

International Lunar Organization: Connecting Lunar Explorers

James D. Burke, Ayodele A. Faiyetole, Florian Mayrhofer, Francisco Müller Sánchez,
Yuki D. Takahashi

International Space University
Strasbourg, France
yukimoon @ socrates.berkeley.edu
Phone 1-510-643-1653; Fax 1-510-643-5204

Keywords: lunar coordination proposal

Thus far, various space agencies (including Japan, Europe, USA, China, India) have planned their lunar missions independently without a common forum for coordination. There also exist many independent groups worldwide related to lunar exploration, such as International Lunar Exploration Working Group, International Lunar Explorers Society, United Nations Office of Outer Space Affairs, and Space Resources Roundtable. We propose an International Lunar Organization (ILO) to facilitate communication among these groups and coordinate their efforts. ILO should have representatives from existing Moon-dedicated groups and encourage participation of groups from non space-faring nations.

The beginning of an organized international lunar effort should take advantage of the established international partnership of the ISS. As a member group of ILO, we propose the ISS Lunar Working Group (ISS-LWG) to coordinate the ISS uses specifically for a lunar program. Additional ISS-LWG objectives should be: to inform the global community about the ISS as a stepping stone to the Moon, to organize international student research participation program for research on the ISS related to the Moon, and to establish a forum and mechanism for the communication and coordination of activities. ISS-LWG should seek members from even non-ISS states to expand the participation to a global level.

While the ISS may not have been designed originally to support a lunar program, we have identified many potential uses, like lunar gravity simulation, that take advantage of its unique capabilities. The ISS can be used to raise public interest in the Moon. With its international nature, long-term human presence, and its visibility in the sky, the ISS is a great vehicle for reaching out to the public worldwide. We propose innovative ways to use television, internet, and mobile phones to bring the lunar applications of the ISS to people all over the world.