

SPACE EDUCATION AND OUTREACH SYMPOSIUM (E1)
Enabling the Future - Developing the Space Workforce (5)

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POLISH SPACE PROFESSIONALS ASSOCIATION - THE BOTTOM-UP CREATED
ORGANISATION FOR SUPPORTING THE DEVELOPMENT OF POLISH SPACE SECTOR.

Abstract

The Polish Space Professionals Association (PSPA) is an organisation which aims to become a platform enabling networking, exchange of ideas and experience, as well as broadly understood cooperation between space professionals with a strong connection to Poland. Becoming a member state of the European Space Agency in November 2012, Poland is still developing its space industry, education and workforce.

It is truly believed that PSPA, being a bottom-up organised association is required in order to accelerate the growth of the Polish space sector. Similar organisations in other new ESA member states, such as Czech Republic and Hungary, are in their conceptual stages. However, already now a cooperation on this level has been initiated at the European Space Generation Workshop in Budapest in February 2016.

The PSPA is currently a project being incubated within the "New Space Foundation", one of non-profit NGOs operating in Poland. The process of drafting the Charter and legal registration of the association in Poland is still ongoing at the time of writing this abstract, nonetheless planned to be finished in May 2016.

Despite being only on voluntary work of its members who are full-time working professionals, the Association can claim several milestones within its first one year of activity. The official logo, website, Facebook fanpage and the LinkedIn group enabled the outreach to over hundred students and professionals from within the target group.

Three projects have been determined as the most vital for the first years of activity. Those are organising a network of student ambassadors at Polish universities offering space-related degrees and courses, organisation of the "PSPA Academy" conference, creating a report summarising best practices and recommendations for creating a Polish Trainee programme at ESA.

Out of those the conference organised together with the Students' Astronautical Society from the Warsaw University of Technology served as the meeting point for students and professionals, with talks and discussion panel highlighting the necessity for such an exchange.

The presentation will also provide an insight into the challenges encountered during setting up of the organisation, therefore serving the general conference audience. The plans for the nearest future include also preparing a presentation about the Polish space sector to be delivered at the companies where PSPA members are active, such as e.g. Noordwijk, Stevenage and Bremen. We believe that our work allows for better development of the Polish space sector and become a first-choice association for Polish space professionals.