



# The University of Fiji

(An Entity of Arya Pratinidhi Sabha of Fiji)

## **The University of Fiji launches its Astronomy Society for Enthusiasts**

The University of Fiji will launch a new initiative for astronomy enthusiasts in Fiji and the South Pacific region on February 22 at Saweni Campus.

Called the South Pacific Astronomers Society of Enthusiasts (SPASE), the Society aims to hold regular events with astronomers and staff and students of the University, as well as astronomy enthusiasts in the South Pacific region. SPASE will be launched by Dr. Nalin Samarasinha of the Planetary Science Institute of the University of Maryland in the United States.

SPASE was initiated by the combined efforts of two Schools of the University of Fiji, the School of Science and Technology and the School of Business and Economics because academic staff in these Schools were enthusiasts who wanted to create an interactive platform with other like-minded astronomy enthusiasts in our region.

The launch of SPASE will be held virtually and will include a keynote lecture by Dr. Samarasinha.

The Vice-Chancellor of the University of Fiji, Professor Shaista Shameem said that the University was honoured to have Dr. Samarasinha launch SPASE as he had the wonderful distinction of having an asteroid named after him by the International Astronomical Union. Asteroid (12871) Samarasinha, found by the Lowell Observatory, was named after him, Professor Shameem said. Dr Samarasinha is the first native born Sri Lankan citizen to gain the distinction of having an asteroid named in his honour.

The University of Fiji's SPASE intends to nurture scientific and educational interest in planetary science in the South Pacific. Young people and adults alike are invited to join SPASE where events and telescopic viewings of the night skies will regularly be held. Planetary scientists and astronomers will be invited to deliver lectures throughout the year at the Saweni Campus of the University. Those interested to attend the launch or become a member of SPASE can contact the University of Fiji for further information.



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# SPASE

## South Pacific Astronomers Society of Enthusiasts

### Hosted by The University of Fiji



Join our Society for free!

Open to All!!!

You are invited to join our Society and attend the virtual inaugural meeting using the information given below.



**Inaugural Virtual Meeting**

9.00 am – 12.00 pm  
22nd February 2022



**Guest Speaker**

Dr. Nalin Samarasinha  
Planetary Science Institute  
University of Maryland, USA



Join the inaugural meeting  
using the following link.

[www.unifiji.ac.fj/astronomy](http://www.unifiji.ac.fj/astronomy)

High School and University Students are highly encouraged to join!

Join Our Society

Link: <https://forms.gle/qq5J3Kmytc9pWD6t6> || Scan QR to access the form



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