

## **International Dark Sky Discovery Center Launches \$18 Million Capital Campaign to Build Science Facility Housing Largest Telescope in Greater Phoenix**

*International attraction connects the night sky to life on earth through STEM education and leading-edge experiences*

**FOUNTAIN HILLS, ARIZ. (Jan. 13, 2021)** – Today, the [International Dark Sky Discovery Center](#) (IDSDC) launched an \$18 million capital campaign to build a unique science-based facility in Fountain Hills, Ariz., that includes a first-class domed observatory. The IDSDC will house the largest telescope in Greater Phoenix, and with its three other state-of-the-art components, will provide STEM education for students and leading-edge learning experiences for all ages.

“By inspiring individuals and organizations to fund this exciting endeavor, we will fulfill IDSDC’s vision to inspire, educate, and stir imaginations to cultivate a greater understanding of our dark skies, our planet, and the universe,” said Joe Bill, IDSDC president.

Coinciding with the third anniversary of Fountain Hills being designated as the 17th Dark Sky Community in the world by the [International Dark Sky Association](#), IDSDC is privately raising capital to construct the 15,000-square-foot, non-profit facility that will be an international attraction benefiting the entire State of Arizona.

**Today, for the first time, the public can experience the vision of the IDSDC by viewing an inspiring video designed to introduce the public to the project.**

- [PLAY VIDEO](#)

**Those interested in more information or donating to make this world-class facility a reality, please visit: [DarkSkyCenter.org](https://DarkSkyCenter.org)**

"The International Dark Sky Discovery Center is an exciting opportunity for students and amateur star-gazers alike," said Arizona Gov. Doug Ducey. "The center will be another tremendous asset to keep our state at the forefront of STEM education."

Once constructed, IDSDC will feature four distinct educational attractions: a Dark Sky Observatory, Hyperspace Planetarium, Inspiration Theater and an Immersion Zone with interactive exhibits.

"Our Dark Sky Observatory will have the largest telescope in the Greater Phoenix area," said Ted Blank, IDSDC vice president and NASA solar system ambassador. "We will offer public viewing to present breathtaking views of the moon, planets, nebula, galaxies, and other stellar objects."

The observatory’s capabilities for astrophotography and research have already attracted the interest of university leadership.

“Arizona State University looks forward to developing a collaborative relationship with the International Dark Sky Discovery Center,” said ASU president Dr. Michael Crow.

IDSDC will also have significant economic and economic development impact on the region.

“Science-based education is important to the continued development of the state’s high-tech industry,” said Chris Camacho, President & CEO of the Greater Phoenix Economic Council. “The International Dark Sky Discovery Center will be a unique regional asset, providing an incredible platform for STEM education and workforce development.”

Tourism officials say IDSDC will be an important part of the state’s Astrotourism industry, which already brings visitors to the region specifically for astronomy-related experiences.

“Dark sky tourism is a major draw for the State of Arizona, and we believe the International Dark Sky Discovery Center will be an extraordinary asset for our state,” said Debbie Johnson, executive director at the Arizona Office of Tourism.

For additional video and photo assets, please click [HERE](#).

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**About International Dark Sky Discovery Center**

The proposed International Dark Sky Discovery Center is a unique, state-of-the-art, multi-functional facility that will provide science-based education and also serve as a tourism attraction for the state of Arizona and beyond.

**About Arizona State University**

Arizona State University has developed a new model for the American Research University, creating an institution that is committed to access, excellence and impact. ASU measures itself by those it includes, not by those it excludes. As the prototype for a New American University, ASU pursues research that contributes to the public good, and ASU assumes major responsibility for the economic, social and cultural vitality of the communities that surround it.

**About Greater Phoenix Economic Council (GPEC)**

The Greater Phoenix Economic Council (GPEC) works to attract and grow quality businesses, and advocate for the competitiveness of Greater Phoenix. As a data-driven regional economic development organization (EDO), GPEC works with 22 member communities, Maricopa County and more than 170 private investors to accomplish its mission and serve as a strategic partner to companies across the world as they expand or relocate to Greater Phoenix. Recently named the top EDO in the U.S. by the International Economic Development Council, over the past 31 years GPEC has fueled the regional economy by helping more than 850 companies, creating 154,000 jobs and \$20.4 billion in capital investment. Greater Phoenix is in a relentless pursuit of innovative and entrepreneurial-focused companies looking to thrive and scale in a vibrant, dynamic region. There is an undeniable spirit about

Greater Phoenix; one rooted in strength, collaboration and resilience. Greater Phoenix is Greater Together. For more information about GPEC and how we can assist your businesses, visit [www.gpec.org](http://www.gpec.org).

**About Arizona Office of Tourism**

The *Arizona Office of Tourism* works to strengthen and grow Arizona's economy through travel and tourism promotion, positioning Arizona as the leading tourism destination for domestic and international travelers. Tourism is a key industry that provides positive economic impacts to every community, city and all 15 counties across the state.