

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

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LEARNING ABOUT SPACE EXPLORATION RESEARCH THROUGH CINEMA: THE NEW SPACE  
FILM FESTIVAL AT HARVARD & MIT

**Abstract**

The Space Consortium at Harvard MIT is a 501(c)3 NGO, founded in Fall 2017 when a concerted effort supported by the Harvard Provost Office brought together faculty members from Harvard and MIT to work towards a common goal: creating an academic space hub for multidisciplinary space research. Today, the consortium serves a network of over 530 affiliates (students, faculty and alumni) in the US, including more than 30 faculty members at Harvard and MIT, working on a wide range of topics, including Space Genetics, Space Economics and Financing, Space Debris and Near-Earth Objects Detection and Tracking, and Space Law and Policy. Strengthening relations between the multiple disciplines of the field is a key driving force for the Consortium.

During Space Week at Harvard, the Consortium's main annual outreach event, the Consortium organizes a series of free public in-person events for the greater Cambridge-Boston community as well as free public online events for all. Its main event is the week-long "Space Film Festival", launched in 2020. Every evening of Space Week at Harvard, participants are invited to join free showings of key space movies followed by expert panels of astronauts, astronomers, movie makers, space lawyers and more to comment on the movies. These public cultural space events aim to promote unprecedented and fruitful exchanges between an impressive array of affiliated top experts, business and community leaders, faculty, researchers, educators, students, alumni and the public. Its goal is also to allow the public to engage with critical discussions related to the multidisciplinary issues affecting the aerospace industry today.

Last year, through the COVID-19 pandemic, The Space Consortium organized its entire Space Week at Harvard 2021, including the Space Film Festival online for free, and tripled its number of attendees. In 2022, Space Week at Harvard and the Space Film Festival are set to be held April 18-22nd 2022. Surveys will be shared with all participants of Space Week at Harvard and of the Space Film Festival and, building upon last year's recommendations and feedback, avenues are being explored to enable online free participation to all events. The goal of this presentation at the IAC 2022 Space Education E1.9 will be to highlight the key lessons learned from the 2022 feedback survey results, to brainstorm with the IAC Space Education community on the ways forward as well as to share best practices regarding public hybrid (in person and online) cultural space events.