

IAF SPACE EDUCATION AND OUTREACH SYMPOSIUM (E1)
Interactive Presentations - IAF SPACE EDUCATION AND OUTREACH SYMPOSIUM (IP)

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SPACEUP FRANCE: GIVING THE SPACE COMMUNITY PLACES TO SHARE

Abstract

Space has always been an inspiration for many people, either as a passion or even shaping their life and professional experience. Some of them are feeling part of a community and are eager to meet other space enthusiasts. SpaceUp, the space un-conference, was born in 2010 in San Diego. The first French event was held at ESA-HQ in Paris in 2013. SpaceUp are participant-driven events, usually over a weekend, bringing together a community of passionate people, wanting to share new ideas about space. The topics are various, ranging from telescopes and astronomy to rocket science and satellite engineering, embracing also space art, space law, space travel, etc. What does it take to transcend this concept, and pushed by the community itself, create places for these different people to come together and share their space experience? SpaceUp France was a legal association, created by the first French SpaceUp organizing team and passed along to the next one, for practical matters (bank account, legal existence). With time, and especially since 2015, the association scope has shifted and enlarged, towards being an entity supporting new social space ambitions. In this paper, we give tips and lessons to create an organization whose aim is to give freedom of initiative to a community, and how to use its potential. We created different status for the national board (administration and coordination) and organizing teams. While easing the organization of new SpaceUp by alleviating the team from the association paperwork to focus on the event, this new direction allowed past organizers to stay and talk about new initiatives. This resulted in the creation of two new events. *miniSpaceUp*, over just one evening, allowing the local community to gather and eventually finding new teams for the next big SpaceUp. They can also easily be coordinated and held simultaneously in different cities. *TheLastJeudi* (*Space Rendez-Vous* outside France) is the new-born. It is an informal gathering of the community, held every last Thursday of the month. Every month, since February 2018, free, open access events, have been held in Paris, Toulouse, Cannes, Lille and Bordeaux. We have been happily surprised by the success of this event, still growing. We have been contacted by people outside of France that wish to create one in their cities, and now Glasgow, Oxford, Rome, Milan, Turin, Dublin, Budapest, Bremen, Bengaluru and more are in the process of having their own Space Rendez-Vous.