

Transcending Societal Issues for Space Exploration (12)  
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EARTH-MOON SOLAR SAIL CHALLENGE GLOBAL CIRCUS

**Abstract**

Flying solar sails between the Earth and the Moon has been considered for more than half a century. Over the past twenty years, the concept has moved from an international competition to a global cooperative challenge with new futuristic organisation concepts. Thinking that the time to increase the orbit of the sailcraft from the official 50,000 km start shell to beyond the Moon's orbit is likely to take more than one year, it may seem difficult to keep the attention of a public over such a long period of time. A key is to make the challenge a regional repetitive weekly event moving from one local region to another, in a way somewhat similar to the business model of Tour de France, with an original kind of "Très Space" circus moving from town to town to present a space exhibition where people may "touch" space artefacts, a local terminal of the control center, educational and economic conferences, workshops for young people of all ages, as well as artistic shows and concerts. Another great model for the management of the Earth Moon Solar Sail Challenge is the famous "Cirque du Soleil" run by cosmonaut artist Guy Laliberté. The 8,000 people company is able to run simultaneously a dozen shows in different major cities on our planet. In a similar way, the operations of the one solarcraft challenger may be run alternatively from several operational control centers, and several major "Tours" may be run at the same time on different continents. Since the Earth Moon Solar Sail Challenge is a cooperative business, in America it may be presented as an American program with the help of European, Chinese, Japanese, Russian and Indian teams. In Russia, it will be presented as a Russian venture with the cooperation of Japanese, Indian, American and European solar sail specialists. In Japan, it may be presented as a Japanese challenge with the support of European, Russian, American and Australian colleagues, in India it will be an Indian enterprise with global cooperation, etc... This will bring a visionary approach for the global essential communication between the space community and the worldwide general public. It will be a showcase for the visibility of scientists and artists, it will boost the business of space entrepreneurs, and bring the emergence of new bright talents.