

IAF SPACE EDUCATION AND OUTREACH SYMPOSIUM (E1)  
Interactive Presentations - IAF SPACE EDUCATION AND OUTREACH SYMPOSIUM (IP)

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EMPOWERING THE NEXT GENERATION IN SPACE: SGAC'S MENTORING COMMITTEE  
ADOPTS A GLOBAL APPROACH TO SPACE EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

**Abstract**

The Space Generation Advisory Council (SGAC) has been at the forefront of fostering global collaboration and mentorship within the space community. The Mentoring Committee within SGAC over the last year has played a pivotal role in orchestrating global education, outreach, and mentoring through its several activities.

Mentoring Program, the flagship event of our committee, is held bi-annually in spring and fall. In the academic year 2023-2024, we received hundreds of applications from potential mentees and mentors. We carefully filtered them and began the matching process. The mentees were matched to their mentors based on various criteria, the most important being professional interest and geographic preference (to ease communication and avoid language barriers). We also developed our very own algorithm to automate the matching process efficiently. This innovative approach led to the formation of over 100 mentor-mentee pairs, transcending geographical boundaries and connecting individuals from diverse backgrounds.

In addition to the mentoring sessions, we also organized two large-scale Space Careers Pathway Workshops, employing a "speed mentoring" format. These region-specific workshops focused on Asia-Pacific, Africa, South America, and North America, and were attended by many students and young professionals. Prominent space leaders were also a part of these workshops and voluntarily offered valuable insights and guidance to aspiring professionals. Notably, these workshops were free to attend, ensuring accessibility for individuals from all walks of life.

The impact of these initiatives extends beyond individual success stories and the benefits are not limited to just the mentees. The introduction of the "Best Mentor Award" further reinforces the commitment to acknowledging and appreciating the efforts of mentors, creating a positive feedback loop to encourage their continued engagement.

One distinctive outcome of SGAC's Mentoring Program is the longevity of the relationships forged. Beyond the formal mentoring sessions, mentor-mentee pairs continue their collaboration, making lasting contributions to the space sector. The mentoring committee of SGAC, driven by principles of love, respect, empathy, and cooperation, not only facilitates education and outreach but also cultivates enduring partnerships and collaborations. Through innovative mentoring programs and inclusive workshops, SGAC's Mentoring Committee will not only continue breaking down barriers to entry in the space sector but also nurture a culture of continuous learning, collaboration, and growth that extends far beyond.