

[Arecibo Observatory](#)'s massive radio dish was many things to many people: pulsar finder, broadcaster to aliens, asteroid mapper, Bond villain's hidden satellite dish, Puerto Rican icon, birthplace of future scientists.

It was our primary way of searching for asteroids headed for Earth.

Until seven months ago, that is, when gravity got the best of an engineering marvel that had endured everything thrown its way for decades and the entire platform [crashed down](#).

Since that fateful day, plenty of eyes have turned to analyzing what went wrong, while many hands have gotten to work sorting through and cleaning up the wreckage. And the brains have been doing what brains do best: dreaming of what science might come next for the site. For one group of scientists with deep ties to Arecibo, that meant dreaming up an entirely new type of telescope: one that would [fill the gap left by the iconic instrument](#), then go much further.

Now, the National Science Foundation (NSF), which owns the site, has determined that despite scientists' pleas, Arecibo Observatory won't be getting any new telescope to replace the loss.

"I don't think that this version has to necessarily be what a new, built version will look like," she added. "It could end up looking more like the original telescope, or it could look completely different from anything that we've imagined so far. The primary goal was to show that we could use that space and continue that legacy of really powerful science."

"We were worried that it could be even worse than this, that they might say, 'OK, just close down everything,'" Abel Méndez, an astronomer at the University of Puerto Rico at Arecibo who used the telescope in his research and teaching, told Space.com. "But my particular hopes were higher."

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