

IAF SPACE EDUCATION AND OUTREACH SYMPOSIUM (E1)
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HOW AND WHY PEOPLE JOIN THE UK SPACE SECTOR: RESULTS OF THE 2024 SPACE
CENSUS

Abstract

The Space Census is a national survey of individuals in the UK space sector and provides a unique insight into the pathways that people take to enter the space workforce. The results of the 2024 Space Census will build on the baseline data collected from the inaugural 2020 Space Census, and will provide us with detailed information about the routes that people take to join the UK space workforce, from what inspired them to work in space, through to the undergraduate and postgraduate degrees studied, and their access to continuing professional development. This paper will use the lens of a three-component model for behavioural change: motivation, capability, and opportunity to explore how and why people join the UK space sector.

The 2024 Space Census will be conducted via an online form from March to May 2024, shared widely with the UK space sector by government, regional space clusters, trade bodies, learned societies, and companies. It will comprise approximately 60 questions covering demographic information, work information, experiences of discrimination, and paths into the sector. The target audience will be people working in the UK space sector. This included those working in industry, academia, the military, government, and the non-profit sector, whether in a space-specific role (e.g. satellite engineer) or not (e.g. marketing). The target sample size is 1,000 people working in the upstream, midstream, and downstream space sector, or in academia.

The release of the 2024 Space Census results will mark a significant step in our ongoing efforts to understand the UK space workforce. By providing detailed insights into workforce demographics and trends, the 2024 Space Census will support decision-makers in developing evidence-based policies and strategies that address the evolving needs of the sector. The results will serve as a valuable benchmarking tool, allowing the UK space sector to compare its workforce with those of other nations.