INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF LIGHT &
LIGHT-BASED TECHNOLOGIES

STEERING COMMITTEE
GLOBAL SECRETARIAT
ABDUS SALAM INTERNATIONAL CENTRE FOR THEORETICAL PHYSICS
ICTP, UNESCO CATEGORY I INSTITUTE
TRIESTE, ITALY

United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

INTERNATIONAL
YEAR OF LIGHT
2015

Ibn Al-Haytham to be the focus of the International Year of Light through partnering with 1001 Inventions

The International Year of Light and Light-based Technologies (IYL 2015) is delighted to welcome as Founding Partner the award-winning educational organization 1001 Inventions. British-based 1001 Inventions has the specific mission to raise awareness of the contributions to science, technology and culture from the Golden Age of Muslim Civilization, and will play a key role during IYL2015 to promote and celebrate the 10th century pioneer Ibn Al-Haytham. Ibn Al-Haytham's seminal work on optics Kitab al-Manazir (The Book of Optics) was published around 1015, and its 1000th anniversary is listed explicitly in the United Nations resolution on IYL2015 as a focal point of celebration.

1001 Inventions will be introducing Ibn Al-Haytham to the world in 2015 through a series of high-profile international events and educational initiatives inter-linking themes of science, arts, culture, education and technology. The guiding philosophy of 1001 Inventions is to use experiential learning to incite inquisitiveness and curiosity and to encourage young people around the world to study Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM).

1001 Inventions will launch the "1001 Inventions and The World of Ibn Al-Haytham" campaign through an interactive exhibit which will be a key part of the IYL2015 Opening Ceremony at UNESCO HQ over 19-20 January 2015. As IYL2015 Chairman John Dudley says "We are delighted to welcome 1001 Inventions with their experience of effective educational exhibits as an IYL Founding Partner. Ibn Al Haytham was a remarkable pioneer and is often referred to as "first scientist" for his insistence on the experimental method, and it will be a pleasure to work throughout 2015 to make his story known \\throughout the world." These comments are echoed by Ahmed Salim, Producer and Director of 1001 Inventions saying: "We're very excited to be working with UNESCO to engage the public in exploring the importance of light and optical technologies through the inspirational discoveries of Ibn Al-Haytham. Ibn Al-Haytham's achievements in physics, optics, mathematics, astronomy, empiricism and the scientific method have had a lasting, yet underappreciated, impact on the way we live our lives today. His story is one that will motivate young people to pursue careers in science and strive towards building a brighter future."

About Ibn Al-Haytham

Hasan Ibn Al-Haytham was a 10th century polymath from Basra (in modern-day Iraq), who is often referred to as the 'father of modern optics'. He spent much of his life in Egypt, including a decade under house arrest, which was where he published his most celebrated work, Kitab al-Manazir (The Book of Optics). Ibn Al-Haytham made significant advancements in optics, mathematics and astronomy, and laid the foundations of the present day scientific method. Ibn Al-Haytham's work on optics is credited with explaining the nature of light and vision, using what is now commonly referred to as a Camera Obscura. Ibn Al-Haytham wrote as many as 200 books, although only 55 have survived. Translations of his work are known to have influenced many Renaissance thinkers, such as Roger Bacon, Christian Huygens, and René Descartes. He was known in the West as "Alhazen", and the crater Alhazen on the Moon is named in his honour, as is the asteroid 59239 Alhazen.

About 1001 Inventions

1001 Inventions is an award-winning, British-based organisation that creates international educational campaigns and engaging transmedia productions aiming to raise awareness of the contributions to science, technology and culture from the Golden Age of Muslim Civilisation. Over the last decade, 1001 Inventions has engaged with over 100 million people across the globe, with educational campaigns in cities such as in London, Istanbul, New York, Washington DC, Los Angeles, Kuala Lumpur, Abu Dhabi and Jeddah. 1001 Inventions works with a network of international partners and leading academics, through its academic partner FSTC (UK), to produce world-class experiences, interactive exhibits, feature films, live shows, books and classroom learning materials that are being used by hundreds of thousands of educators around the world. Further information can be found at www.1001inventions.com

Contact

Junaid Bhatti
Head of Marketing and Public Relations
1001 Inventions
London, United Kingdom
info@1001inventions.com

About IYL 2015

The International Year of Light and Light-Based Technologies (IYL 2015) is a global initiative adopted by the United Nations (A/RES/68/221) to raise awareness of how optical technologies promote sustainable development and provide solutions to worldwide challenges in energy, education, agriculture, communications and health. With UNESCO as lead agency, IYL 2015 programs will promote improved public and political understanding of the central role of light in the modern world while also celebrating noteworthy anniversaries in 2015—from the first studies of optics 1,000 years ago to discoveries in optical communications that power the Internet today. The IYL Global Secretariat is located at the International Centre of Theoretical Physics ICTP. In addition to 1001 Inventions, the Founding Partners of IYL 2015 are the American Institute of Physics (AIP), the American Physical Society (APS), the Deutsche Physikalische Gesellschaft (DPG), the European Physical Society (EPS), the IEEE Photonics Society (IPS), the Institute of Physics (IOP), the International Society for Optics and Photonics (SPIE), the lightsources.org International Network, The Optical Society (OSA).

Contacts

John Dudley
Steering Committee Chair
International Year of Light and Light-based Technologies 2015
president@eps.org

Joe Niemela
Global Coordinator (IYL Secretariat)
International Year of Light and Light-based Technologies 2015
light2015@ictp.it

Jean-Paul Ngome Abiaga
Assistant Programme Specialist
International Basic Sciences Programme
UNESCO HQ, Paris
jj.ngome-abiaga@unesco.org