

Holding ourselves accountable to our research questions has been key to decision making across all elements of the project: from PD to curriculum refinement to recruitment to data collection.

**New Challenges & Next Steps**

*Post COVID, teachers have reduced capacity to take on new innovations in their classrooms, making recruitment more difficult, especially for the control-study phase of the project. We have been identifying new strategies and avenues for reaching networks of teachers, and will continue to do so.*

**Equity**

*We are employing professional development strategies, partnerships, and pedagogical approaches that emphasize and operationalize 3 “Core Principles” for what equitable YouthAstroNet engagement should look like: 1. The Sky Belongs to Everyone; 2. Listen to Student Ideas; 3. There Are Many Ways to Be a Science Person.*

**Lessons Learned & Insights Gained**

*We’ve used our prior research findings to optimize our learning platform, curriculum, and professional development to focus on the program features which promote career interest and STEM identity. We used creative recruitment strategies to contact over 12,000 educators resulting in 150 applications to the program.*

**YouthAstroNet: Research on the scale-up of innovative technology experiences in astronomy and science imaging**

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NSF Award Number​: 2049012 Dates: 2021-2026

Project type:​ SEI: Scaling, Expanding, and Iterating Innovations

Project URL: https://cfa.harvard.edu/research/youthastronet

Project Overview: The project is scaling up a program & online learning platform for youth ages 11-14 that features customized access to robotic telescopes, support for learner-driven engagement with scientific and computational analysis tools and practices, and interactions with digital STEM mentors.