

Adler
PLANETARIUM



2023: A LOOK BACK

The cover image depicts the Cosmic Cliffs in NGC 3324 as captured by the JWST; image courtesy of NASA, ESA, SCA, and STScI.



Photo Credit: Tim Reilly

2023: A LOOK BACK

Science is better when everyone does it together. That's why—here at the Adler Planetarium—we've spent 2023 working to break down the barriers that keep people out of scientific spaces. Our unique blend of in-person and digital experiences has created a museum where people of all ages, backgrounds, and abilities can share their perspectives, explore the universe together, and practice skills they can carry with them into any profession or pursuit they choose.

Over the last year, we've connected millions of people to one another and to the wonders of our universe: inside our historic Art Deco museum building with interactive exhibits and immersive sky shows, around our city through community stargazing events, and via digital programming accessed across the world.

We are creating a world where everyone can access our community and feel welcome once they're in it. A world where differences are celebrated; where art and science converge; where every problem is solvable and everyone knows they have what it takes to help solve it.



STUDENTS AND SCHOOL EXPERIENCES

Every year, the Adler invites thousands of Chicagoland young people to participate in an array of immersive STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts, mathematics) opportunities. These range from field trips that give students the VIP treatment, to specialized cohort programs where teens lead scientific research and civic advocacy.

SCHOOL EXPERIENCES

Throughout 2023, the Adler Planetarium has given students and instructors everywhere a first-class experience in space visualization and science education. In-person field trips continued to offer students the full museum experience, with unimpeded access to sky shows, exhibits, and *Community Design Labs* on Tuesdays and Thursdays during the school year.

Virtual Learning Experiences (VLE) continued to reach a broad geographic audience while maintaining an emphasis on sparking curiosity and building authentic connections. Our virtual experiences are now fully supported for Spanish-speakers, with instruction and written materials available in English and Spanish.

In 2023, the Adler's school experiences saw strong attendance for both in-person field trips and *Virtual Learning Experiences*:

- 22 VLE school groups with 662 student participants.
- 434 in-person groups 28,479 total guests (23,438 students and 5,041 teachers and chaperones).





YOUTH ENGAGEMENT AND LIGHT POLLUTION RESEARCH

This year, Adler teens explored new ways to study light pollution, supported one another in research and activism, and advocated for civic change through groundbreaking experiments and artistic expression.

Participants in *Far Horizons Teens* used GONet cameras—designed and built with the help of volunteers and students from previous years—to capture observations in and around the Palos Preserves Dark Sky Reserve, using data to triangulate the locations of light pollution affecting this internationally-protected area.

2023 also saw the introduction of *Far Horizons Teen Captains*, a new addition to our array of educational programming. Consisting solely of former *Far Horizons Teens* participants, Teen Captains support younger participants in articulating research goals, testing scientific equipment, and devising experiments to be carried out by the cohorts of *Far Horizons Teens*.

Finally, YOLO (Youth Organization for Lights Out) partnered with Enlace Chicago and Little Village Lawndale High School on a major new project, using photography to document, reflect upon, and communicate issues of concern about light pollution in their communities. This project culminated in a new permanent installation in our *Chicago's Night Sky* exhibit, along with an event in recognition of their efforts. This exhibit documents the experiences of YOLO participants and outlines strategies for reducing light pollution.





SKY OBSERVERS HANGOUT

#LOOKUP

Partial Solar Eclipse
October 2023
Saturday,
October 14, 2023
10:15am CDT



PUBLIC OBSERVING

Adler Public Observing helps people connect to the sky, both here in Chicago and around the globe. Through a variety of programming, in-person and digital, we invite people to explore the cosmos through naked-eye and telescope observing.

DOANE OBSERVATORY

The Adler's Doane Observatory houses the largest publicly-accessible telescope in Chicago and is a centerpiece of the Public Observing experience. With our physical museum open for Wednesday evenings—and free general admission for Illinois residents—there's never been a better opportunity for night-time observing. The Doane invites everyone to gaze into the night sky each week, weather-permitting.

'SCOPES IN THE CITY

'*Scopes in the City* continues to be a cornerstone of Public Observing programming, bringing our expert staff and equipment to city parks, libraries, and locations throughout Chicagoland and the state of Illinois for free stargazing events. 2023 '*Scopes in the City* events were held across the city and suburbs, including places like Humboldt Park, Roseland, Bronzeville, Oak Park, and more.

SKY OBSERVERS HANGOUT

A major highlight of the Adler's digital programming, *Sky Observers Hangout* is an original YouTube series where Adler astronomy educators discuss notable celestial events—eclipses, meteor showers, conjunctions—with people across the world. In 2023, Adler educators broadcasted six episodes on a range of topics, garnering 36,000 views worldwide.





MUSEUM EXPERIENCES

The Adler creates innovative spaces where people of all backgrounds can connect and explore together. From *Community Design Labs* to our immersive sky shows, we encourage our guests to ask big questions about our universe, instilling a sense of curiosity that lasts long after their visit.

CHASING ECLIPSES

A new addition to our history galleries, *Chasing Eclipses* invites guests to discover how people past and present have predicted when and where to stand in the narrow corridor of totality—and prepare to chase down a total solar eclipse for themselves. Featuring artifacts from the Adler's collection like a tellurian, spectroscope, and pocket orrery, *Chasing Eclipses* helps guests understand how solar eclipses occur, and prepares them to safely view eclipses themselves.

COMMUNITY DESIGN LABS [CDLS]

The Adler's *Community Design Labs* are spaces where anyone can gather, explore, and experience the thrill of discovery first hand. Using visual arts, hands-on activities, experiments, and open-ended play, our *CDL* educators facilitate a delightful mix of space science and fun.

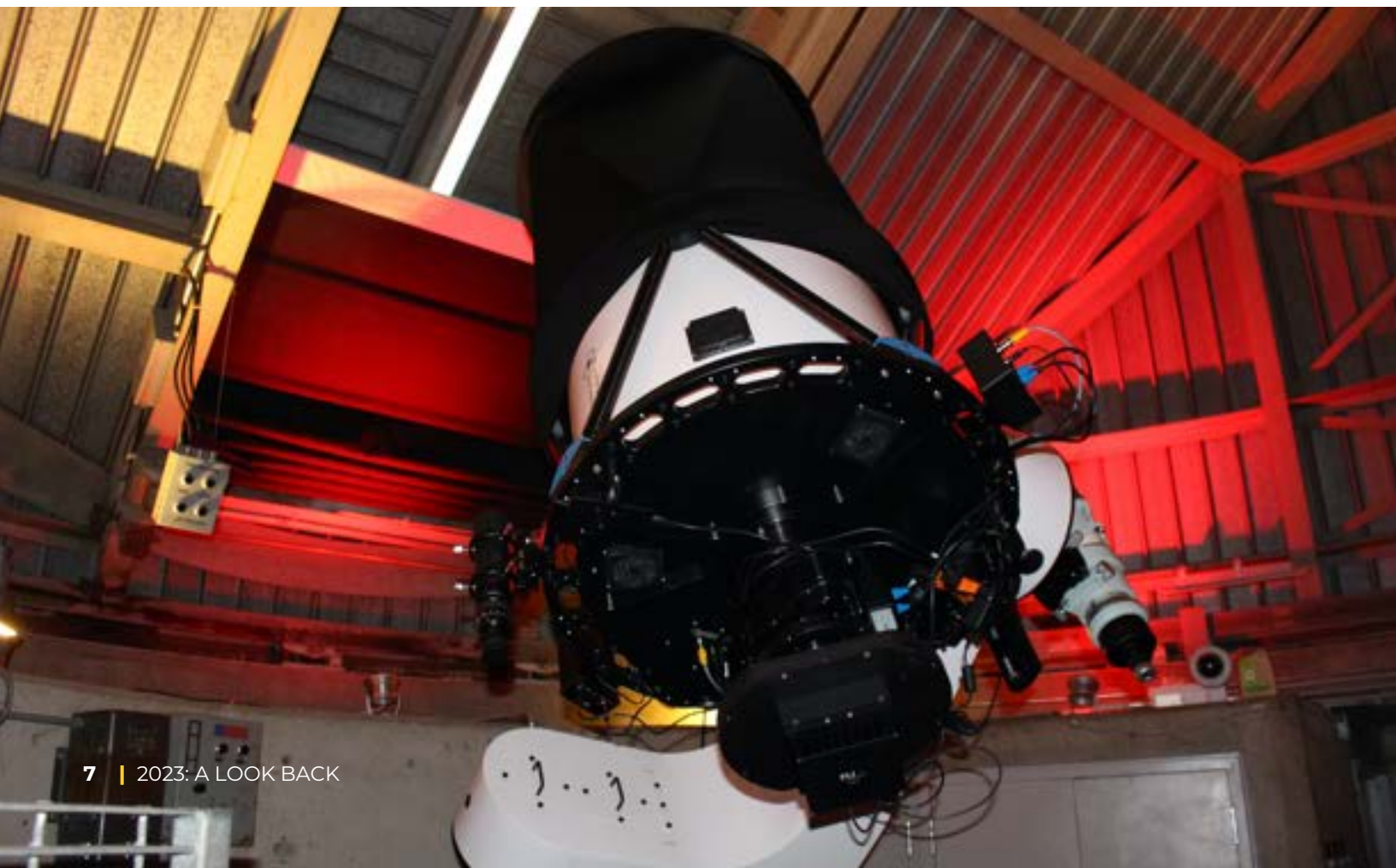
In the summer of 2023, the Adler was proud to debut our fourth and final *CDL: Stargazers Hub*. Beyond providing a new space for tinkering and collaborative learning, the *Stargazers Hub* has transformed our lower-floor collections exhibition area into a beautiful, vibrant, and welcoming space for guests of all ages. Through a multisensory experience that includes educator interaction, hands-on optical activities using lens and mirrors, and historical artifacts, we invite guests of the *Stargazers Hub* to see, hear, and feel how people throughout history have used and shared tools to understand our universe.



FY'22 FINANCIALS

(JULY 1, 2021–JUNE 30, 2022)

| REVENUE & SUPPORT | | EXPENSES | |
|---|---------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------|
| Contributions, Memberships & Fundraising Events | \$5,752,750 | Education & Professional Programs | \$9,969,519 |
| Admissions | \$2,254,246 | Collections Care & Stewardship | \$452,438 |
| Chicago Park District | \$2,155,122 | Development & Membership | \$1,333,511 |
| Other Government Grants | \$7,488,121 | Administration | \$2,895,174 |
| Other Earned Revenue | \$2,584,601 | TOTAL | \$14,650,642 |
| TOTAL | \$20,234,840 | | |





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As we reflect on the past year of connection and reach, we are grateful for the steadfast support of our community. With your partnership, we've helped millions of people explore our universe—from our museum, from public spaces throughout the city, and from homes and backyards around the world. 2023 has been a season of exciting transformation, with new exhibits and a new *Community Design Lab* enabling us to make more profound connections than ever before. Your support has made all of this—and more—possible.

THANK YOU!