

IAF SPACE EDUCATION AND OUTREACH SYMPOSIUM (E1)
Space Culture – Public Engagement in Space through Culture (9)

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ASSESSING OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN IN SPACE

Abstract

It is undeniable that various space agencies around the world have paved the way for women to contribute to space missions. NASA's Artemis mission aims to land the first woman on the Moon by 2024 and is currently providing training to nine women among the 18 astronauts selected for the future Artemis missions. The UAE Mars Mission saw a significant contribution from women. ESA claims to have pro-active policies to promote gender equality on a foundational level. Yet, statistics prove that women are still a minority in the space sector. The world still faces the challenge of advancing women's rights at the local level. Women are undeniably an integral part of the mission of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals that is intended to be achieved by 2030. "Space for Women" is one such initiative by United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs (UNOOSA) to promote women's empowerment in space. The purpose of this paper is to further assess the opportunities and barriers and proposes a comprehensive approach to further the involvement of women in the various space initiatives globally. It is necessary to reach out to nations that are emerging in the space-race, to resonate with local and universal concerns and also promote STEM education in the space domain. The various barriers that may be involved in the same will be detailed in the paper along with suggestive mitigation strategies.