

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

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SPACE: THE DRIVER OF THE DESIRED FUTURE IN AFRICA - RECOMMENDATIONS FROM
THE 1ST AFRICAN SPACE GENERATION WORKSHOP

Abstract

Space is an enabler for the economy and space technology and applications benefit people and nations. For Africa, the space sector is also an opportunity for socio-economic development. The African Union clearly recognizes, in its space strategy and policy, that space applications can “have a significant impact in achieving the sustainable development goals”. One of the greatest challenges for Africa is to develop indigenous capacity in this critical area of space. It is imperative to train the youth of Africa in matters of space technology, science, policy and provide opportunities for learning and networking.

Space Generation Advisory Council (SGAC) under the United Nations (UN) programme on space applications is a student and young professional organization that presents the voice of the youth on matters of space at the UN Committee On the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS). SGAC, thus, fills an important gap in the space sector, connecting the younger generation with established players in industry and academia and providing experiential learning opportunities. As part of its implementation strategy, SGAC conducts workshops at the regional, local and international levels. These workshops gather SGAC members and experts from the space community to tackle matters of critical interest to the region. They play a significant role in deepening the involvement of the young generation in the space sector as well as building relationships among them. Nowhere are these workshops more crucial than the African region with its nascent space sector amidst increasing national ambitions.

The First African Space Generation Workshop (AF-SGW) was held on 16th and 17th November 2017 at the Federal University of Technology (FUTA) in Akure City, Nigeria. A total of 100 delegates from 12 countries were selected to participate in the first AF-SGW. Delegates got together to discuss some of the most urgent issues of interest to the African space sector in African space policy, Space technologies development for Africa, Roles of STEAM in developing the space industry in Africa and Space in driving the African economy/ aerospace start-up sector. The first AF-SGW provided a platform for students and young professionals in Africa to lend their voice to the global discussions. It was also an important milestone that allowed new relationships to be forged, both personal and professional, that will hopefully strengthen the space community on the continent. This paper discuss the outcomes of the workshop, specifically the recommendations from the working groups.