



## “EXOWORLD WALK” A LEARNING EXPERIENCE ABOUT THE LIFE ON EARTH AND IN THE UNIVERSE

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# ExoWalk

### ABSTRACT:

“ExoWorld Walk” project is delivering the Astronomers For Earth message “There is no planet B!” to the Romanian public in an innovative “in situ” learning experience that raises climate change awareness through connections between Nature and the Universe and reflections on why Life should be celebrated. The “ExoWorld Walk” Project was selected to be funded by the Europlanet Society in the 2021 call of the Public Engagement Funding Scheme. In the Botanical Garden of Cluj-Napoca we suggested to the visitors a new walk path, with five stops, each stop designed to link the Nature elements at that specific location to the Nature on Earth and since the Earth is part of the Universe inspire reflection upon how miraculous Life in the Universe really is. At each stop we interact with the visitors through a poster, hence we allow people to learn at their own pace, regardless of any COVID restrictions. For those curious for more we have a website ready and a workshop and even guided tours. We started from the idea that sometimes a simple change of perspective can deepen understanding and we would like to present here the effectiveness and the multiple benefits of our approach.

### ABOUT EXOWORLD WALK:

Our project aims to give the Romanian public an interdisciplinary experience that combines learning about astrobiology with increasing awareness about the importance of protecting our planet. We designed a walk path that seen from above resembles to the Big Dipper constellation. and along the walk path we placed a poster exhibition, all to inspire the public to reflect upon the miracle of Life in the Universe...The poster exhibition explores 5 main astrobiology themes: Earth and Life are Unique, When Life Appeared, Diversity of organisms, Formation of planetary systems and Ingredients of Life.

### EXOWORLD WALK Project &

#### Public Engagement:

The ExoWorld Walk poster exhibition nested within the different displays of elements of the Botanical Garden gives the public the opportunity for self motivated learning either by actually learning new content or by connecting the knowledge they already have into a new content. Either way, this “in situ” learning method facilitates contact with a relatively new scientific discipline for the Romanian public in a flexible fun way that people would engage in effortlessly.

### EXOWORLD WALK Promotes

#### Career Diversity:

We match the theme of each poster with the scientific career(s) that search for answers in that particular area of interest.



### Discussion & Conclusions:

Our approach has been effective in attracting the public of all ages to explore the proposed astrobiology themes. We surprised children asking their parents to read to them so they could use the interactive cubes to answer the challenge. Surprisingly effective with groups of people and families, an opportunity for the public to be outdoors exploring new knowledge in their own way. To measure the effectiveness of the learning itself we invited the public to share with us on our website, however the online participation was considerably less.

### Take Away Message:

**ENGAGE THE PUBLIC TO COMBINE LEARNING WITH THE OUTDOORS, TO CONNECT WITH NATURE AND THE UNIVERSE IN A WAY THAT INVOLVES ALL THEIR SENSES.**

### Benefits of our Approach:

The benefits of our approach are multiple and address different aspects of the project:

1. Ease to address wide ranges of differences of age, background, etc within the targeted public and adapt the learning process to be suitable for all.
2. Flexibility of the learning process which allows the participant to delve into the proposed Astrobiology themes as deep as they can or want.
3. Igniting curiosity with the exhibition which is meant to be only the starting point of the learning process.
4. A simple way of placing the participant at the steering wheel, hence the learning process and the experience itself is centred on the person.
5. Facilitating interdisciplinary connections: the real world to the knowledge learned, the previous knowledge to the new one.
6. Activating an exploration attitude such that all the awareness messages come as a discovery rather than a dooming warning.
7. Enabling people to connect or reconnect at a deeper level with the Nature and hence the Universe by thinking and caring about Nature, understanding it and acting to protect it.



EXOWORLD WALK Project Impact:



Target 3.4 Target 4.3, 4.7 Target 17.16 Target 13.3

Project financed by:



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