

LunarSat Outreach and Education Initiative

Gernot E. Groemer, Institut of Astrophysics, Univ. Innsbruck, Austria

LunarSat is a proposal for a lunar microprobe to be launched around 2002. It shall investigate the lunar South Pole's suitability for the first permanent human outpost.

This mission is primarily being carried out by young professionals and students across Europe. It aims to involve more than 50 000 youngsters in ESA/EU member countries. By means of multimedia learning kits, a Internet/Real-life based game called "Mooncivilization" and other initiatives, LunarSat aims to create a self-sustaining outreach model which would be the first of its kind.

The Public Outreach and Education Division managed to reach more than 10 Million people via press activities in 1999 in Germany and Austria only and attracted several sponsors to support the outreach activities. Although the advertisement has been minimal, a strong interest from schools and the educational community is experienced.

The LunarSat Outreach strategy is a very-low budget way of reaching, involving and stimulating the next generation of space enthusiasts and might be a promising way of doing space related outreach in Europe.

Details on the LunarSat mission can be found at: <http://www.microsat.de>