

Teaching the Known Universe

Tuesday, 2 September 2025 13:00 (20 minutes)

Planetariums are one of the most crucial tools for teaching astronomy. It allows us to recreate a night sky anywhere at anytime so students can make observations and participate in the practice of science. It allows us to transport people to different places in the universe and offers spatial context to help people understand complex topics. Humans are also diverse in their identities and what will “hook” one person’s interest will inspire a yawn from someone else. Luckily, astronomy overlaps with so many other aspects of the human experience from other STEM subjects to art, law, agriculture and more. As planetariums have evolved, it has allowed us to more easily make those connections to other topics. This presentation will explore how planetariums are effective tools for teaching astronomy and how they have evolved to be sandboxes that allow students to explore everything we know about in our universe.

Primary author: SCHMOLL, Shannon (Michigan State University and International Planetarium Society)

Session Classification: Keynote Speaker

Track Classification: Informal Astronomy Education