

The Astro Society 2026: Astronomy@250

August 27-29, 2026

A virtual conference celebrating 250 years of
astronomy in the United States

Abstract Submission Guidelines

Astro Society 2026: Astronomy@250

The Astro Society strongly recommends that you read these Abstract Submission Guidelines prior to submitting your Abstract.

Proposals for abstracts must be submitted via our online system, and not via regular mail or email. The Program Committee will rate submissions based only on the information you provide, so please complete the abstract form carefully. Abstract submissions will be accepted through June 9, 2026, 11:59 pm PT, and reviewed right after.

When you submit an abstract, you will receive a confirmation email from meeting@astrosociety.org. Check your spam folder if you do not see the confirmation email after submitting.

Submitting an abstract is NOT the same as registering for the conference. All approved lead and co-presenters will still need to register for the conference. Those who decline to register will have their session or presentation removed from the final conference program, though you can request a co-presenter to assume the lead presenter role as long as they don't already have a separate approved abstract as lead presenter in the program.

Abstract submission *character limits*:

- Title – 100 characters (including spaces)
- Abstract - 2000 characters (including spaces)

Abstract Submission Presentation Formats

50-minute Interactive Panel Discussion:

Panels should be made up of at least 3 individuals presenting a thought-provoking discussion. Panels made up of a variety of backgrounds are encouraged.

Panels should include the audience in the discussion through tools like the session chat, polls, feedback, or other audience engagement tools. The final 10 minutes will be reserved for Q&A.

50-minute Interactive Workshop:

An Interactive Workshop must be designed to showcase an interactive engagement experience, placing conference participants in the role of active learners. Use audience engagement tools like the session chat, breakout rooms, Zoom annotations, polls, word clouds, game-based learning tools, etc.

Poster Presentation:

Poster Presentations will be grouped into Poster Session blocks in the conference schedule. Posters will be available throughout the meeting, with specific Poster Sessions available for presenters to give a 1-minute introduction followed by time for discussion.

The number of poster presentations in each Poster Session block will depend on the number of submissions.

Submission Topics:

When entering your abstract information, you will be asked to choose one of the conference topics your abstract most closely fits.

1. Ancient Skies, New Nation

Astronomy, culture, and knowledge systems at the founding of the United States

Explores astronomy at the time of America's founding, and continues to shape our understanding and the questions we ask — including Indigenous sky knowledge, celestial navigation, timekeeping, calendars, and scientific sense-making. This strand invites sessions focused on perspectives from cultural astronomy, history of science, and early scientific practices.

Who this is for: Informal and formal educators, science communicators, historians, cultural astronomers, Indigenous scholars, science historians.

2. People Who Changed Astronomy

The individuals, communities, and collaborations behind American accomplishments and discovery

Examines the diverse people and partnerships that transformed astronomy in the United States — including Indigenous observers, immigrant contributions, the African diaspora, and international collaborations driving modern astronomy. This strand invites sessions focused on how collaboration across cultures and nations drives discovery. Topics include biography, identity, access, and the global nature of scientific progress.

Who this is for: Informal and formal educators, historians, DEI scholars, science communicators, sociologists of science.

3. Building the Tools of Discovery

Observatories, technology, and citizen science that change our understanding of the Universe

Highlights the instruments, institutions, missions and innovations that have powered astronomical discovery for the past 250 years — from ground-based observatories to space missions and public participation in science. This strand invites sessions that connect the history and current technological advancement to scientific breakthroughs and public engagement.

Who this is for: Informal and formal educators, science communicators, astronomers, engineers, observatory leaders, mission scientists, citizen science leaders.

4. The Next 250 Years

Future discoveries, space exploration, and the evolving space economy

Focuses on what comes next — emerging facilities, space missions, the low-Earth-orbit space economy, and the future of human exploration. This strand invites sessions exploring how astronomy and space science will shape society over the next 250 years and what knowledge and skills will be needed. We welcome Indigenous views, Afrofuturism, Gene Roddenberry-inspired worlds and more.

Who this is for: Informal and formal educators, science communicators, astronomy researchers, industry professionals, NASA scientists and specialists, policy experts, futurists, workforce development leaders, science fiction writers.

5. Teaching the Cosmos

Transforming astronomy education for a changing world

Examines the history and current state of astronomy education and public engagement, including the evolving role of K-12 schools, informal learning environments, planetariums, mass media, and technology. How is astronomy currently taught and experienced? What does the future look like? This strand invites sessions focused on novel and successful ways to involve learners in astronomy, the application of new technologies, curriculum design, culturally responsive teaching, and preparing all learners for a global STEM future.

Who this is for: Informal and formal educators, science communicators, curriculum designers, education researchers.

Target Audience(s)

You will be asked to identify which type of audience(s) you are targeting or have targeted with the work described in your abstract. You may choose more than one type of audience, or just the one type most appropriate, from the following:

- College teachers & students
- K-12 teachers & students
- General public
- Children & families
- Amateur astronomers
- Informal educators & visitors

On Submitting Multiple Abstracts:

For this conference, you may be the *lead presenter on just one abstract, not counting Poster Presentations*. We may receive more good abstracts than the Meeting can accommodate. Thus the Program Committee reserves the right to decline some abstracts or request a different format for the proposed workshop or panel. There is no limit on the number of abstracts an individual may be listed as a co-presenter. Collaboratives are welcome to submit more than one abstract on related content, as long as each abstract has a different lead presenter and each abstract has sufficiently clear and distinct content. Each abstract will be considered on its own merit.

Conference Proceedings

The conference will publish proceedings of all presentations through the ASP Conference Series to provide a record of the conference and a ready reference for those attending, as well as those unable to attend. It also provides a publishing opportunity for those making a presentation during the conference.

After the virtual conference, all presenters are eligible to have their work published in the ASP Conference proceedings volume. Instructions and deadlines will be shared after the conference. All attendees will receive access to the digital version of the conference proceedings.