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INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AND GENERAL PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT FOR FUTURE
LUNAR MISSIONS

Abstract

The interest in setting foot on the Moon was first presented as a race between agencies representing different countries and aiming to dominate spaceflight technologies. However, in the past seventy years, the competition has evolved into a continuing international partnership with the common goal of maintaining a sustained presence of humans in space. The Moon is not yet a tangible entity for the general public, but it resonates more deeply than far-away space exploration missions. In this work, the possibility of tapping into the positive association the public has for space exploration to generate funding for Lunar exploration and the founding of a "Moon Agency" is explored.

This work proposes the establishment of a specialised international agency that could be considered as the first common "Moon Agency". The proposed "Moon Agency" would connect multiple nations and would be in charge of directing the activities related to the exploration and future exploitation of the Moon. The agency is conceived as an organisation linked with government institutions. Legal issues and concerns regarding lunar surface operations and orbital activities would be regulated by a single, international, impartial organisation and decided among all the actors involved. The baselines for space ethics regarding Lunar activities are set in order to preserve fairness between nations, especially in the exploitation of Lunar resources. The organisation of the "Moon Agency" is inspired by successful international organisations, like the United Nations, and the lessons learned in their dealing with terrestrial issues in a global and cooperating frame.

This paper also focuses on possible strategies to manage effectively the involvement of public and private companies in space activities concerning lunar exploration missions. Common practices of public engagement such as crowd-sourcing, are considered for novel use in space field applications in order to combine fundraising and public involvement activities.