

IAF SPACE EDUCATION AND OUTREACH SYMPOSIUM (E1)
Space Culture: New Processes of Public Engagement in Space through Culture and Art (9)

Author: Dr. Lily Hibberd
Université Paris Diderot (Paris 7), France

VENUS CONVERSATIONS: 2024 TO 2034

Abstract

Venus Conversations 2024-2034 is an art-science project centred on the planet Venus. It has been initiated in anticipation of a new era of discovery with three international Venus missions scheduled from the end of the 2020s. The Venus Conversations project will publicly launch in November 2024 at the Science Museum in London. The context for conversations around Venus arises from two years of research and dialogue between artists, art curators, planetary scientists, and museum collection managers. The project is directly related to the topic of IAC-24 Session 9 as it promotes new avenues for sustained public engagement in space through culture and art in the lead up to the next Venus space missions.

This paper will introduce the objectives of this conversational Venus art-science project. These include fostering new ways to perceive and imagine Venus through artistic and aesthetic processes. Over a ten-year period, it will build a rigorous interdisciplinary community focused on Venus to closely connect its intended audiences of artists, curators, museums, astrophysicists and space agencies. The project will also produce varied creative outcomes and public events, including artworks, performances, exhibitions, publications, and podcasts to reach a diverse and wide public. Conversation will act as the medium to make the space science of Venus inviting and inclusive for communities of every culture, class and generation without reducing its sophistication or difficulty.

Venus Conversations 2024-2034 is led by artist, researcher and curator Lily Hibberd (AUS-FR). The project curatorial team includes art-science curator and critic Annick Bureaud (FR) and art-science curator and scholar Claudia Schnugg (AT). The project features collaborating scientists from EnVision, the joint European Space Agency-NASA mission to Venus due to launch in 2031. Major cultural institutions involved in the project are the Science Museum London, Sydney's Powerhouse Museum, and the Observatory of Paris, based on their significant Venus-related artefacts. Comparable organisations in Asia, Africa and South America will be invited to participate as the project evolves. Diverse artists from around the world are making important work about Venus, a community that the project will support and augment in relationship with museum and space communities.

This project is unique for its sustained approach to establish a meaningful and lasting rapport between science and society through artistic approaches in a shared mission to rediscover Venus. It offers the international space community an innovative human-centred and inclusive art-science model for engaging the public in a dialogue that transcends science communication.