

SPACE EDUCATION AND OUTREACH SYMPOSIUM (E1)
Open Space: Participatory Space Education and Outreach (8)

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AFRICA2MOON - HARNESSING THE INSPIRATIONAL POWER OF SPACE EXPLORATION FOR
AFRICA'S DEVELOPMENT

Abstract

Africa is the world's second-largest and second-most-populous continent. It is often thought of as a continent in turmoil, yet it also has great potential. Last year, 7 of the 10 fastest growing economies in the world were in Africa. In addition, Africa has the youngest population among all the continents; 50% of Africans are 19 years old or younger. However, as many as one in five university graduates leave the continent.

Africa2Moon aims to harness the unique motivational power of space exploration to inspire this youthful population. Inspiration is critical for the future of Africa. Inspiration leads to education and in turn education leads to opportunity and economic empowerment.

The Africa2Moon Mission is designed to inspire the youth of Africa to believe that "They Can Reach for the Moon" by reaching for the moon through education science.

The Africa2Moon Mission is a multi-year public participation space programme designed to showcase existing space capabilities on the continent; to provide opportunities for researchers and aerospace professionals to work on a world-class project; to retain and attract essential space science and engineering skills in and to Africa; to inspire the next generation of space scientists and engineers from Africa; and through the continent's first lunar mission, to make a meaningful scientific contribution to global lunar research.

The project is being driven the Foundation for Space Development, a non-profit entity that focuses on space education and outreach to promote Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics (STEAM) awareness and literacy. Last November the Foundation launched a crowd-funding campaign to raise seed funding for a Phase I study. The study will be based on the outcome of a competitive Call for Proposals for mission concepts. The Call was open to participation by the international community, but with the requirement that the Principal Investigator of each proposal had to be domiciled in Africa.

In parallel with the Phase I study, the Foundation has been running numerous education and public outreach events focusing on space exploration, space applications and lunar science.

The feasibility study will be the starting point for the next phase of the Africa2Moon, which will comprise an expanded outreach participation program and a detailed mission design.

This presentation will describe the objectives and scope of the Africa2Moon mission and will describe the progress achieved since the inception of the programme.