

## SPACE EDUCATION AND OUTREACH SYMPOSIUM (E1)

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## OUTSOURCE OUTREACH - UNDERSTAND AND ADAPT TO THE REAL NEEDS OF TOMORROW

**Abstract**

For years humanity has aspired to reach the stars; and after the great successes born out of the Space Race era, expectations rose. Yet after landing on the Moon and the subsequent deceleration of progress in space exploration, today we witness a paradox: There are those who always appreciate the need for humans to venture forth again, cherishing all the direct but mostly indirect benefits bound to come out of it, and there are still many who do not realize the pragmatic necessity to keep advancing and invest in space and its exploration. This in turn minimizes the potential of the space sector, as public opinion is usually connected with government funding and support. What is more, the brightest minds are directed elsewhere and not persuaded to work for placing humanity in space, which could be losing its brilliance.

With the current financial situation and budgets of agencies shrinking, we are caught in a vicious cycle as the funds dedicated to involving the public and convincing them about the importance of space, vanish. Still, the space sector cannot really survive without outreach, since it cannot attract interest by delivering direct, tangible and easily identifiable profits. Thus, a clever, cost-efficient and pioneering way to continue and expand stimulating the public has to be devised.

In this paper an attempt is made to re-establish the importance of space outreach and the commitment that current players in the space sector must take. There is an effort to redefine the message that we need to pass to the general public and optimize the means. The prime motivators that made humans explore throughout history are studied and compared with today's conditions and challenges. An idea of "outsourcing" the outreach procedure to young aspirant individuals is proposed, making use of healthy, constructive competition and following the paradigm of pioneering institutions and corporations.

Another aspect touched upon is the need to come up with a more personalized, targeted outreach process and aim not only to the general public, but to specific subgroups as well. Better coordination of outreach activities at a global level among space-faring nations is also considered as a logical next step, parallel with the coordination of efforts to improve in technical domains. Revitalizing and refining space-related outreach in today's world, after deeply understanding the needs of, benefits for and motivation of society, is examined as a necessary landmark to advance in off-the-Earth exploration again.