

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

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EMBEDDING SPACE EDUCATION INTO THE UNITED KINGDOM'S NATIONAL CURRICULUM

Abstract

Considering the recent boom in the United Kingdom's space sector, with various spaceports being created around the country, and the introduction of a space sector apprenticeship, there is a need within the country to integrate space education into the national curriculum from a young age. Alongside providing sufficient education to encourage young people into space careers, it is important for them to understand the importance of expanding the UK's space presence.

Following the Destination Space and Destination Space 2 programmes, created and run by the UK Association for Science and Discovery Centre, workshops were run in schools and space science was heavily featured in science centres across the UK. There is now a need for similar initiatives to become permanent in schools.

By developing a model based on multi-disciplinary courses featuring a range of technical and non-technical space topics, a selection of courses at both primary and secondary levels will be proposed. Creating a nationwide programme in the area of space education would pave the way for new space leaders, and establish the UK as a global centre for the future of space exploration.

As two UKSEDS student volunteers, both of us have experience in creating career resources and outreach, specifically focused on the space sector. The ultimate aims of UKSEDS are to improve the knowledge base, skill sets, and hands-on experience levels of students in the UK, involve students in space exploration, and to promote the exploration of space.

Throughout our time on committees at UKSEDS and other organisations, our key findings have been the importance of making role models within the space sector more visible, capturing young peoples' interests using engaging outreach materials, and working with organisations to promote the growth of the space workforce. The only way that this is possible is through creating a steering committee of policy makers, education leaders, and space experts.

Through use of in-person as well as a variety of media, young people will be encouraged to engage with space content in their preferred medium. By providing ideas for learning objectives and competencies, role models, articles, hands-on and online activities, as well as resources from organisations such as UKSEDS, this programme will be distinctive from previous space initiatives in the country, with a focus on longevity. This new programme could be rolled out gradually, beginning with communities of existing space hubs, including Glasgow, Leicester, and Oxford.