

19th SYMPOSIUM ON SMALL SATELLITE MISSIONS (B4)
Hitchhiking to the Moon (8)

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THE INCORPORATION OF TRANSDISCIPLINARY THINKING INTO THE DEVELOPMENT OF
HITCHHIKING PAYLOADS**Abstract**

In the light of far reaching proposals of space technologists to go to Mars and asteroids, the Moon provides the opportunity for a questioning and critical engagement with ideas on how humans will want to interact, dwell and conduct themselves away from Earth. In the spirit of the exchange of ideas proposed by this forum and the offer to 'Hitchhike to the Moon', this paper offers perspectives from a non-space-technologist.

The research presented draws primarily on an artist-led project called Moon Vehicle, based in Bangalore, South India, which aimed to make evident the cultural dimensions of Chandrayaan-1's mission to the Moon. This project brought together design communities with the Indian Space Research Organisation, ISRO, through education/art practice projects that also involved children living near to where Chandrayaan was assembled.

What was revealing in the Moon Vehicle project was how a space agency presents many images and many imaginaries, depending on the viewpoint of the observer and that there is complexity interwoven between the mental image and material phenomenon of space technology in which lies the potential for new ways of thinking about the invitation to re-imagine cosmos that is offered via the spacecraft.

The possibility for exceptional new thinking though the encounters with the exceptionally unfamiliar environment of interplanetary space, made possible by space travel, lead to this proposal which suggests ways that Moon missions can invest in the unique potential they make available for valuable instances of uncommon thinking to occur.

The proposal here is to embrace the generosity and mutual trust involved in hitchhiking, to incorporate transdisciplinary approaches into the early stages of design processes in order to allow multiple and non-scientific objectives a valued place on Moon missions. Examples will be used to show how this incorporation could take place initially within analog sites, through which, a much broader engagement with the cultural constituencies who have an investment in the development of the Moon, could creatively inform these delicate and meaningful journeys.

This reflective presentation proposes new tools for thinking through what constitutes the ecology of meanings preceding and arising from the production of space technology, and how such awareness could be incorporated into Moon missions.