



End of Year Round-Up

2023

S P A C E
SOUTH
CENTRAL

End of Year Round-Up 2023

Last year saw the South Coast Centre of Excellence in Satellite Applications evolve into the UK's largest regional space cluster, **Space South Central**. Our End of Year Round-Up looks back at 2023's highlights, and how we've set the scene for the cluster's work in 2024 and beyond.



Helped organisations access more than
£48 million
of funding/investment opportunities



Provided
213 hours
of business support



Supported
22
collaborative R&D projects



Built relationships with
15
countries



Hosted
24
industry events



100
regional space organisations engaged



6
international delegations

Introduction

It has been a real pleasure to reflect on 2023 and **Space South Central's** journey over the last year. Built on the work of the South Coast Centre of Excellence in Satellite Applications and the Hampshire and Surrey Space Hub, Space South Central has rapidly developed into a mature and distinctive regional space cluster.

At the beginning of the year, the South Central region's thriving space industry benefitted from **£1.2 million** awarded by the UK Space Agency in a drive to boost innovation and growth. Additional investment and support from the universities of Portsmouth, Southampton and Surrey expanded the team and our activities and provision for the needs of our growing space community.

The addition of a dedicated Business Development Manager has ensured that even more start-ups and SMEs are supported, and we have seen a flurry of new and exciting collaborative projects emerge. This summer, we recruited an International Partnerships Manager to assist the region's engagements with organisations overseas. Already, we are supporting opportunities associated with emerging space nations, including direct involvement with two projects funded by the UK Space Agency's International Bilateral Fund.

To support companies focusing on downstream space applications, we host the ESA Business Applications Ambassador for the South East,

whose remit is to facilitate access to ESA's ARTES (Advanced Research in Telecommunications Systems) 4.0 programme. Behind the scenes, we also benefit from extensive administrative support and communications expertise.

As well as delivering our regional networking events, Orbit South Central, we have organised, hosted, and participated in various events and forums throughout 2023, creating opportunities to discover the region's space-related activities, hear the latest news and funding opportunities and listen to experts from across the sector. I was particularly delighted to work with female leaders from across the sector to deliver the first **Women in Space Networking Reception** at the US Embassy in London. Activities like this are just one way we highlight and champion the importance of a diverse workforce.

Our industry continues to thrive against a backdrop of uncertainty, and I don't doubt that we will see further sector growth when the next *Size and Health of the UK Space Industry* report is published later this year. However, the **Space Sector Skills Survey 2023 Report** indicated that nearly every organisation is experiencing skills-related challenges. Employers across our region echo this message, underscoring the threat to future growth. Consequently, we are working with the community to understand the challenges, identify training and education provision and secure

funding to support the next generation of innovators, scientists and technologists. Regional initiatives like **SpaceCraft** and HSDC's **new Space Technologies programme** are set to train the future workforce.

The last year has been a whirlwind of activity. I'm proud of Space South Central's progress so far – and 2024 is set to be even bigger! We have technical support programmes already in development with key sector specialists, some rather large outreach and public engagement activities planned, a new series of webinars and events to be delivered, plus a variety of activities in the works to ensure that Space South Central is proactively engaged with the global partners of tomorrow. To find out more, reach out to the team and see how we can help you.

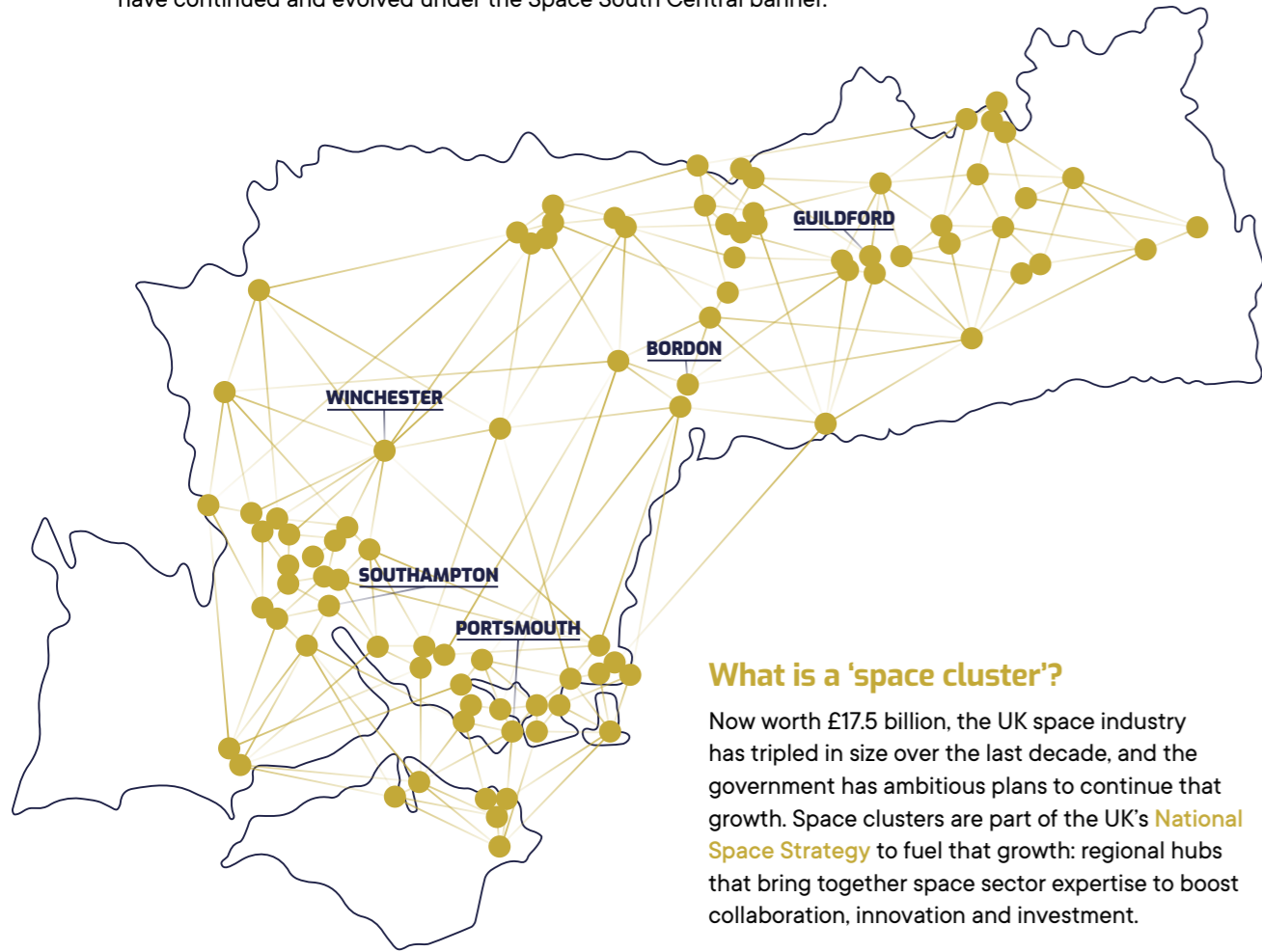


Dr Louise Butt
Director of the Space South Central Enterprise Network

The start of a new chapter

On 1 April 2023, the South Coast Centre of Excellence in Satellite Applications (SCCoE) became the Space South Central Enterprise Network, to support and champion the space sector across Hampshire, Surrey and the Isle of Wight.

While this signalled the end of the SCCoE as an organisation, its team, services and events have continued and evolved under the Space South Central banner.



What is a 'space cluster'?

Now worth £17.5 billion, the UK space industry has tripled in size over the last decade, and the government has ambitious plans to continue that growth. Space clusters are part of the UK's **National Space Strategy** to fuel that growth: regional hubs that bring together space sector expertise to boost collaboration, innovation and investment.

The South Coast Centre of Excellence in Satellite Communications legacy



7

years



400

companies engaged



100+

events delivered



65

projects supported



Helped regional organisations secure more than

£35

million

Space South Central

Space South Central is the UK's largest regional space cluster, representing the space industry across Hampshire, Surrey and the Isle of Wight. At its heart, it's a partnership between industry and academia, designed to accelerate space business growth and spark innovation. We bring together more than 150 of the region's space-related businesses and the cluster's founding partner universities of Portsmouth, Southampton and Surrey. The Space South Central team connects and supports organisations to:

- Develop collaborative projects
- Link expertise
- Identify and attract funding and investment opportunities
- Share information
- Provide networking opportunities
- Represent the region's space sector locally, nationally and internationally

Although space clusters are a relatively new concept and many of the UK's space clusters are starting from scratch, we've been able to build on our existing SCCoE experience and extensive industry connections to get Space South Central off to a flying start in 2023!

“

Space South Central exemplifies the vision set out in the National Space Strategy of a sector working together across the country to showcase UK skills and capabilities, catalyse investment, and enhance our international reputation as a hub of expertise and innovation.

”

Dr Paul Bate
CEO, UK Space Agency

Meet the Team



Dr Louise Butt
Director



Toby Marchant
International Partnerships Manager
University of Surrey



Dan Smith
Business Development
Manager



Frances Clarke
Business Engagement
Manager for Space
University of Southampton



Lee O'Driscoll
Marketing &
Communications Officer



Ebony Cox-Vint
Digital Marketing Officer



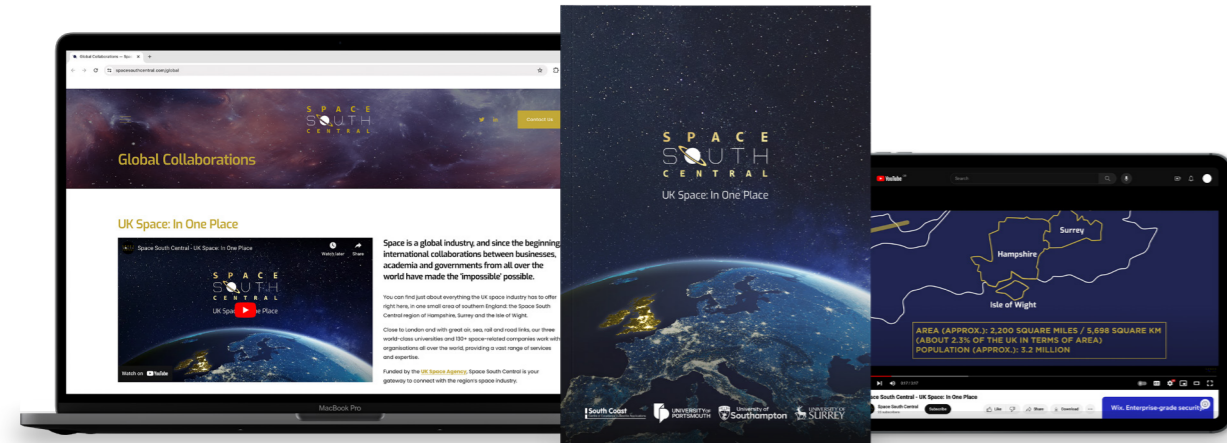
Victoria May-Chamberlain
Senior Administrator



Emily Wilkins
Administrator

Going global

'Securing international partnerships' is one of our key objectives, and the South Central region's rich space heritage and unrivalled industry capabilities make our businesses and universities perfect partners for international investment, trade and collaborations. Developing how we present the region's space sector to the world and how we can create and nurture global opportunities were top priorities for us in 2023 and going forward.



UK Space: In One Place

Back in the summer, we launched our ongoing *UK Space: In One Place* campaign, so-called because just about everything the UK space industry has to offer can be found within Hampshire, Surrey and the Isle of Wight.

Aimed at introducing overseas organisations to the region and its wealth of space expertise

– and how the Space South Central team can help connect them to it – we produced a **brochure** and an accompanying **video** featuring our universities and some of our businesses. Both are featured on a new web page, spacesouthcentral.com/global, and are available for cluster organisations to use in their own international marketing activities.

International delegations

Following the success of our first inward delegation from Taiwan last year, in 2023 the Space South Central region welcomed delegations from Thailand, Singapore and the **USA**. Outward delegations included visits to Taiwan and Canada and two trips to Singapore, which led to Space South Central and Singapore academics developing a **climate change monitoring project** that attracted International Bilateral Fund (IBF) investment from the UK Space Agency.

Capitalising on Portsmouth's Sister City Agreement with Halifax, Nova Scotia, a Portsmouth City Council/Solent Partners delegation travelled to Canada. Nova Scotia will be home to **Maritime Launch**, Canada's first commercial spaceport, and the visit included meetings with **Dalhousie University** and spin-out company **Galaxia Mission Systems**.



Space South Central's Toby Marchant and Peter Stocken from *InSpace Missions* with members of December's Singapore delegation on a trip to London.

L-R: Dr Hongbo Sun (Agency for Science, Technology & Research A*STAR Institute for Infocomm Research), Dr Shu Ting Goh (National University of Singapore), Toby Marchant, Yen Ting Ng, (A*STAR) Peter Stocken, Dr Soo Chin Liew (CRISP National University of Singapore) and Dr Terence Shie Ping See (A*STAR).

International space industry events

Space South Central had a presence at key space sector events including **Space Tech Expo** in Bremen, Germany, **TASTI** in Taiwan, **GSTC** in Singapore, as well as **DSEI**, **MATS** and the **UK Space Conference** in the UK.



Toby Marchant
International Partnerships Manager

Toby joined the Space South Central team as our **new International Partnerships Manager** in August.

He's already visited three countries and five international space sector events in the role and assisted overseas delegations and individual companies during their trips to the UK.

I'm immensely proud of what Space South Central has achieved in 2023 to bring the wealth and breadth of the region's space expertise and capabilities to a worldwide audience. We've also established strong connections with the **Department for Business and Trade's** regional, national and sector-specific teams.

Personal highlights have been helping to coordinate our IBF-funded climate change project with Singapore, bringing together 10 teams from six university and research organisations, and using this experience to engage with other Singaporean companies like **SpeQtral**.

I was excited just to be a part of the NASA **JPL** and University of Arizona visit to the region – let alone organising it! It brought together academics from our partner universities of Portsmouth, Southampton and Surrey and UCL's Mullard Space Science Laboratory (**MSSL**), as well as the UK Space Agency, Science & Technology Facilities Council (**STFC**) and satellite company **SSTL**. I had such positive feedback from everyone who attended.

In 2024, I will continue to grow our connections within the Asia-Pacific region and North America and engage with sovereign European nations and regional clusters. We plan to support a big South Central cluster presence at the Global Space & Technology Convention (**GSTC**) in Singapore, participate in an outward North American delegation, and, back on Space South Central soil, we'll host international visitors at **Space-Com** in Farnborough.

Supporting businesses

From highlighting funding and investment opportunities in our regular Funding Flash emails, to bespoke 1-2-1 guidance for companies, we offer free, impartial support, connections and advice to any space-related organisation in Hampshire, Surrey and the Isle of Wight. Space services and technology can also help non-space companies, so we also work with those in sectors such as financial services and the marine industry to explore how 'space' could enhance and grow their business.

New software to promote industry collaboration and communication

We launched our **Valuechain** platform in March. Available for free to all Space South Central organisations, once they've set up a company profile, they can:

- Showcase their products and services
- Search other cluster businesses' products and services
- Connect with other members
- Share and receive industry news and information

Webinar series launched

November saw the launch of our new webinar series on a range of business-related topics for space-related companies. The first session was on intellectual property (IP) law with experts Phil Merchant and Michael Barrett from **Marks & Clerk**, and future themes include marketing, recruitment and ESA funding opportunities.

- **1** new Business Development Manager
- **100** Hampshire, Surrey and Isle of Wight companies engaged
- **213** hours of business support provided
- **22** collaborative R&D projects supported
- **19** referrals to space-related support programmes
- **10** regional networking events hosted

SpaceCraft

In February 2023, the UK Space Agency awarded the University of Surrey £406,000 to develop its **SpaceCraft** project, supported by Space South Central.

Now fully operational, SpaceCraft gives local start-ups, SMEs and FE colleges access to training, engineering facilities and technical expertise that would otherwise be out of reach. Users can access training and support from SpaceCraft's **resident space engineer** and cutting-edge prototyping and manufacturing facilities including:

- **Ground station**
- **Helmholtz coil facility**
- **Propulsion test facilities**
- **Thermal chamber**
- **Docking facilities**
- **Workshops and technical spaces, including an ISO class 6 clean room**

Through SpaceCraft, the university is also developing short courses to meet the needs of local FE colleges and SMEs.

Aiming to kickstart both innovation and careers, SpaceCraft is already seeing results. Richard Foster-Turner, Chief Operating Officer at **Atout Process Ltd**, said: "We have already benefitted enormously from SpaceCraft to develop our revolutionary new propellant tank gauging technology and prepare for its first in-orbit tests.

"As a very small space company, the support and facilities provided have been vital."



To find out more about SpaceCraft, visit surrey.ac.uk/spacecraft or contact SpaceCraft@surrey.ac.uk

Widening our network

Space South Central became one of only three space clusters to join trade association, **UK Space**. We continued to nurture our relationships with local councils and other organisations providing support to businesses in the region, like LEPs and Chambers of Commerce. Working closely with organisations like the **Satellite Applications Catapult** Department for Business and Trade and the UK Space Agency, we support their regional work while representing our region on a national level.



Dan Smith
Business Development Manager

Our team grew in May, with Dan Smith appointed as our new Business Development Manager.

I joined Space South Central in May 2023, and have been blown away by the welcome I have received from companies and people within the sector. It's been a busy year: we've delivered hundreds of hours of business support, engaged with new businesses from within the sector and others, and grown the cluster membership significantly.

It's been great to get out and about visiting companies including **TUV Sud** in Fareham and **Eureco** on the Isle of Wight, and I've met dozens more through community events run by the Chambers of Commerce.

My personal highlights of the year have included attending the Space-Comm Expo and UK Space Conference. Meeting so many engaged and enthusiastic colleagues was genuinely infectious and gave me valuable connections to help Space South Central deliver on its priorities for 2024.

Our monthly, in-person industry networking events, Orbit South Central, were more popular than ever, and we launched a new webinar series. Featuring guest experts and covering popular business topics, these online sessions will help us reach and support more people.

We've further strengthened our relationships with the UK Space Agency and Satellite Applications Catapult, and I look forward to working more closely with regional bodies supporting businesses and economic development. We'll be increasing our attendance at Chamber of Commerce events, and you can come and see us at our stand at **Portsmouth & South Coast Business Week** in February.

Most of all, we'll continue to provide high-quality, sector-specific business support to our cluster network, growing that network significantly and developing work with non-space companies.

I look forward to working with you in 2024.



▲ Representing Space South Central at the UK Space Conference, Belfast.
L-R: Tobias Marchant, Dr Louise Butt, Frances Clarke, Dr Lucinda King and Professor Keith Ryden.

2023 highlights from our university partners

The Space South Central cluster boasts three leading universities as founding partners, each with their own space-related specialisms: the [University of Portsmouth](#), the [University of Southampton](#) and the [University of Surrey](#).



Joining forces through Space South Central optimises the impact of the universities' combined expertise, creating new opportunities for ground-breaking research, business collaborations and courses.

All three institutions have an extensive commercial track record, using their research and expertise to form spin-out companies, partner with organisations to develop new products and services or support businesses through access to facilities, consultancy or staff training.

Working together with our university partners, we're in the process of mapping all the facilities from each institution that are available for Space South Central businesses to use. A one-stop-shop for any cluster member to see at a glance what's on offer to them, in 2024 we'll be asking companies for their input into how we show this, and what is important to them.

Here are some of our university partners' space-related highlights from 2023.

The University of Portsmouth

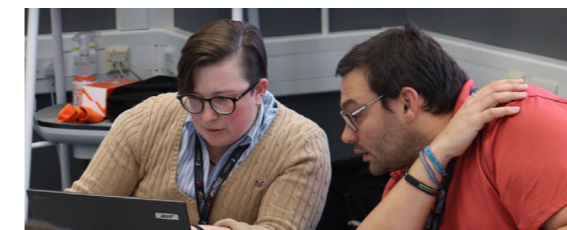


NASA-inspired space mission design facility awarded £100,000

A unique new mission design service, inspired by NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL), won £100,000 UK Space Agency funding for its set-up phase.

Part of the [Portsmouth Research Institute for Space Missions \(PRISM\)](#), which aims to connect academia and industry to boost UK space innovation, the '[Space Mission Incubator](#)' allows scientists to take a space mission idea from initial concept to full mission design.

The [first study](#) in the new facility saw science and engineering experts working together in real time to rapidly develop a space mission to place a small satellite in orbit around the Moon.



▲ Dr Lucinda King and Dr Eloy de Lera Acedo ([University of Cambridge](#)) during the pilot study.

¹ Times Higher Education Young University Rankings (universities established during the last 50 years)
² Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2021
³ QS World University Rankings 2022: 5-star overall rating

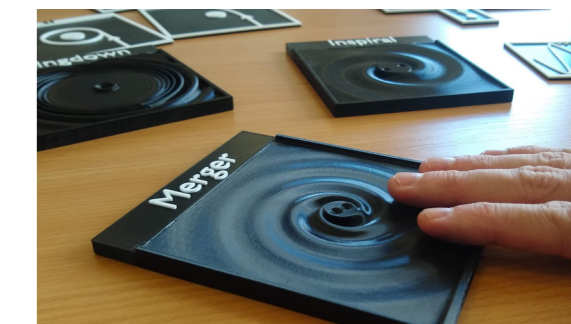
[Dr Lucinda King](#), Space Projects Manager at the university's Institute of Cosmology and Gravitation (ICG), said: "The facility is for scientists and industry experts to work in the same place at the same time and quickly assess whether a mission is feasible. We have been fortunate enough to be guided by experts at NASA JPL's Mission Formulation Office, who pioneered these types of studies for space mission design."

Portsmouth experts work on Euclid

A team of academics from the ICG have spent years working on software for Euclid, which will help the telescope achieve its goal of mapping over one billion galaxies.



▲ ESA/Euclid/Euclid Consortium/NASA, image processing by J.-C. Cuillandre (CEA Paris-Saclay), G. Anselmi, CC BY-SA 3.0 IGO.



▲ 3D-printed tactile surface.

Unveiling the Cosmos through touch

An award-winning space project won further funding to make gravitational wave research accessible to visually impaired teenagers.

The [Tactile Universe](#) makes astrophysics research accessible through touch using 3D-printed tactile images of galaxies, and the legacy award will be used to develop additional resources to communicate the detection of and science behind gravitational waves.

[Dr Nic Bonne](#), a blind astronomer at the ICG, was part of the team that developed original idea. He said: "The purpose has always been to inspire people to think differently about how we access astronomy, and to show blind and vision-impaired people they can pursue an interest or even a career in the subject if they want to."

The University of Southampton



▲ Artist impression of a black hole accretion. Credit John A. Paice.

Southampton astronomers discover the largest cosmic explosion ever seen


Scientists at Southampton have uncovered the largest cosmic explosion ever witnessed – ten times brighter than any known supernova.

The explosion lasted more than three years and took place nearly eight billion light years away, when the universe was around six billion years old.

Astronomer **Dr Philip Wiseman** said:

“Most supernovae only last for a couple of months before fading away – so for something to be bright for two-plus years was immediately very unusual.”

University of Southampton space facts



1. Southampton's aeronautics department is one of the longest-established in the UK – and has been teaching students since 1959 how to design future aircraft, rockets and satellites.
2. Its space research facilities include the largest **wind tunnel** in any UK university, a space **propulsion lab** which simulates space in low Earth orbit, and a **jet laboratory** with a supersonic ramjet, turbojet and rocket engine.
3. The world's first robust method for estimating the value and mass of space junk was built in Southampton.

¹ QS World University Rankings 2024
² Times Higher Education World University Rankings 2024
³ Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2021

Scientists calculate value of space debris

Southampton scientists have developed the world's first method for **estimating the value and mass of space debris**.



Removing debris and reusing or recycling it is a viable possibility to safeguard the future for satellites and space exploration, said expert **Professor Ian Williams** from the university. His research estimates there are potentially trillions of dollars' worth of recyclable materials among the space debris orbiting the Earth.

Professor Williams calculated there is somewhere between 5,312 and 19,124 tonnes of scrap metal in space. He said: “Space debris is a form of pollution that poses a threat to future space exploration and satellites which we rely heavily on here on Earth.”

The University of Surrey

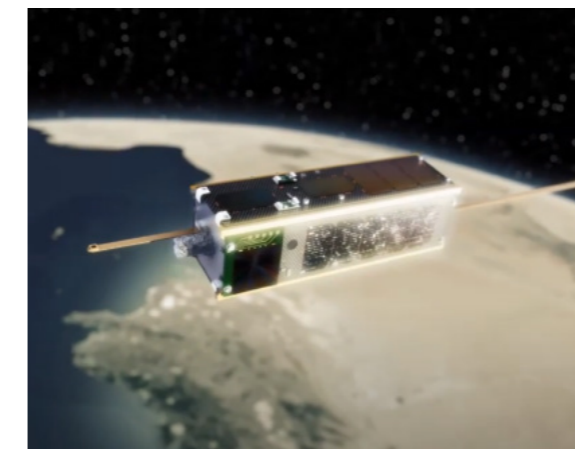


Solar farms in space are possible

It's viable to produce low-cost, lightweight solar panels that can generate energy in space, according to **new research** from the University of Surrey and University of Swansea.

The first study of its kind followed a satellite over six years, observing how the panels generated power and weathered solar radiation over 30,000 orbits.

The findings could pave the way for commercially viable solar farms in space.



▲ Solar farms in space. Image courtesy of University of Surrey.

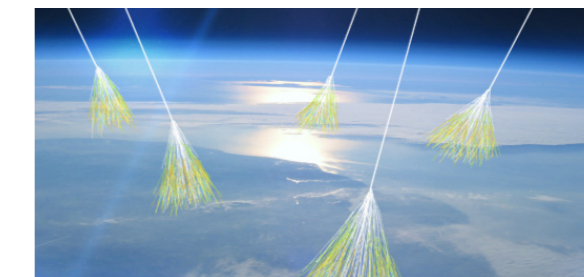
¹ The Times/Sunday Times Good University Guide 2023
² Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2021

New telescope will measure extreme space weather

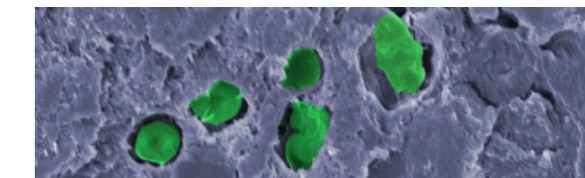
The latest project from Surrey's space scientists who are working to boost understanding of space weather could make flying safer.

They're developing prototypes for **HEPTEL**, a new **High Energy Proton Telescope**, which aims to measure in space the radiation caused by solar flares. HEPTEL will monitor extremely high energy protons, the dominant particle type from solar events. Once they penetrate the atmosphere, they can stop electronic devices from working properly.

Surrey Space Centre's **Professor Keith Ryden** said: “The most severe high energy solar proton events could have a significant impact on avionics. Given the ever-increasing quantity of electronics on-board, future aircraft will need to be designed to cope with intense events.”



▲ Solar flares. Image courtesy of University of Surrey.



▲ Bacteria found in desert paves the way for paint that produces oxygen whilst capturing carbon. Image courtesy of University of Surrey.

Revolutionary new paint could be used in space stations

University of Surrey scientists have created an innovative paint containing oxygen-producing, carbon dioxide-capturing bacteria that could be used in extreme environments, such as space stations.

The new biocoating, **Green Living Paint**, features *Chroococcidiopsis cubana*, a bacterium usually found in the desert requiring little water for survival. Biocoatings, a type of water-based paint with live bacteria encased in layers, capture carbon and can also serve as bioreactors or as biosensors. ‘Living paints’ also offer a more sustainable and environmentally-friendly solution than traditional materials.

[Read about more space research at Surrey.](#)

The University of Surrey is home to Surrey Space Centre: discover its past, present and future at [SpaceAtSurrey](#).

Tackling skills and recruitment challenges

The Space South Central region has a mature, thriving space industry with a stellar heritage of space innovation and expertise, and a huge range of capabilities unrivalled anywhere in the UK. However, tackling current and future skills gaps, and attracting the right employees, are top priorities if we are to safeguard further economic and job growth.

To ensure that our region stays at the forefront of the UK space industry, Space South Central is committed to supporting the development of training opportunities and helping employers of all sizes attract and retain the staff they need. In 2023 our work in this area included:

- Helping organisations access funding opportunities
- Hosting skills-focused events
- Supporting the development of new training programmes
- Commissioning and sharing research
- Raising awareness of skills and outreach activities in the region

Commissioning and sharing research

Sector-specific data are essential for shaping future policy, both on a local and national level. In Spring 2023, we commissioned independent research to assess the region's training provision and future needs and to help inform future skills strategies. To ensure our organisations' voices are heard, we publicise opportunities to participate in national research like the **Space Sector Skills Survey** and **Size and Health of the UK Space Industry** reports. We also help national space skills stories get local media coverage by issuing press releases that highlight the regional impact.

Ministerial visit and Skills Roundtable

Space clusters lead and support local initiatives, but we also serve as the voice of our region's space sector on a national level. In June, Space South Central hosted Science Minister, George Freeman, for a **Skills Roundtable** with some of our regional businesses and education providers to discuss skills and recruitment challenges and suggest solutions. The Minister's visit included a tour of **Surrey Space Centre** at the University of Surrey, which offers training to both students and businesses, and satellite company **SSTL**, the venue for the Skills Roundtable.



Science Minister, George Freeman, Space South Central businesses and education providers at the Skills Roundtable.

Helping develop new training opportunities

We contributed to the Hampshire and Surrey Local Skills Improvement Plans (LSIP) and work with employers and education providers continuously to develop training and access funding opportunities to equip people with the skills the sector needs.

Examples from 2023 include HSDC College in Alton's **new Space Technologies programme**, **SpaceCraft** at the University of Surrey (see page 9) and plans for a new Degree Apprenticeship in Space Engineering at the University of Portsmouth.

Raising awareness of space careers

Targeted events help raise awareness of space career opportunities among those who may not have considered it before. Our **PICS-Space** career summit, held in partnership with satellite company **SSTL** at Southampton Science Park, connected around 100 post-doctoral researchers from a range of disciplines with space industry employers and career opportunities. We also share career-related news from Space South Central businesses, for example during **National Apprenticeships Week**, and promote their job vacancies through our **partnership with spacecareers.uk**, which was announced in the summer.

Southampton was the first stop on the UK Space Agency's **Space for Everyone Tour**, and we were able to get the University of Portsmouth's **ICG**, satellite company **SSTL** and social enterprise, **Seekers Create** involved – with Seekers Create participating in the rest of the national tour.



Dr Lucinda King (L) and Dr Jen Gupta (R) representing the University of Portsmouth and Space South Central at the UK Space Agency's Space for Everyone Tour in Southampton.

“Space South Central will provide an essential element which has been missing within our region to drive a greater awareness within the local population of the job opportunities which the space sector offers, as well as coordinating with education providers to help reduce the current skills gap which risks limiting growth.”

Doug Liddle
CEO, In-Space Missions

2023 Events

Orbit South Central

To reflect our transition from the SCCoE to Space South Central, 2023 saw our free networking events, Orbit South Coast, rebranded to become Orbit South Central with a new 'roadshow' format.

Expanding beyond our Portsmouth HQ, we held 10 events at five different venues across the region. Making it more convenient for people to attend made Orbit events more popular than ever, with more than 500 attendees in 2023.

We welcomed 30 speakers, including **NKT Photonics** discussing light lasers and their impact and uses, Dr Lucinda King from our partners, the University of Portsmouth, introducing their new Mission Incubator, and Susan Charlesworth of **Charlesworth Human Performance** revealing the rigorous training she provides to astronauts among others.

To book your FREE place at an Orbit South Central event in 2024, visit spacesouthcentral.com/events.



▲ Susan Charlesworth of Charlesworth Human Performance presenting at Orbit South Central.

UK Space Conference



▲ UK space cluster leads at the UK Space Conference 2023.

Space South Central had a stand at one of the highest-profile events in the country's space industry calendar, the **UK Space Conference**, in Belfast in November.

It was great to see so many Space South Central organisations in attendance, including **TISICS**, **KISPE**, **SSTL**, **In-Space Missions**, **Airbus**, **BAE Systems** and the University of Surrey's **Surrey Space Centre**.

Venturefest South Festival of Innovation

November's Festival of Innovation, **Venturefest South**'s flagship event, brought together entrepreneurs, businesses, funders and investors to champion innovation in the region.

Held at the Ageas Bowl near Southampton, we exhibited in the new Space Tech Zone, and the organisers kindly allowed us to give some local companies – **GlobalTrust**, **KISPE**, **Eterra Space** and **Woodrow Scientific** – the opportunity to showcase their expertise, products and services.



▲ Staff from KISPE, guests of Space South Central at Venturefest South's Festival of Innovation.

Women in Space



▲ L-R: Della Granville (Maxar), Dr Louise Butt, Avril Jolliffe, Laurie Farris (US Government's International Trade Administration) and Stephanie Ayres (The Aerospace Corporation).

Around 100 guests attended the inaugural Women In Space Networking Reception in November, which aimed to unite and inspire women working in the space industry.

The invitation-only event, held at the US Embassy in London, was the idea of Avril Jolliffe, Director General for Industry, Trade and Economic Security at the Ministry of Defence and was supported by **The Aerospace Corporation**, **Maxar** and **Space South Central**. A central theme was the need for more diversity in the sector, and our Director, Dr Louise Butt, participated in an uplifting discussion on the many different routes into space careers.

After rave reviews from attendees of the first Networking Reception, Space South Central will host the next Women In Space event in 2024.

Above and Beyond

Space South Central's Dr Louise Butt presented at **Airbus Defence and Space's** Above and Beyond event in London in October.

Billed as 'an afternoon and evening of innovation, insights and discussions', topics included *Space in 2040*, how space impacts our daily lives and the ongoing development of space-based threats.



▲ Professor Keith Ryden of the University of Surrey also represented Space South Central at Above and Beyond.

Ignite Space

Bristol Aerospace was the venue for March's Ignite Space, a UK Space Agency event bringing together many different parts of the UK space community. Space South Central joined space clusters from all over the UK in the Cluster Zone, showcasing capabilities and creating opportunities to build cross-regional relationships.

During the first main stage session, *Find Your Place in Space – Space Clusters and the UK Ecosystem*, we presented on the role of clusters in international engagements, and later took part in a Cluster Zone workshop exploring topics such as growing exports.

Doug Liddle, CEO of **In-Space Missions**, and member of the Space South Central Advisory Board, was a panelist in the Skills Zone's Main Stage Session; and over in the Business Zone, Farnborough-based **KISPE** demonstrated their cubesat training satellite, **EssentialSat**.



▲ Space skills on the agenda at Ignite Space.



My first year as an ESA BASS Ambassador Dr Lucia F. de la Bella for the South East, London and East of England

Dr Lucia F. de la Bella from the University of Portsmouth's ICG, is one of four regional UK ambassadors for the European Space Agency's (ESA) Business Applications and Space Solutions (BASS) programme. **ESA BASS Ambassadors** provide advice and guidance on space-related business ideas and funding opportunities to multiple sectors.

It has been an exciting first year as ESA Ambassador of the South East, London and East of England! As an ESA Ambassador, I bring space solutions to non-space companies. Ambassadors are your first national point of contact, reinforcing positive messages about space in Europe. We act as a bridge between ESA, EU Member States and industry, and create and manage relationships with non-space industries. We also advise companies on the different funding opportunities available from ESA.

During my maternity leave, Dr Elizabeth Clutton stepped into the role, supporting and creating links with more than 30 space and non-space

companies in our region. I cover a vibrant area where there's a keen interest in space activities and within a couple of weeks of my return, I had dozens of interactions with clients. I am very excited to continue supporting UK companies through the **ESA Business Applications Space Solutions** programme and helping them make their dreams come true in the clean growth, health, future mobility and AI and data sectors.

Since my return I have participated in Orbit South Central and have been invited to speak at the Space & Underwater Tourism Universal Summit (**SUTUS23**). My favourite visit has been to the Space Mission Incubator at the University of Portsmouth, a JPL/NASA-inspired concurrence design facility.

I also attended the Marine Autonomy Technology Showcase (**MATS 23**) with Space South Central's International Partnerships Manager, Toby Marchant.

The event sparked intriguing discussions exploring how the space and the marine world intersect. Marine and space technologies share a symbiotic relationship: satellites are equipped with proven marine technology, while the maritime industry depends heavily on satellite communications and

geo-localisation services. Maritime professionals and space engineers are working together, exchanging best practices and knowledge to enhance both disciplines.

There was even more fun at VentureFest South's Festival of Innovation sharing a stand with Space South Central in the Space Zone and meeting old and new contacts and hearing about their progress. It was a fantastic opportunity to speak about ESA BASS and how we can fund business ideas.

I look forward to working with you all in 2024!

“
Lucia has provided us great support during the preparation of several APQs for project proposals in response to ESA calls, helping us to improve the quality of each proposal in all its aspects (technical, business, project management) and raising our confidence to deliver potential good outcomes.

”
Marco Morelli
Director and CTO, siHealth



“
Space South Central has had a remarkable 2023, and firmly established themselves as one of the UK's most mature space clusters.

By supporting organisations across the South Coast's regional space sector to come together, they have driven local growth by building new partnerships - both nationally, and now increasingly, by breaking into exciting new international markets - and show no signs of slowing down.

Space South Central is a vital part of the UK's thriving national space ecosystem.



Jon Hulks
Space Ecosystem
Development Manager,
UK Space Agency

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