

SPACE EDUCATION AND OUTREACH SYMPOSIUM (E1)
 Space Culture: Innovative Approaches for Public Engagement in Space (9)

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ADVOCATING FOR A NOBEL PEACE PRIZE: AN INNOVATIVE APPROACH TO PROMOTING
 GLOBAL SPACE ENGAGEMENT

Abstract

This paper relates to the work of a group of volunteers who successfully secured the nomination of the International Space Station (ISS) partners for the 2014 Nobel Peace Prize. ISS has been a platform for international collaboration and research for more than fifteen years, but currently faces a public relations challenge. While fifteen nations are involved in the daily operation of ISS and sixty-nine nations have performed space-based research on the station, many in both the public and private sectors do not understand the value that the station provides to society, and the diplomatic achievement that it represents. This status quo calls for greater innovation in the methods used to communicate the value of ISS as a political model for future international projects on Earth and in space.

ISS has brought together countries that were mortal enemies in the recent past, in particular cold war rivals the United States and Russia. It has connected once-competing technologies into the most complex engineering artifact ever developed by humankind. Reducing the discrepancy between the actual and perceived value of these achievements is a great challenge in an era that has witnessed tightening budgets and increasing scrutiny of future expenditures. It is important to create public interest and understanding of the ISS program to highlight the critical role of international collaboration in future space endeavors.

At this time, the authors and their collaborators, together with the non-profit organization Space Safety Magazine, have secured several 2014 Nobel Prize nominations for the ISS Partnership, using the nomination process to reach out to members of the space community, politicians, university professors, and other influential public figures. Since the nomination deadline, the outreach campaign has been expanded to a broader swath of the public through both local and international organizations. A key message has been the duality of ISS as a global resource that is accessible on a local scale, as communicated through tailored multimedia demonstrations highlighting benefits to individual countries, especially those outside the fifteen partnership nations.

While the ultimate success metric for this initiative relies on a decision from the Norwegian Nobel

Committee, the authors will report on the efficacy of using such a recognizable prize as the focal point for a campaign to enhance public outreach across national and cultural divides.