



Playing with math

On 14 March, the International Day of Mathematics will be celebrated worldwide

Press information, embargo until 12.03.2024

(14.03.2024, Paris). On 14 March, the International Day of Mathematics (IDM), proclaimed by UNESCO, will be held under the theme *“Playing with math”*. The 2024 theme celebrates mathematical games, puzzles, and other entertaining activities, but also “playing” with mathematics itself, exploring, experimenting, and discovering.

Organized by the International Mathematical Union, the IDM includes a mixture of virtual and face-to-face celebrations in 2024, including celebrations in classrooms and, for the first time, an international school pairing program. IDM 2024 is celebrated in more than 90 countries with over 1100 individual events¹.

“Mathematics is a timeless language that knows no borders and has no gender. From the Ishango bones discovered in the ancient sands of Palaeolithic Africa more than 20,000 years ago to the brilliant minds shaping our future – like Ukrainian mathematician Maryna Viazovska, recipient of the 2022 Fields Medal, mathematics has the power to change the world. Through this year’s theme for the International Day of Mathematics, ‘Playing with Maths’ we embrace the boundless potential of mathematics to drive progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals through exploration, experimentation and new discoveries.”, says Audrey Azoulay, Director-General of UNESCO.

The flagship event of IDM 2024 is the school pairing program for schools of the Global South sponsored by the Simons Foundation. It takes place in the four languages Arabic, English, French, and Spanish. For a period of several weeks before or around the IDM, 70 paired schools explore mathematical games and play against each other.

More than 2300 individuals, schools, and organizations have submitted a photo to the MATH REMIX 2024 Creative Challenge. The contributions will be made available on March 14 and remain in a public gallery accessible to all under a free and open license.

IDM 2024 is celebrated on all continents and more and more countries celebrate it in a recurrent fashion. All over the world, people are organizing festivities, and teachers celebrate in the classroom, for instance by playing strategic mathematical games. Celebrations take many forms: national and local competitions, conferences, exhibitions, and talks, organized by mathematical societies, research institutes, museums, schools, universities, etc.

¹ Browse the map of www.idm314.org

On 14 March, 13:00-14:30 UTC, UNESCO co-organizes a webinar "[Playing with Mathematics for Society](#)" together with the International Mathematical Union and the International Decade of Sciences for Sustainable Development 2024-2033. This webinar addresses the many ways in how playing with mathematics can contribute to the achievement of the SDGs.

A live coverage will take place on the IDM website and social media on 14 March.

Ahmed Sidiki Diallo, coordinator of ASPnet in Burkina Faso (the network of UNESCO affiliated schools) is leading the IDM celebrations in Burkina Faso: *"For more than eight years, thousands of children in Burkina Faso have been unable to learn to count or to grasp mathematical formulae. The IDM encourages a love of math and opens up new horizons for those still at school. When will the other children be given this opportunity?"*

Djamel Eddine Cheriet is the IDM Ambassador for the Arab world. This year he coordinates the Arabic school pairing program. *"Playing with math is an effective approach to integrating mathematical knowledge, creativity and reasoning while having fun. For the first time, a school pairing programme between 20 classes from 5 Arab countries is enabling the participating pupils to get to know each other and, through play, to learn new skills and discover the beauty of mathematics."*

Rosa Alicia Cárdenas Puig coordinates the school pairing in Cuba: *"There's great enthusiasm among the students and teachers involved in this beautiful idea of school pairing to celebrate International Day of Mathematics: it creates an atmosphere that attracts people."*

The date of 14 March is already known as *Pi Day* and is celebrated in many countries around the world. It is named after the important number π , the ratio between the circumference and diameter of a circle, and approximately equal to 3.14. The IDM celebration expands Pi Day to include the whole spectrum of mathematics. Mathematical language and reasoning are accessible to everyone.

The IDM website is the main hub for the International Day of Mathematics:

www.idm314.org

It hosts information material to be used by press and organizers (including logos and flyers in different languages) as well as [proposals for activities](#) related to the theme for everyone interested in hosting an event. All the official material provided through the website is under an open license, which means it can be freely shared, translated, and adapted.

Partners:

The **International Mathematical Union (IMU)** is an international non-governmental and non-profit scientific organization, with the purpose of promoting international cooperation in mathematics.

The IDM is communicated and supported by the IDM website, which is hosted by **IMAGINARY**, a non-profit organization that communicates modern mathematics.

Sponsors:

The **Klaus Tschira Foundation** (which supports natural sciences, mathematics, and computer science in Germany) sponsors the website and the IDM communications.

The **Simons Foundation** sponsors specific IDM activities with Africa and Latin America.

The **International Mathematical Union** supports IDM special activities.

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Pictures:

The logo and all pictures below can be used freely for articles about the International Day of Mathematics. Please find high-resolution versions via the “Download Link”. The pictures are from locally organized events (exhibitions, workshops, festivals) to celebrate mathematics.

Logo of the International Day of Mathematics: <https://www.idm314.org/logos.html>

Press Kit page with images and press releases: https://www.idm314.org/press_kit.html



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