



Impact Statement

The SPERO connects institutions with high visibility whose close proximity to each other enhances collaboration. It can tap into UK-wide initiatives and funding (e.g., the UK Space Agency), which are enhanced by Scottish government support (e.g., Innovation Centres). The SPERO network is thus uniquely situated to deliver far-reaching impact to society, economy, and policy to the benefit of Scotland and the UK.

Society

Planetary exploration inspires people around the globe, is deeply interdisciplinary and thrives on international cooperation. It supports an outward looking society, unites people in an endeavor that is greater than national interests, and gives us a new appreciation of the richness and diversity of our own planet. Museums are core partners in the SPERO. They not only support research through access to their collections (e.g., meteorites) but also are at the heart of education and outreach initiatives. National Museums Scotland host many activities during the Edinburgh International Science Festival each year. Member institutions bring a variety of outreach activities into the network such as Space Rocks from the University of Glasgow or the Geobus at the University of St Andrews. Many of our individual members are STEM ambassadors. By coordinating these initiatives, the SPERO will significantly enhance their impact.

Economy

The UK and Scotland have a growing space economy. The Scottish space economy ranges from cubsat builder ClydeSpace in Glasgow via the STFC's UK Astronomy Technology Centre in Edinburgh to the spaceport initiative of Prestwick Airport. Our researchers are involved in instrument design and testing for space mission such as NASA's Mars Exploration Rovers or ESA's ExoMars. Working with companies and the Scottish Innovation Centres such as the Innovation Centre for Sensor and Imaging Systems (CENSIS) we aim to attract contracts for building hardware for future missions to Scotland and the UK as well as inspiring and training the next generation of engineers and scientists. We are also involved in cross-transfer of technology from the space and astronomical communities into terrestrial application (e.g. geological repository monitoring).

Policy

We support the UK Space Agency in developing and delivering the UK Space Strategy by serving on its advisory committees, for example. We aim to engage with the Scottish government. Our members are involved with other Space Agencies around the globe. The UK Centre of Astrobiology based at the University of Edinburgh is an international node of the NASA Astrobiology Insitute.