



The Ecsite Space Group

Conference Session

Report

9 June 2016 – Graz (Austria)

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1. The Ecsite Space Group

The Ecsite Space Group offers a platform for science centres and museums to improve and extend communication about European space activities by helping science centres and space professionals to work together with non-specialists to develop collaborative projects and events.

The group is chaired by Marc Moutin, Director of Exhibitions at Cité de l'Espace, France, Ana Noronha, Executive Director of Ciência Viva, Portugal, and Maria Menendez, Head of ESA Corporate Exhibitions and Events, France.

Joining the Ecsite Space Group is an opportunity to getting closer to space professionals and science centres willing to communicate about space. It also allows to be better informed about space news, programs, and discoveries. The Space Group offers opportunities to share experiences, expertise, knowledge, tools, resources and best practices.

For Europe's main space actors like the European Space Agency (ESA), national space agencies, industries, research institutions, and academia, the Space Group offers the possibility to build close collaborations with science communication professionals. The group benefits from the already established European networks of Ecsite and the European Space network of ESA and its member states.



Astronaut Jean-François Clervoy follows the intervention of Maria Menendez during the Space group session in the main conference

2. Speakers and Convenor

Convenor:

Maria Menendez Head of Corporate Exhibitions and Events (ESA)

Speakers:

Jean Francois Clervoy, Astronaut (ESA)

Marc Moutin, Exhibitions, Shows and Development Director (Cite de l'Espace)

Ana Noronha, Executive Director (Ciencia Viva)

Tina Ibsen, Head of Science and Outreach (Tycho Brahe Planetarium)



Maria Menendez, Astronaut Jean-François Clervoy and Ana Noronha during their interventions at the Space Group session during Ecsite Annual Conference in Graz

3. Abstract

International Cooperation is a key for space: from the study of the Universe to the first permanently inhabited, international outpost in Earth orbit - the International Space Station (ISS). In this session, we will invite experts from the European Space Agency, the industry, the scientific community and representatives of science centres and museums to share content and expertise on the theme of the ISS, the world's largest international scientific venture ever.

Among the topics that will be highlighted in the session: Europe's key contribution to the Station; research activity carried out by astronauts in 'microgravity' conditions; unique environment to observe our planet. Science centres and museums have a role to play in engaging the public on these important issues. They have skills and expertise to use space images and data to build exhibitions, events and educational tools to communicate with different target audiences.

4. The session

The session started with ESA Astronaut Jean Francois Clervoy giving a general overview on the European Space Agency's activities, with focus on the missions of European astronauts to the International Space Station.

He highlighted that since 1998, the ESA/European Astronaut Centre (EAC) is established in Germany to prepare an ESA astronaut corps of experts in the fields of science, technology and medicine. Since 2001 European astronauts have been flying to the ISS to carry out scientific and technological research, delivering insights that cannot be achieved on Earth. European astronauts have also performed essential extra-vehicular activity - spacewalks - to assemble key elements of the ISS. His presentation ended on a general outlook on what are the next steps in Space exploration.

Ana Noronha was in charge of presenting the Space group objectives, its achievements so far and future projects, concentrating especially in the fantastic results that the Rosetta toolkit achieved with more than 24 events organised and 37.037 visitors reached across 16 European countries.

Marc Moutin presented the work developed by Cite de l'Espace for the Ecsite Space Group focusing on the update of the Rosetta toolkit that will be available by the end of June and on the new pilot project, the ISS: Living and working in Space that will be available in December. He presented the focus of the exhibition (what the toolkit will contain, how the graphic identity will look like as well the main topics covered by the panels).

Tina Ibsen presented the programme "Rumrejsen 2015" that celebrated Andreas Morgensen 10 day mission at the International Space Station. 15 partners from Science centres, universities and media among others put in place this programme with 5 main focus areas: Events, educational material, competitions, teacher training courses and outreach. The program was a huge success and some of the activities tested then will be expanded into materials for the Ecsite Space Group project, the ISS: Living and working in Space.

All of the presentations used in the sessions can be downloaded [clicking here](#).