



# SEAL

## Solar Eclipse Activities for Libraries

### Solar Science Circulation Kits and Workshops for Public Libraries

Two solar eclipses are coming to North America – an Annular Eclipse in 2023 and a Total Solar Eclipse in 2024 – and it's time for public library staff to get ready! Thanks to a grant from the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation and a supplement to the NASA@ My Library Project, the Space Science Institute's *STAR Net* team is providing 5 million solar viewing glasses, in-person training workshops, solar science circulation kits, print resources, ~10,000 public libraries and 55 state library agencies across the nation. To learn more about the project, including how to register your library for free solar eclipse glasses, visit: [www.starnetlibraries.org/about/our-projects/solar-eclipse-activities-libraries-seal/](http://www.starnetlibraries.org/about/our-projects/solar-eclipse-activities-libraries-seal/)



**Circulation Kits**, two designed for younger groups and two designed for multigenerational audiences, will be provided to state library entities nationwide for distribution amongst the public libraries they serve. These kits will be a “program in a box,” featuring books (*Moonbear’s Shadow* by Frank Asch and *When the Sun Goes Dark* by Andrew Fraknoi and Dennis Schatz), interactive activities and solar viewing instruments (including a solar telescope, a SunSpotter and Sunoculars). They will also include printed materials aimed at helping public library staff feel more comfortable when talking about these exciting celestial events! Library patron enthusiasm for solar science will be high both *before* and *after* the eclipses occur and these kits will lead to engaging programs even outside of the October 14, 2023 – April 8, 2024 time window. Virtual trainings and recorded videos on kit components will become available through *STAR Net* [Webinar](#) and [YouTube](#) channels in Fall of 2022.



**In-person workshops** will prepare and empower public library staff to facilitate meaningful solar and space science programs for their patrons that build curiosity, knowledge and inspiration. Attendees will receive hands-on training on operating solar telescopes and other methods for direct and indirect solar viewing, best practices for developing and facilitating STEM programs, and how to engage with community partners and library-specific digital resource networks. Attendees will also be able to sign up for free solar eclipse glasses to distribute to their communities in advance of both eclipses! [STAR Net facilitators](#), bringing many years of experience building the STEM capacity of public library staff, will work with each state library to customize the workshop experience based on the needs and interests of public libraries within that state. These workshops will use materials from the circulation kits and highlight best practices in using those materials but the strategies, activities and resources shared during the workshop will be useful to attendees whether they have access to a circulation kit or not.

The goals of these solar science workshops are to help library staff:

1. *Build off the excitement of the 2023 and 2024 solar eclipses, and engage their patrons in solar science activities*
2. *Safely and effectively facilitate direct (e.g. solar telescope and Sunoculars) and indirect methods of safe solar viewing*
3. *Develop and facilitate exciting and interactive STEM programming at their library*

While workshops are customizable, almost every solar science workshop will include the following elements:

- Advice on engaging with community partners to promote and support solar science programs
- Ample opportunities for peer-to-peer networking and group discussions
- Direct instruction on setting up and using solar telescopes and sun spotters
- “Guide on the Side” facilitation strategies for STEM learning
- Help navigating *STAR Net*’s online community, where public library staff can share eclipse-related programming ideas, strategies and resources
- Hands-on facilitation of interactive solar science programs designed for library settings
- Advice on leveraging NASA volunteer networks like the *Night Sky Network* and *Solar System Ambassadors*

These workshops will begin in September of 2022 and continue throughout 2024. The project will cover the cost of the presenters’ travel and all materials associated with the workshop. We simply ask that state libraries help us recruit participants and provide a venue (ideally a public library!) While circulation kit materials are available to all 55 state and territory library agencies, workshop dates are filling up fast, and we encourage you to reach out soon. After 2024, the next total eclipse to cross the continental US won’t be until Aug. 12, 2045 – you don’t want to miss these two!

To get your state involved, please fill out our interest form ([www.surveymonkey.com/r/L6PZKXR](http://www.surveymonkey.com/r/L6PZKXR)) and contact Anne Holland ([aholland@spacescience.org](mailto:aholland@spacescience.org)) or Brooks Mitchell ([bmitchell@spacescience.org](mailto:bmitchell@spacescience.org)).