

Platform, Participation, and Progress: China's Recent Advances in Astronomical Citizen Science

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Background

Astronomy's data-driven era presents significant opportunities for public participation in scientific discovery. The National Astronomical Data Center (NADC) demonstrated this potential by launching the Popular Supernova Project (PSP) in 2015, which has since engaged nearly 20,000 participants and identified 212 supernova candidates. Building on this success and the expanding data landscape, NADC has developed more citizen science projects—from object identification to event reporting—and officially established an unified Citizen Science Platform in 2025. This initiative leverages public collaboration to collect data and address scientific challenges, creating a powerful multiplier effect that enhances research, improves public scientific literacy, and fosters more innovative forms of collaboration.

CHINA-VO Citizen Science Platform

The China-VO Citizen Science Platform embodies this idea. By integrating massive data with advanced web technologies and effective promotion, we have built an ecosystem which is more inclusive, engaging, and ripe than ever before.

This platform features a series of citizen science projects developed by China-VO team of NADC, which form the core of the platform. Beyond this core content, the platform also provides an explanation of citizen science, introduces their missions, and showcases the outcomes of those projects.



Homepage of CHINA-VO Citizen Science Platform



Object Identification



Event Reporting

CSSA: A Milestone for Community Building

To consolidate a decade of practice, the NADC launched the first Citizen Science Summit in Astronomy (CSSA) in July 2025, The CSSA established a foundational framework for the field's growth, which can be summarized through the following key outcomes:

WHAT | Defining Citizen Science

Citizen science is a kind of activity that allows the general public to participate in scientific research, typically under the guidance of professional scientists.

WHY | Demonstrating Impact

The purpose of citizen science is to leverage public participation to collect data, identify and address scientific problems, while enhancing the public's understanding of and interest in science.

HOW | Enabling with Technology

Explored how cutting-edge technologies like Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Big Data platforms can be integrated to create more powerful, efficient, and engaging citizen science projects, empowering participants to make even greater discoveries.

WHERE TO | 2025 Roadmap

- Developer community
- Project R&D
- Education & Support
- Standardization

China-VO Citizen Science Platform: <https://nadc.china-vo.org/citizenscience>

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