

SPACE EDUCATION AND OUTREACH SYMPOSIUM (E1)  
In Orbit - Postgraduate Space Education (4)

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MISSION CRITICAL: A GENERATION OF SOCIAL SCIENTISTS AND HUMANITIES SCHOLARS  
WELL-VERSED IN SPACE**Abstract**

The training of space scientists and engineers is significantly outpacing the training of researchers in the social sciences and humanities with in-depth knowledge of space science and exploration activities. Increased spacefaring and incremental solar system colonization will lead to a wide range of human impacts – not just for those directly involved, but also for the social, political, economic, and spiritual systems of those who remain Earth-bound. In terms of human impacts: what happens in space, doesn't stay in space. Accordingly, more space-literate scholars of humanity are needed, and fast, to anticipate near-future developments, share their knowledge with stakeholders ranging from the public to governments to scientists to corporations, and advise policy-makers. This paper will review some activities of the Astrobiology Society Focus Group of the NASA Astrobiology Institute, towards the consolidation of a research community which will encourage the training of postgraduate students in these crucial areas.