

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

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ESTONIAN STUDENT SATELLITE PROGRAM

**Abstract**

We present the concept, educational design, and achievements of the first five years of the Estonian Student Satellite Program (ESSP). Established in 2008, the ESSP is a nation-wide informal initiative with the strategic objective to support innovation and long term economic growth in the country. More specifically, the ESSP activities are designed to popularize careers in research and technology, to provide high-school, undergraduate, graduate, and post-graduate students with the hands-on experiences in space technology development, and to promote the knowledge based economy as the key factor for the economic independence of Estonia. The flagship project of the program is development of the first Estonian satellite ESTCube-1, a 1-unit Cube Satellite to be launched to space in April 2013. Since 2008, more than 80 students from different Estonian universities have been involved in the activities The Estonian Student Satellite Program. The program activities are included in the undergraduate curricula at the University of Tartu as a problem-based learning exercise. So far 30 undergraduate and graduate theses have been prepared based on the research carried out under the program; 3 doctoral dissertations will be based on the ESTCube-1 mission. High school students are actively involved into the project through the student summer camps. ESTCube-1 mission has generated massive media coverage in the country including a number of cover page articles in the leading newspapers.