

SPACE EDUCATION AND OUTREACH SYMPOSIUM (E1)
On Track - Undergraduate Space Education (3)

Author: Mr. Sven Kevin van Langen
University of Twente, The Netherlands, s.k.vanlangen@student.utwente.nl

Dr. Mark Bentum
University of Twente, The Netherlands, m.j.bentum@utwente.nl

Mr. Martijn F. Brethouwer
University of Twente, The Netherlands, voorzitter@twentesat.nl

Mr. Robert Grootjans
University of Twente, The Netherlands, r.grootjans-1@student.utwente.com

Mr. Roelof Grootjans
University of Twente, The Netherlands, r.grootjans@student.utwente.nl

Mr. Rowan De Vries
University of Twente, The Netherlands, r.a.devries-2@student.utwente.nl

PERCEIVED VALUE OF STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN THE FIELD OF AEROSPACE
ENGINEERING FROM A STUDENT'S PERSPECTIVE.**Abstract**

The importance of student participation in space projects is well known. New students are needed to supplement the future workforce and both experience and enthusiasm are important factors to join a certain industry. Students can also offer fresh perspectives to existing problems in any field of engineering. It is also argued that it is very beneficial for the students themselves. This paper will clarify the point of view from students on student participation in aerospace engineering for their own interests, both personal and professional, as well as their general opinion on space research and development.

Qualitative interviews were held with several groups of (former) students: Students not (yet) engaged in a space project; Students in the concept stage of a space project; students at the end stages of a space project; Former students that worked on a space project during their student years and now found a career in the space field; Former students whom ended up in the aerospace industry but had little to none experience with this field of work during their studies. Both engineering and non-engineering students are of interest for this research. A broad range of questions are asked to the participants as this is mostly explorative research.

The aim of this paper is to increase student participation by means of a better understanding of student expectations and experiences. Projects better suited to student needs could be developed in the future. With this better understanding and improved projects, more student projects could be successfully launched by both universities and corporations. This should benefit both educational and corporate interests in active student involvement as more research will be done by the students and more students will be engaged and motivated in the space industry. Due to the nature of qualitative interviews students will come with ideas on how to increase student participation and make student projects more successful, so we can relay these to educational institutions and companies.