

Adler Planetarium Announces the Return of Award-Winning Temporary Exhibition *What Is a Planet?* Opening February 16

CHICAGO – February 6, 2018 –Twelve years after its reclassification to dwarf planet, Pluto is still plagued by its lack of true planet status. If Pluto isn't a planet, then what is? What made the International Astronomical Union reclassify Pluto in 2006? On February 16, Adler's award-winning temporary exhibition, *What is a Planet?* will be returning to continue the conversation.

The accepted definition of a planet has changed quite a bit over the past 500 years. At various times, the term has been used to describe the Sun, the Moon, and asteroids. And would you believe that Earth—the most familiar planet of all—hasn't always been considered a planet?!

So how do you define a planet? As scientists learn more about how the Universe works, they make discoveries that don't fit neatly into old ways of thinking. In *What is a Planet?*, guests will discover that new approaches and perspectives in science can change how we define worlds near and far.

The exhibition addresses the most compelling questions in astronomy, like why Pluto is no longer a planet, in a fun, dynamic way, and demonstrates how new approaches and perspectives in science can help change our view of the Universe. In the exhibit, guests explore artifacts from the Adler's collections that show how "planets" aren't what they used to be, witness how astronomers and the media reacted to Pluto's reclassification in 2006, and discover what it requires to be a planet today.



What to Expect:

- Witness how astronomers and the media reacted to Pluto's demotion in 2006.
- Learn what the current definition of a planet is and hear what Adler astronomers think of this current definition.
- Voice your opinion about Pluto alongside skeptics and space enthusiasts through an interactive voting poll in real-time.
- Explore artifacts from the Adler collections that illustrate the ever-evolving definition of a planet.

What is a Planet?, which had its first run at the Adler Planetarium from March 19, 2016-January 8, 2017, was awarded first prize in the 2016 British Society for the History of Science (BSHS) Great Exhibitions competition in November 2016. Qualifying exhibits needed to address the history of science, technology, or medicine, and were judged on audience experience including originality, clarity, design, and learning.

This temporary exhibition, which is included with general admission, will be open to the public February 16, 2018 through October 21, 2018.

For more information, please visit: <http://www.adlerplanetarium.org/events/what-is-a-planet>. Photos can be provided upon request.

Presented by Bank of America.

About the Adler Planetarium:

The Adler Planetarium—America’s First Planetarium—is more than a museum; it is a laboratory, a classroom, and a community exploring the Universe together. Each year, almost 600,000 visitors experience the museum’s interactive exhibitions, live planetarium shows, hands-on, minds-on STEM education programs, and world-class collections. Founded in 1930 by Chicago business leader Max Adler, the Adler Planetarium is a recognized leader in public engagement. The museum's scientists, historians, and educators inspire the next generation of explorers and invite you to explore space with us.