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FROM INSPIRATION TO ORBIT:
SPACE PIONEERS' ROLE IN CRAFTING TOMORROW'S SPACE GENERATIONS

Abstract

As humanity navigates the ever-evolving landscape of space exploration, the need to integrate space activities into diverse terrestrial professional sectors becomes paramount. During the past few generations of humans on Earth, space activities have emerged as a major distinguishing factor from the past. Space will become an even more crucial part of our identity as a civilization, and therefore, it is necessary to expand the scope of space activities to various terrestrial professional sectors that are not typically associated with space presently.

This paper aims to highlight the difficulties, prospects and creative methods employed by Space Pioneers, an Italian non-profit association that organises space-related events to inspire the young generations to be ambitious and pursue their aspirations.

Space Pioneers aims to create a space workforce of the future through volunteers and participants, especially the youth who will become the backbone of the entire space sector. Space Pioneers promotes STEAM education, and it's not uncommon for people who attend its events to pursue careers in fields other than engineering or science. Our space-related events are designed to be inclusive and welcoming to participants from all backgrounds, inspiring them with the wonders of space. Space Pioneers is currently organising the following periodic events:

- Analog Astronaut Missions
- International Space Camp
- Space Exploration Game
- Type X - Tech Beyond Tomorrow Conference

The paper sheds light on Space Pioneers' commitment to inspiring ambition through space-related events, fostering an environment that encourages individuals to explore unconventional career paths within the space industry.

Despite its noble mission, Space Pioneers, like many volunteer-driven entities, has encountered and continues to grapple with challenges, some of which are still relevant at the time of writing this paper, including funding, partnerships, and managing a part-time volunteer team among others.

Through lessons learned and recommendations, this paper serves as a blueprint for charity space activities and contributes to the broader discourse on cultivating a space workforce that extends beyond traditional engineering and science fields. By showcasing the practical applicability of its initiatives and the impact on participants' career trajectories, Space Pioneers' experiences offer valuable insights for organizations and individuals dedicated to shaping the future of space exploration.