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"Look up! Flip the sky with your finger"a virtual exhibition for the enhancement of the historical astronomical atlases of INAF

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Together with research activities in different fields of astrophysics and astronomical technologies, INAF promotes projects to preserve, valorize and public engagements projects related to its bibliographic, archival and instrumental heritage. The observatories are the oldest scientific institutions in Italy and contain more than 7000 rare books, over 1200 astronomical instruments, dated from the 11th century to the first half of the 1900s, and more than 3 million documents. The works of Galileo, Copernicus, Ptolemy, Kepler and Newton represent real milestones in global culture and are a symbol of the scientific revolution. In order to tell and enhance these works, the INAF "Cosmic Pages"and "Touch the sky"projects were developed. They led to the creation of the virtual exhibition "Look up! Flip the sky with your finger". It is an effective communication tool aimed at enhancing and giving maximum dissemination of the entire collection of celestial atlases, cometographs and selenographies preserved in the INAF Observatories. These works, for their meticulous care, represent testimonies of rare beauty that blend art, mythology and science, as well as having a role of particular importance in the history of scientific culture. This virtual exhibit was designed and built so that the digital visitors can navigate, explore and understand how our knowledge of the cosmos, the Moon and the planets have evolved and changed. Using new virtual technologies, visitors will be able to explore the scientific and cultural content of the star and cartographic atlases, interacting with them and obtaining in-depth information on the cosmology of the time and the cultural environment in which they were produced. With the exhibition, educational activities were also developed, organized in collaboration with Save the Children Italy, to reach both students of all levels and the school-age population most in difficulty. The intent is to encourage and support the self-determination of the individual and self-expression, regardless of personal condition, gender, social status and culture of origin, using the cultural heritage of Italian astrophysics.

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