	Nishi-Harima <sup>1)</sup>	Nayuta	Hyogo, Kansai
160	Nayoro <sup>2)</sup>	Pirka	Nayoro, Hokkaido
150	Gunma		Gunma, Kanto
130	Sendai	Hitomi	Miyagi, Tohoku
130	Kohyama <sup>3)</sup>	Araki	Kyoto, Kansai
115	Ginga-no-mori		Rikubetsu, Hokkaido
113	Anan		Anan, Tokushima, Shikoku
105	Misato		Wakayama, Kinki
105	Ishigakijima <sup>4)</sup>	Murikabushi	Ishigaki, Okinawa
103	Saji Astro park		Tottori, Chugoku
101	Bisei		Okayama, Chugoku
100	Toyama		Toyama, Hokuriku
100	Hoshino Bunka Kan		Yame, Fukuoka, Kyushu

*Notes:*

<sup>1)</sup> Owned by University of Hyogo. <sup>2)</sup> Owned by Hokkaido University.

<sup>3)</sup> Managed by Kyoto Sangyo University. <sup>4)</sup> Partly managed by National Astronomical Observatory of Japan.

## 2. NameExoWorld campaign

The NameExoWorld campaign held on 2014–5 was the first such case. In order to get over the language barrier, we set up the instruction web pages <sup>†</sup> for every procedure. We also wrote many articles, made many lectures and so on. For details, refer Usuda-Sato *et al.* (2018).

In the name proposal phase, our project made a excellent job. Many Japanese astronomy clubs made their registration. In the IAU directory for world astronomy <sup>‡</sup>, among total 699 organizations, Japanese clubs account for 166 (about 23 %). The proposed names with the Japanese language was quite popular. As a result, Japanese clubs got 4 official ExoWorld (star and/or exoplanet) names which were greatest number in the world.

On the other hand, in the public voting process, we got very small number of vote from Japanese citizens. Among 573,242 valid votes, there were only 5,411 votes (0.94%) from Japan. For example, in Syria and Greece, their official languages uses non-Roman alphabet, but their voting rate is higher than Japan, it shows we did not receive enough attention.

It was because we could not reach to the general public. We have used new media (e.g. twitter) as well as appealing at the traditional mass media, but it was not so effective, possibly because we could not include the influencer. When the vote results were announced, the newscaster commented that she wanted to vote if she have known it.

We really hope that we can make more effective strategy at the next occasion. We would like to exchange the experiences with other NOCs in order to learn their methods.

## References

Usuda-Sato, K., Iizuka, R., Yamaoka, H., & Handa, T. 2018, *Communicating Astronomy with the Public Journal*, 23, 13

<sup>†</sup> <https://tenkyo.net/exoplanets/wg/index.html>  
<sup>‡</sup> <https://directory.iau.org/directory>



**Figure 1.** The logo of NOC Japan.