Elizabeth Cole-Kodikara PhD Looking at Space from all corners of the World

Elizabeth behind the telescope

She is an astronomer. Originally from the United States, she got her Masters and PhD in Finland, where she made many cool friends from **around the world**. She explores *stellar magnetic fields.* She says, this gives us a glimpse into what the Sun may have been like billions of years ago, when it was an active star - she probably knows best!



Answer me this - the 5 year old is asking the scientist

Elizabeth under the microscope

"One of the most frustrating things with astronomy is that people ask me what practical purpose it serves. Things we take for granted **like WiFi tech or GPS** originated from astronomy, but it is impossible to know what hypothetical future inventions will benefit people directly. On the other hand, astronomy is a **fascinating science** to most people, and explaining even a little about the universe and our place in it amidst **exoplanets, supermassive black holes colliding galaxies, and explosive supernovae** leads to some very interesting conversations with people."

"Why do we need two eyes if they can only look the same way?" "2 eyes give us 3-dimensional vision through something called "parallax." You can see this if you alternate between only having your right or left eye open, where close objects will shift left or right compared to far away objects as you switch between eyes. The same technique is used in astronomy to find the distance to stars; as the earth orbits around the Sun, closer stars will shift in position compared to far, far away background stars and we can measure the distance based on this shift."