

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

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THE “ZAHRA KOSMOSDA” AN ONLINE SPACE-TECH PLATFORM: ACCESSIBILITY OF SPACE
TOPICS FOR ALL AND ITS IMPACT ON THE CREATION OF SPACE CULTURE IN AZERBAIJAN

Abstract

From the moment we heard the “beep” from space (the first radio signal received from the Sputnik-1 satellite on October 4th, 1957) to this day, in less than a century, we - the Earthlings have spread across a vast area in space. And we go on. As we explore space, we continually push our bounds and broaden our minds to discover new places and topics. Over time, these new space topics begin to spread everywhere and anyway reach people. The issue at hand is the degree of comprehension among individuals and whether the ultimate message aligns with the original one. Especially, as most people get that news through unreliable sources on social media platforms. In this context, the article focuses on the availability of reliable and language-wise accessible sources for understanding topics related to space and its impact on the emergence of space culture in Azerbaijan. The “Zahra Kosmosda” (Zahra in Space, <https://www.zhtrakosmosda.com/en>) an online space-tech platform, on which I will base my analysis throughout the article, was founded by me as a result of the search for answers to these questions. The goal of the platform is to create a space culture by bringing space to all. Zahra, the protagonist of the platform, is a fictional character in space. Through her space adventures, Zahra conveys seemingly sophisticated information in a storytelling format for people to understand, even if they do not have any space-related background. During this time, I observed how is it important to not only share the information as it is, but also to consider the language, culture, and history of the audience, as well as those of the person conveying the information. Well, how do these nuances affect the promotion and creation of space culture in Azerbaijan? What does it bring us that society gains a space culture as a result of the accessibility of space information? How do these factors contribute to the future of space exploration and the development of space technologies? The article is looking into the answers to the above questions based on data gathered during the activity of the “Zahra Kosmosda” platform, feedback, and the platform’s demonstrable impacts. In conclusion, once the aforementioned hurdles have been dismantled, we will examine the means of advancing in the domain by merging our diversity as global societies on the path to space.