

International Cooperation for Space Exploration (12)

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DESIGNING A LOW COST MOON VILLAGE FOR ALL HUMANITY

Abstract

The Moon Village is not a traditional space program. It is a paradigm shift that requires a fundamental change in our thinking about the way we design and govern international space exploration projects. Recently a workshop hosted by Silicon Valley VC Steve Jurvetson explored whether a lunar settlement could be possible for a few billion dollars (rather than the tens of billions regularly cited). The workshop concluded that it would cost \$3-5 Billion USD to create a self-sustainable human settlement for two humans. However, outdated approaches are holding back progress. To explore together we also need to design new ways of working together.

The Moon Village Alliance will unfold in the context of a truly unique governance scheme by integrating from the very beginning the perspectives and interests of all different stakeholders: governments, philanthropists, the private sector, established space powers and emerging space nations. At a moment in history that's likely to be remembered for its alarming divisiveness, the space community has the unique opportunity to coordinate efforts to create a powerful symbol of unity - a partnership wider and stronger than the ISS - promoting cultural inclusivity. The Moon Village could be a turning point, representing us all united as human species. Moreover, it has the potential to become an innovation platform and research network for the 21st century. A new way of thinking and doing that breaks down the barriers dividing the disciplines and facilitating the sharing of expertise between a global community.

What if space exploration could give humanity purpose for sustainable, unbound growth? The Apollo moon shots, led to kids in Iowa launching rockets—and it was a nationwide optimism that came from a dream. The tangible goal of a Low Cost Moon Village has the potential of providing Humankind with the perspective it needs to re-boost optimism against decline and fear.

Finally, the Moon Village governance might create powerful innovations useful back on Earth. What if working towards this goal can help us rethink all the systems we are part of today? What if we approach the Moon Village as a way of experimenting with and prototyping international collaboration methods, consensus building, finance, and creativity? The Moon Village is a pivotal setting for demonstrating human, technology, institutional and financial cooperation for doing differently things not only on the Moon, but as a precedent for other destinations on Earth and in space.