

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

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PROMOTING THE DEVELOPMENT OF YOUNG SPACE PROFESSIONALS ON HARWELL
CAMPUS

Abstract

The Harwell Campus is known as the space gateway for the United Kingdom. Based in Oxfordshire, the campus hosts over 80 space organisations and more than 800 space professionals. Although a few networking opportunities were held on site, none was specifically addressing the younger space community on campus. Moreover, in conversation with several young professionals on site, it was clear the interest in creating a more dynamic community and make the most of the co-location of a significant number of space companies. As a result of personal initiative, the Next Generation Space Network was formed in November 2017 aiming to engage the younger space community on campus. The main objectives of this initiative were to connect young space professionals, raise awareness of the space activities on site and provide a series of opportunities to foster career development. In the first month of its existence, the network organised a speed mentoring event, secured the support from several space organisations on campus and had more than 50 young professionals registering their interest in the activities. In early 2018, the network was invited by the Harwell Campus to support the development of *Connect Harwell Nxt Gen*, targeting students and young professionals from all disciplines on site, including sectors like life sciences, energy and space. The Next Generation Space Network is now under the umbrella of *Connect Harwell Nxt Gen* and benefits from the support provided by several organisations on site (programme partners) aiming to help the *next generation* on campus. *Connect Harwell Nxt Gen* has organised several types of events since its creation, including training courses, visits to different organisations on site and social events, promoting the exchange of experiences between different disciplines. As part of *Connect Harwell Nxt Gen*, the space network is looking to expand its range of activities and collaborate with the local community, including the University of Oxford. At the same time, the network is currently working on a platform to promote the work of young space professionals on campus and provide support material to newcomers in the space sector.