

SPACE EDUCATION AND OUTREACH SYMPOSIUM (E1)
Social Media for Space Education and Outreach Young Professional Virtual Forum (10-YPVF.5)

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SOCIAL MEDIA EDUCATION AND OUTREACH STRATEGY FOR THE 120 DAY HI-SEAS MARS
ANALOG MISSION

Abstract

The 120 day Mission 2 of Hawai'i Space Exploration Analog and Simulation (HI-SEAS) will take place March 28th, 2014 to July 26th, 2014. The crew of six researchers will live in the HI-SEAS Habitat at 8000ft elevation on the northern slope of Mauna Loa volcano, a suitable analog area for geological field work and modelling challenging conditions such as those that may be found on Mars.

The simulation will emulate real conditions of a Mars mission, thus there will be inbuilt delays for all communications and no live outreach activities will be possible. However, the experiences of "living on Mars" for four months will be shared with schools and the general public through videos, researcher blogs and social media such as Twitter, Instagram and Facebook, using online networks and STEM networks to deliver the material as broadly as possible, and attempting to develop an ambassador network external to the mission to support activities.

Outreach will be measured by performance metrics such as number of students participating through classroom outreach, members following on social media and number of retweets and shares of information about the mission together with average numbers of web page impressions of blog entries and videos. These baseline statistics will be taken at the date of the first press release about the mission, at the start of the mission and at regular intervals throughout the mission. A detailed log of all outreach activities will be maintained.

People newly engaged with the mission will be categorised in a basic way where possible as to whether they had previous interest and interaction with space science and industry, or whether they have become interested from a totally different background. This will be done by examining avatar profiles and conducting surveys.

Analysis will be undertaken to examine correlation of particular types of outreach activity with impact on performance metrics, and type of new audience, to establish the highest impact strategies and best ways of engaging new audiences.