

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

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MASSACHUSETTS SPACE WEEK, A STATE-WIDE EFFORT FOR PUBLIC SPACE EDUCATION &
OUTREACH

Abstract

Massachusetts Space Week, organized by the Space Consortium, is a new initiative aimed at democratizing space education and outreach across the state of Massachusetts. Scheduled every April near International Earth Day (April 22nd), this week-long series of free events is designed to bridge the gap between the academic community and the general public, fostering a deeper understanding and appreciation of space sciences. As a grassroots volunteer community initiative led by Massachusetts-based space faculty, academics, and researchers, the Space Consortium's mission is to disseminate transdisciplinary space research and resources, which are often confined within academic departments, to a wider audience. Events during Massachusetts Space Week include public transdisciplinary talks, student workshops, an open "Space Day" at local Museums featuring citizen science activities, a space ethics workshop, star-gazing events, and a space career fair.

These activities reflect the consortium's commitment to making space science accessible and engaging to all. The Space Consortium eagerly seeks the opportunity to present its structure, ongoing projects, and insights from past events at the IAC 2024 SE1 Session 9 on "Space Culture" a forum dedicated to space outreach and communication.

By sharing experiences and lessons learned from our Week-long series of space education and outreach events, the consortium aims to gain valuable feedback from the IAC community. This feedback will be instrumental in enhancing the effectiveness of future outreach efforts and in furthering the consortium's goal of sharing space science with a broader audience. Massachusetts Space Week aims to serve as a model for how community-led initiatives can play a critical role in educational outreach. The goal of this presentation would be to highlight and enable discussions on the challenges and successes of grassroots science communication at the IAC 2024.