



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization



International  
Day of Light

## International Day of Light 2020 Final Report

During a time when access to information and connectivity has been more important than ever, light science and technology is providing efficient and affordable solutions to current global challenges.

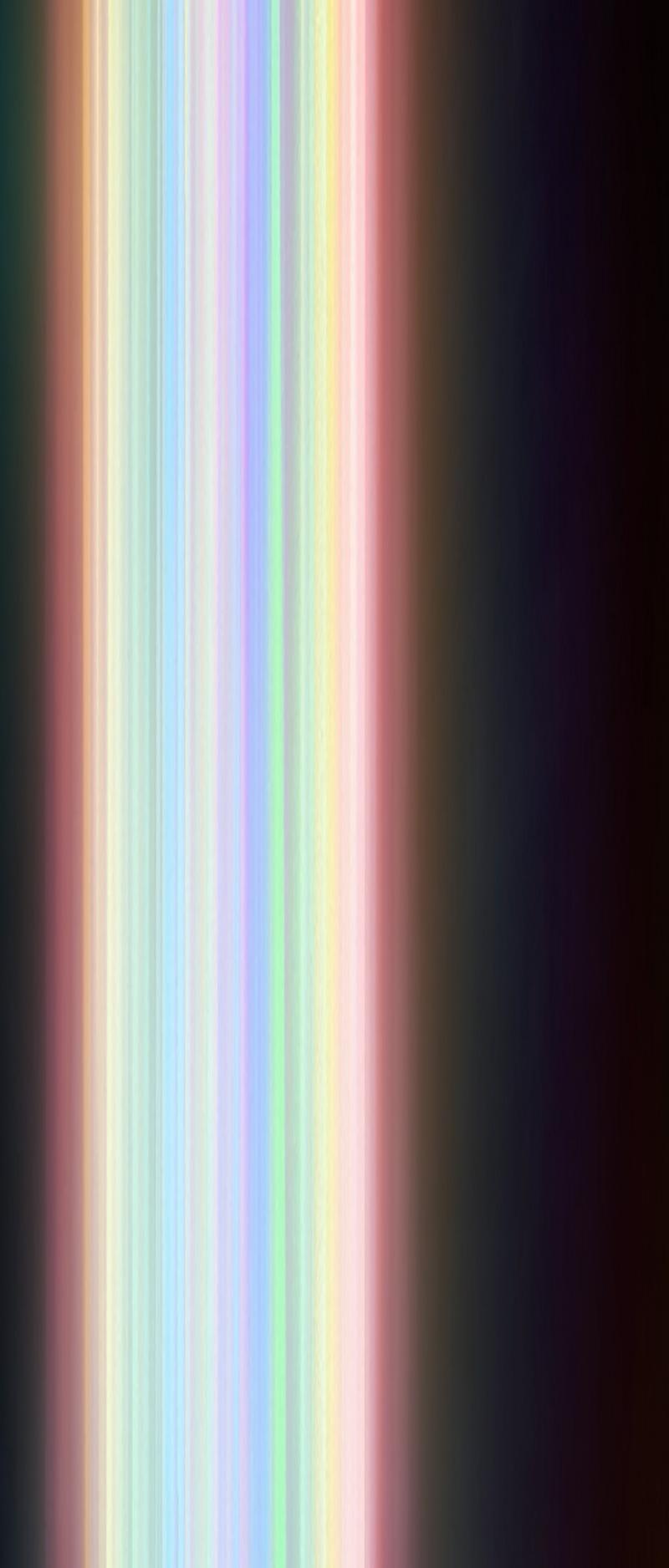
On 16 May 2020, we celebrated the International Day of Light and the light-based technologies that drive cleaner energy, sustainable farming, high-speed connectivity and better diagnostics and treatments.

*“ The best thing we can do is put our confidence in scientists and engineers who work with light and in many other areas of science to develop solutions to the many challenges we are facing, and to guide us towards a brighter future. ”*

**John Dudley**

*International Day of Light Steering Committee Chair  
Université Bourgogne Franche-Comté, France*

# SEE THE LIGHT



The celebration of  
**#IDL2020** and  
**#SEETHELIGHT**  
reached:



Views by Country:

- USA (20%)
- India (16%)
- UK (6%)
- Italy (5%)
- Germany (5%)
- China (4%)
- Brazil (3%)
- Spain (2%)
- Mexico (2%)
- Canada (2%)
- Other (35%)

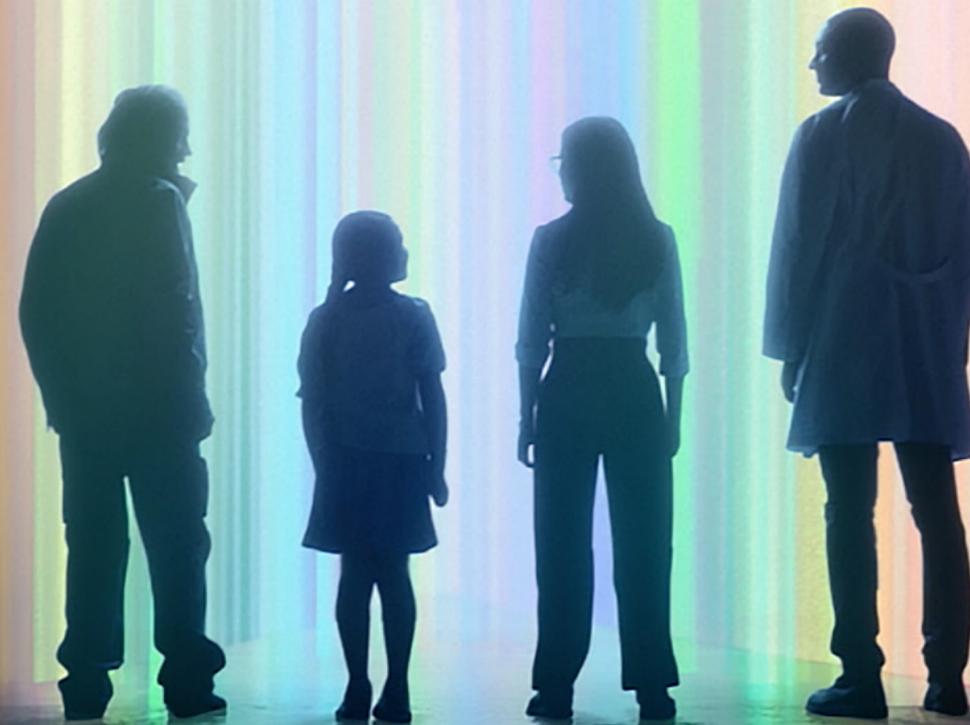


*\* Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, there were 25% less events registered through lightday.org compared to 2019. 83% of the events held globally on 16 May were online/virtual activities. The projected participant number is based on both virtual events that took place as well as both in-person and virtual events that have been postponed to later in the year and are still planning to take place as of June 2020.*

## #SEETHELIGHT

was a video message released  
on 13 May on social media.

There were 30,000 views  
by 25 May 2020.



International  
Day of Light  
16 May

SEE THE LIGHT

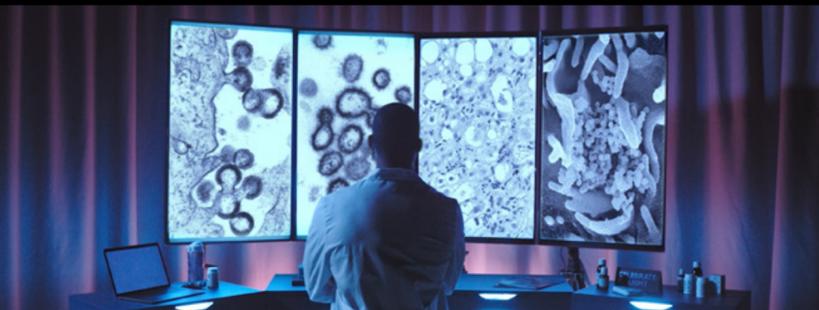
CLEO

The video premiered during the Wednesday,  
13 May plenary presentation at CLEO to  
3,000 tuned in participants.

Parallel with four themes in the video are four articles from leaders in the field. These pieces describe the role of light and how light drives cleaner energy, sustainable farming, high-speed connectivity and better diagnostics and treatments.

The authors include Nobel Laureate **Donna Strickland**, University of Waterloo, Canada; Juergen Popp and **Ute Neugebauer**, Leibniz Institute of Photonic Technology e.V. Jena, Germany; **Cather Simpson**, University of Auckland, New Zealand; and **Imrana Ashraf**, Quaid-i-Azam University, Pakistan.

The following are excerpts from each of the pieces available at [lightday.org/seethelight](https://lightday.org/seethelight).



In the field of infectious disease — a topic that is very much in focus in our current COVID-19 world — light-based technologies have already made an enormous impact with optical microscopy and PCR testing. The next five to ten years could see new techniques start to take hold that optimize the accuracy, cost, and speed of diagnostics. And with better diagnostics comes better treatment, including a greater push towards personalized medicine.



**Ute Neugebauer**  
Leibniz Institute of Photonic Technology e.V. Jena,  
Germany



**Juergen Popp**  
Leibniz Institute of Photonic Technology e.V. Jena,  
Germany



The applications of photonics in agriculture is a small window into the amazing capabilities of light and its boundless ability to solve humanity's problems. It can be harnessed as an energy source, a sensor, and a tool to increase food production and the sustainability of farming. Including the birth of the laser 60 years ago, history has shown time and time again that light can be used to make the world a better place, one innovation at a time. It's up to us to see that science — and the science of light, specifically — is a source of hope for us to inspire future innovations.



**Cather Simpson**  
University of Auckland,  
New Zealand



Light contains infinite possibilities for science and technologies that can transform our world. It has the power to generate clean, renewable solar energy for all, even for those living in remote or poverty-stricken areas. In combination with more efficient lightbulbs, it paves the way for greater access to education, safer city streets, and a healthier population who doesn't have to rely on burning dangerous fuels. And the positive impact of these changes on the environment can even be measured using light.



**Donna Strickland**  
University of Waterloo,  
Canada



Optical fiber is what enables wireless communication, which has become one of the most important mediums of transmission of information between devices. In this technology, electromagnetic waves transmit information through the air without requiring any cable or wires or other conducting materials.



**Imrana Ashraf**  
Quaid-i-Azam University,  
Pakistan

# HIGHLIGHTS OF THE GRASSROOTS CELEBRATION

309 events in 69 countries around 16 May. 50 community videos received from 30 countries with over 22,000 views.

**Rachel Won** @rachelwon  
We are celebrating the 60th anniversary of the invention of **#laser** tomorrow - 16 May. How much do you know about laser? Try it out and check the answers on 21 May: [physicsworld.com/a/celebrate-th...](https://physicsworld.com/a/celebrate-th...) @PhysicsNews @IDLofficial #IDL2020



Celebrate the laser's 60th birthday with this enlightening quiz - Physics W... This week's trivia challenge focuses on the past, present and (possible) future of laser technologies @physicsworld.com

12:53 PM · May 15, 2020 · Twitter Web App  
15 Retweets 43 Likes

**Astghik Chalyan** @Astghik\_Chalyan · Jun 1  
Here is my Virtual IDL Bingo with #SPIE for the celebration of #IDL2020, SPIE, the international society for optics and photonics, and International Day of Light 16 May #SPIEBingo #SeeTheLight



International Day of Light  
Celebrate all the activities in the card and submit with photos on social media to be entered to win!

1  
1  
5

**UNESCO** @UNESCO  
This is what a village without access to electricity looks like.

Today is Int'l #DayOfLight. Keen reminder that energy is essential for humanity - in science, art & culture, education, medicine & communication!

[on.unesco.org/2Hb6dWI](https://on.unesco.org/2Hb6dWI) #IDL2020 #UNESCOCourier



12:00 PM · May 16, 2020 · Hootsuite Inc.  
40 Retweets 81 Likes

**Mete Atature** @MeteAtature  
Today is the International Day of Light #IDL2020! 🌟

Where would we be without #optics #photonics and the #laser? Here is a photo of a rainbow over #Cambridge to start the day of #light in our lives. #SEETHELIGHT



6:36 AM · May 16, 2020 from Cambridge, England · Twitter for iPhone  
58 Retweets 1.1K Likes

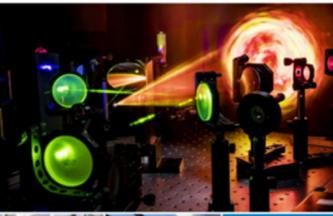
**Light Painting Italia** @lightpainting · May 25  
Mosaico di Luce realizzato da 34 light painters italiani per La Giornata Internazionale della Luce! @IDLofficial



#lightpainting #SeeTheLight #InnoToccasu #fotografia #IDL2020

UNESCO and 2 others

**DTU Fotonik** @DTUFotonik · 1,378 followers  
International Day of Light 16 May  
At DTU Fotonik every day is a day of light! 🌟 All year our scientists and excellent students research into und... see more



97 · 3 Comments

Like Comment Share

**John Dudley** liked Gilbert FAURE's comment on this

**John Dudley** · 3rd+  
Professor of Physics at Université Bourgogne Franche-Comté

Thrilled to share this global video celebrating the importance of the science of #light & light-based technologies in our lives. Help the world #SEETHELIGHT this #IDL2020 and share this special video message! Let's make 16 May a day to remember <http://ow.ly/jfB850zF1zw>.



1:01 / 1:36

48 · 2 Comments · 2,929 Views

**TOPTICA Photonics** @TOPTICAPhotonics · 3,627 followers  
On May 16th 1960 Theodore Maiman saw laser light for the first time. How can we celebrate this major event for photonics in times of Corona and social distancing? TOPTICA people have designed individual "laser face masks" with various subjects from physics, optics and laser applications. More will come up in the next days. Happy Birthday Laser! #SeeTheLight #IDL2020 <https://lnkd.in/d/Fm3KzF>



115 · 3 Comments

Like Comment Share

**SEESPIE** · Follow

SEESPIE (French: 'YOU' to everyone who loves optics) is celebrating the International Day of Light. We are grateful for the #IDL2020 sponsors, partners, supporters, search engines, and the global community who collectively stand against the oppression of light. #IDL2020



Liked by Ben, UK, Benjamin and 100 others

**I-VI Incorporated** @IVI · 10,448 followers  
I-VI celebrates the International Day of Light and 60 years of laser technology with these 5 enLIGHTening facts about CO2 lasers. #IDL2020 #seetheLight @IDLofficial



0:03 / 0:40

66 · 1 Comment · 1,869 Views

Like Comment Share

**IEEE Photonics Society** @IEEEPhotonics  
#SEETHELIGHT! Celebrate the importance of the science of light & light-based tech in our lives this #IDL2020. Learn what you can do here: [bit.ly/3cxq1kc](https://bit.ly/3cxq1kc) #jointheconversation #sharethisvideo #photonics #optics #STEMed

International Day of Light 16 May @IDLofficial · May 12  
Better Diagnostics and Treatment: Find hope in the research into light-based solutions for infectious diseases such as COVID-19 in this article from Jürgen Popp and Ute Neugebauer: [lightday.org/better-diagnos...](https://lightday.org/better-diagnos...) #SEETHELIGHT #IDL2020



1:01 / 1:36

**Max Planck Institute - Science of Light** @MPLight  
Happy International Day of Light to everyone! #IDL2020 @IDLofficial



HAPPY INTERNATIONAL DAY OF LIGHT 2020

1K views

4:00 AM · May 16, 2020 · TweetDeck  
22 Retweets 50 Likes

**International Day of Light 16 May** @IDLofficial  
#IDL2020 Community Videos: A symbol of hope from the newly founded SBLuz - The Brazilian Society of Light and Lighting #SEETHELIGHT



0:18 171 views

WE PERCEIVE THE WORLD

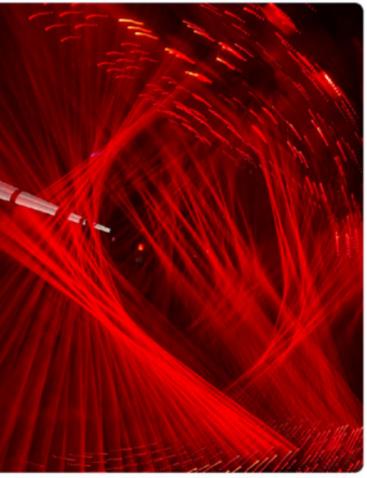
9:00 PM · May 16, 2020 · Twitter Web App  
2 Retweets 13 Likes

**Tyndall Institute** @TyndallInstitut  
In appreciation of #IDL2020 and the phenomenal #photonics research carried out here in Tyndall, this week's Science from Home experiments focus on the concept of light! Don't forget to follow @PICireland and get involved in #SeeTheLight tomorrow! [bit.ly/2TaARF8](https://bit.ly/2TaARF8)



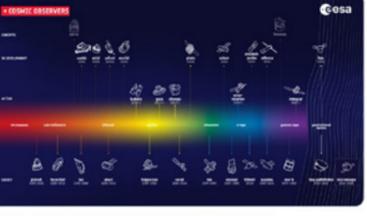
10:55 AM · May 15, 2020 · Twitter Web App  
12 Retweets 25 Likes

**ARTEHOUSE** @artehouse  
This year we are also celebrating the 60th anniversary of the laser! Thanks to Theodore Maiman, we are able to experience installations like #IntangibleForms, which utilizes 660 modular light beam laser modules in the main installation! #Laser60 #SeeTheLight #IDL2020 @IDLofficial



10:45 AM · May 15, 2020 · Twitter Web App  
3 Retweets 18 Likes

**ESA Science** @esascience  
Happy International Day of Light! In #space #science we seek #light across the electromagnetic spectrum - from radio waves to gamma rays - to study cosmic objects near & far. And we plan to use lasers to detect gravitational waves 🌟 #IDL2020 #SEETHELIGHT [esa.int/ESA\\_Multimedia...](https://esa.int/ESA_Multimedia...)



4:02 AM · May 16, 2020 · Falcon Social Media Management  
260 Retweets 563 Likes

**IAU OAO** @IAU\_Outreach  
Will you look up at the sky tonight? Take a measurement of the starlight for the @GLOBEatNight in honor of the International Day of Light

More information here: [globeatnight.org](https://globeatnight.org)

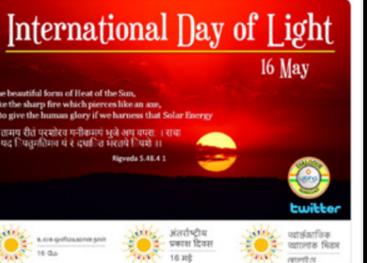
#DarkSkies4All #IAUoutreach #IDL2020

Image credit: NPS/Emily Ogden



1:01 PM · May 16, 2020 · Hootsuite Inc.  
2 Retweets 3 Likes

**Dialogue** @Dangeesamvaad  
Wishes on #InternationalDayofLight Anniversary of first successful operation of #Laser by physicist & engineer, #TheodoreMaiman @UNESCO @IDLofficial @UNinIndia @Vibha\_india @mnreindia @jayantss66 @Omkar\_Rai @SECLtd @PraveenRamadas @Adviser\_DST #SeetheLight #IDL2020 #RigVeda



International Day of Light 16 May

The beautiful form of Heat of the Sun, like the sharp fire which pierces like an arrow, is to give the human glory if we harness that Solar Energy

आर्य ऋषयः सूर्योत्पत्तये अग्निं यत्नः । तदा नः तं सुवर्णं च रं कर्तुं तं सूर्योत्पत्तये ॥  
Rigveda 5.18.4.1

6:20 AM · May 16, 2020 · Twitter Web App  
110 Retweets 95 Likes

**The Optical Society** @OpticalSociety  
Happy #IDL2020! Hope all are celebrating the International Day of Light with their friends, families and laser pets. Check out the official #SEETHELIGHT video now posted on [osa.org](https://osa.org) for the weekend - [ow.ly/yxeh50z19n](https://ow.ly/yxeh50z19n)



Celebrate the International Day of Light and 60 Years of Laser Innovation

OSA | 100

8:04 AM · May 16, 2020 · Brightcove Social  
26 Retweets 71 Likes

**Graying** @Graying  
@IDLofficial Morse-code lights will spread their messages from trees and buildings in #Eindhoven made for Fontys Pulsed

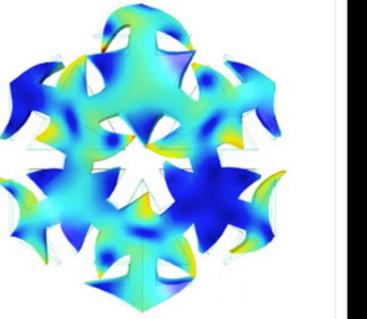


0:02 207 views

5:09 PM · May 16, 2020 · Twitter Web App  
3 Retweets 9 Likes

**Florian Marquardt** @FMarquardtGroup  
Happy International Day of Light 2020 #IDL2020 to everyone, from the Max Planck Institute for the Science of Light! @MPI\_Light @IDLofficial @MPS\_Phonics @maxplanckpress

Enjoy a movie from our design studies of optomechanical crystals (@chrisbrnd)...



9:21 AM · May 16, 2020 · Twitter Web App  
7 Retweets 68 Likes

**SPIE** SPIE, the international society for optics and photonics  
12 maggio alle ore 19:18

Re-sharing our International Day of Light photo contest album in celebration of #IDL2020 on Saturday! We can't wait to launch the next #SPIE #IDL photo contest. Stay tuned! International Day of Light 16 May



SPIE, the international society for optics and photonics ha aggiunto 14 nuove foto all'album: International Day of Light Photo Contest 2019. 3 dicembre 2019 · 49

Check out a sample of photos submitted to the #SPIE #IDL2019 Photo Contest.

44

Commenti: 2 Condivisioni: 8

**Ariel Levenson** @ArielLevenson  
Four days away from the International Day of Light, a video with my daughter few years ago #IDL2020 #SeeTheLight @IDLofficial @johndudley @aubeva @MariaLCalvo1 @sylvaingigan



0:11 351 views

12:00 PM · May 12, 2020 · Twitter Web App

**International Day of Light 16 May** 18 maggio alle ore 10:53

#IDL2020 Community Videos: "Why We Love Lasers". The team of Cobolt - a Swedish laser manufacturer - share why they love lasers! #SEETHELIGHT



0:07 / 1:16

5

Condivisioni: 8

**SeeTheLight** · Follow

International Day of Light 16 May



128 likes

**Armani Lab at USC** @ArmaniLab  
On #IDL2020, we're celebrating the ability of #photonics to inspire the #nextgen of #engineers and #scientists to continue to push the boundaries of #innovation and #discovery. @OpticalSociety @SPIETweets #womeninstem @IDLofficial



4:55 PM · May 16, 2020 · Buffer  
7 Retweets 18 Likes

**SeeTheLight** · Follow

For fun, we used the search term "light" in our own photo collections and share them in our gallery, Search Light, playing with themes, lens, filters, etc. We are, after all, lighting designers. #SeeTheLight #IDL2020 #SeeTheLight #SeeTheLight #SeeTheLight #SeeTheLight #SeeTheLight #SeeTheLight #SeeTheLight #SeeTheLight #SeeTheLight



77 likes

In 2021, the International Day of Light will continue to be an annual, public-facing focal point for the continued appreciation of light and the role it plays in science, culture and art, education, and sustainable development, and in fields as diverse as medicine, communications, and energy.

In order to expand the reach of the International Day of Light, #LightDay2021 and #SEETHELIGHT, we ask all partners and interested parties to schedule events, share content and explore new opportunities. You can reach us at [seethelight@lightday.org](mailto:seethelight@lightday.org)

**John Dudley**  
*Chair*

**Bethany Downer**  
*Secretariat*



SEE THE LIGHT

THANK YOU

A special thank you to our design and production partners SMALL Agency LLC and Indiana Production SPA as well as those who provided footage, images and/or permissions for the International Day of Light video, articles and graphic pieces: ARTECHOUSE and NONOTAK, Dronisos, European Space Observatory (ESO), HRL Laboratories LLC, Karlsruhe Institute of Technology (KIT) and Vanguard Photonics GmbH, M Squared Lasers and the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases – Rocky Mountain Laboratories. We also thank those who helped to amplify the message of the International Day of Light including the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS), American Association of Physics Teachers (AAPT), the European Space Agency, The Nobel Prize, Photonics21 and EURACTIV and all those who #SEETHELIGHT and continue to spread the word about the importance of light.



OSA

SPIE.

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH: THE INTERNATIONAL DAY OF LIGHT STEERING COMMITTEE

AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF PHYSICS (AIP)

AMERICAN PHYSICAL SOCIETY (APS)

BOSCA CELLARS

INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION ON ILLUMINATION (CIE)

CHINA INTERNATIONAL OPTOELECTRONIC EXPO (CIOE)

THE CHINESE OPTICAL SOCIETY (COS)

EUROPEAN CENTRES FOR OUTREACH IN PHOTONICS (ECOP)

EUROPEAN PHYSICAL SOCIETY (EPS)

EUROPEAN PHOTONICS INDUSTRY CONSORTIUM (EPIC)

HAWAIIAN EYE FOUNDATION

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LIGHTING DESIGNERS (IALD)

THE ABDUS SALAM INTERNATIONAL CENTRE FOR THEORETICAL PHYSICS

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THE OPTICAL SOCIETY (OSA)

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