



Pushing Frontiers: Human Spaceflight and Disability

31 March 2021 (Wednesday), 15:00hr to 16:30hr (CEST)

Programme

Topic	Speaker	Duration
Moderator Introduction	Ang Xing Yi, UNOOSA	5 mins
Welcome remarks	Director Simonetta Di Pippo, UNOOSA	3 mins
Opening remarks	H.E. Ambassador and Permanent Representative Corrine Kitsell, United Kingdom	3 mins
Introduction to Diversity & Inclusion at the European Space Agency (ESA)	Ersilia Vaudo, Chief Diversity Officer, ESA	5 mins
Human Spaceflight: What it takes to be an Astronaut	Thu Jennifer Ngo-Anh, Directorate of Human and Robotic Exploration, ESA	5 mins
Technical Challenges and Innovations for Accessibility	Stéphane Ghiste, European Astronaut Centre Management Support Office, ESA	15 mins
Space Physiology and Engineering: Can People with Disabilities Go to Mars?	Ilaria Cinelli, PhD FAsMA, Past- President of the Aerospace Human Factors Association	15 mins
Beyond Hardware: Workplace Diversity and Team Performance	Professor Gro Mjeldheim Sandal, Professor of Psychology, University of Bergen, Norway	15 mins
Creating Space for Possibility	Eddie Ndopu, UN SDG advocate	5 mins
Q&A		15 mins
Closing remarks	Moderator	5 min

Speakers' Biographies



H.E. Ambassador and Permanent Representative Corinne Kitsell, United Kingdom

Corinne is a career multilateralist. She was the UK's UN Co-ordinator and Head of the UN & Multilateral Department in the Foreign & Commonwealth Office from 2017-2019. Prior to that she was Head of Conflict Department and from 2013-2016 Counsellor at the UK Mission to the UN in New York. Before New York, Corinne was the FCO's Deputy Director Migration in London. Her previous overseas postings include the UK Mission to the United Nations in Geneva and the British Embassy in Beirut as well as short stints in Beijing, Karachi, Hamburg and Accra. In London she has worked in the FCO's Policy Unit and EU Directorate, dealing with EU trade and development issues, as well as in roles leading on the UN, human rights, the Commonwealth and the South Caucasus and Central Asia.

Corinne has been an active supporter of diversity and inclusion for many years. Since 2016 Corinne has been a Senior Sponsor of the UK's, Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO), Disability and Inclusion Awareness Network (DIAN). The network supports colleagues with disabilities and health conditions to achieve their potential, driving positive behaviours and cultural change. DIAN's objective is for the FCDO to continue developing as an inclusive and equitable workplace that empowers people with disabilities and long-term health conditions and values diverse perspectives.



Ersilia Vaudo Scarpetta, Chief Diversity Officer, European Space Agency (ESA)

Ersilia Vaudo Scarpetta holds a degree in Physics, with specialisation in Astrophysics. She has been working at the European Space Agency since 1991, where she is currently Chief Diversity Officer. During her career at ESA, she held several positions i.a. in international relations, elaboration of high-level strategies, preparation of decisions at Member States' ministerial meetings, network with think tanks. She had the responsibility as Executive Secretary of the Science and Technology Advisory Group on Exploration in charge of selecting experiments for exploration missions, including ExoMars. She spent four years at the ESA Washington Office ensuring relations with NASA and US stakeholders. She was Member of the Board of Directors of Women in Aerospace USA and she is currently member of the Women's Forum Daring Circle of Women in STEM, and of Women in Aerospace – Europe.

In 2019 she was nominated for the European Diversity Awards in the "Head of Diversity of the Year" category and in 2020 ESA received the prestigious "Excellence in 3G Diversity Award" from the International Astronautical Federation for its achievements in fostering diversity in the space sector.

In 2020 she has been awarded the Premio Internazionale "Tecnovisionarie 2020, Premio Speciale Europa" from the Association Women & Technologies.



Thu Jennifer Ngo-Anh, Directorate of Human and Robotic Exploration, ESA

Dr. Dr. Thu Jennifer Ngo-Anh obtained her medical degree from the University of Tübingen and her PhD in neurosciences from the Oregon Health Sciences University in Portland, Oregon. She joined the Agency in 2006 and has coordinated ground-based and space-based (for example, International Space Station) science activities in the Directorate of Human and Robotic Exploration.



Stéphane Ghiste, European Astronaut Centre Management Support Office, ESA

Stéphane Ghiste holds degrees in Theoretical and Mathematical Physics from Université Catholique de Louvain, Belgium. He has been working at the European Space Agency since 2013, where he has worked in various roles as an ESA Astronaut training specialist, first as an instructor for space vehicles and later on for robotics at the European Astronaut Centre. He then got the responsibility to manage the Astronaut Basic and Pre-Assignment Training. He is currently a Management & Operations Support Officer where he provides management expertise for ISS related operations projects to the Head of Low Earth Orbit Exploration Group and ESA ISS Programme Manager.



Ilaria Cinelli, President of the Aerospace Human Factors Association

Ilaria Cinelli, PhD FAsMA, is a senior engineer with records of biomedical engineering and space exploration accomplishments. Ilaria has a Bachelor's and Master's degree in Biomedical Engineering from the University of Pisa (Italy) and a structured PhD in Neural Engineering from the National University of Ireland Galway (Republic of Ireland). She is also a graduate of the Space Studies Program run by the International Space University at TU Delft (The Netherlands) and she has completed a Postdoc at Tufts University (USA) in Neuromodulation.

Ilaria is a Fellow of the Aerospace Medical Association, President of the Aerospace Human Factors Association and Member-at-Large of the Aerospace Medical Council. She is also a Co-Leader of the Space Generation Advisory Council, and an invited member of The Mars Society Steering Committee. In the end, she is a Mentor of the Space4Women network of the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs.



Gro Mjeldheim Sandal, Professor of Psychology, University of Bergen

Gro Mjeldheim Sandal Ph.D. is a professor of psychology at the Faculty of Psychology, the University of Bergen in Norway where she is Deputy Dean and a leader of the Society and Workplace Diversity Research Lab. She is a co-editor of the award-winning book, *Space Safety and Human performance*. Dr. Sandal has been the Principal Investigator of large-scale research projects funded by the European Space Agency focusing on understanding psychological and team resilience among people living and working in extreme environments. These projects have included resident crews at the International Space Station, space simulations, and personnel operating in other isolated and demanding environments, such as Antarctic research stations and polar expeditions. A major aim of her research is to gain knowledge that can be applied for selection, training, and in-flight psychological support. Dr. Sandal has published a large number of book chapters and papers in the above-mentioned areas as well as on more general organizational topics such as leadership, culture, psychological testing and recruitment.



Eddie Ndopu, United Nations Sustainable Development Goals advocate

Diagnosed with Spinal Muscular Atrophy at age two and given only five years to live, Eddie Ndopu has gone on to become a beacon of hope for people with disabilities all over the world. In 2019, he was handpicked by Antonio Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations, to serve as one of the seventeen eminent Advocates for the UN's Sustainable Development Goals and is heeding the Secretary-General's demand for a Decade of Action around the goals. To this end Eddie is campaigning to be the first wheelchair user to travel into outer space as a call to action around relentless inclusion and accessibility, and ambitiously pursuing a US \$1billion Global Access Fund to benefit the billion people living with disabilities globally. Eddie is an Oxford-educated public policy thought-leader and intellectual who has advised Nobel Peace Prize winning organization Humanity & Inclusion, Amnesty International and UN-Women. He is a Senior Partner at Global Goals Advisory and currently advises the World Economic Forum, the Paralympic Games and New York based biotech investment firm, RTW. He sits on the boards of IMAGINE and The Valuable 500, and has written for TIME Magazine.