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Space Expectations: Involving the Public in Space Activities (2)

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THE BARCELONA MOON TEAM AT GLXP

Abstract

The Barcelona Moon Team is an LOI holder at the international competition Google Lunar X-Prize. The team is currently in the final part of the application process to become an Official Team by March 2010.

In 2007, Google and the X-Prize Foundation together established a prize to reach the Moon with private funding and encourage entrepreneurs, technicians and scientists from around the globe to develop technologies that will use the Moon as a platform for solar system exploration and a source of energy solutions for the Earth.

This paper explains additional objectives and challenges for the Barcelona Moon Team: to create a tractor project for the small but growing Spanish aerospace industry, and to create alliances and boost business relations between companies and universities, to be able to take on greater challenges in the future. The mission will also carry scientific payloads developed by local Universities and it wants to contribute in the development of the Spanish legal framework, to create the basis of a public access to the space both for exploration and business development. The recent news in the space policy environment indicates a radical shift in the strategy for space exploration, with a strong boost for the private sector, in line with the GLXP goals.

Space is still a great unknown to the general public, but is also an endless source of fascination. The project also wants to engage the whole society through an outreach strategy including media and educational programs to promote interest in space science and technology studies within the young people.

In short, the Barcelona Moon Team is developing a project that is socially engaged, technologically and economically viable, and aiming to exploit the GLXP as a catalyst for parallel goals besides the main objectives of the competition, which could lead a change of the paradigm in the current Spanish productive system.