

SPACE EDUCATION AND OUTREACH SYMPOSIUM (E1)

Living In Space - Education And Outreach In Space Life Sciences and infrastructure development for capacity building (7.-A1.8)

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THE EUROPEAN ALTERED GRAVITY STUDENT NETWORK

Abstract

Attracting students to the altered gravity research field is an important challenge to build the next generation of scientists and engineers who will lead its development in the upcoming decades. In Europe, there are different initiatives that eventually allow students to access altered gravity conditions for their scientific projects, and to share the results obtained.

To cope efficiently with the difficulties inherent in student projects, such as scarce access to test facilities or sophisticated instrumentation, lack of information and a steep learning curve, students need to share their interest and motivation even before being involved in an altered gravity research project. A platform offering research and fellowship opportunities, where lessons learnt can be gathered and even experimental setups and instrumentation recycled would certainly facilitate the process. Within the European educational framework, such a platform would also facilitate the exchange of students and the consolidation of international research partnerships.

For this reason an European Altered Gravity Student Network has been established. Its specific mission is to promote the different opportunities in Europe, to support the development of student projects in altered gravity conditions and to bring together students and experts, scientists and organizations within the sector. This paper will analyze the steps taken to establish the network, its current specific activities and the final scenario to be reached in a near future, as well as its potential for implementation in other regions of the world.