

IAF SYMPOSIUM ON ONGOING AND NEAR FUTURE SPACE ASTRONOMY AND
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ITALIAN SPACE AGENCY SCIENCE PROGRAMMES AND NEW PERSPECTIVES

Abstract

The Italian Space Agency (ASI) considers the science programme a top priority as it provides a fundamental contribution to crucial open questions leading to modern mission design, that involves the core of space competencies, innovation and forefront developments. Thanks to the development of new technologies, the access to space astronomy is indeed open to a wide community and is based on different solutions in terms of payloads. It could be then crucial to evaluate the most promising scientific challenges in order to optimize efforts and foster international cooperation. ASI aims to create a National space science programme to offer a wide range of opportunities for encouraging the use of mini-satellites for astrophysics investigation and fundamental physics experiments, as well as, for Earth observation and educational activities. Mini-satellites and related constellations are also a tool to test new miniaturized technologies (i.e. MEMS), by opening interesting scenarios for industrial investments and technology transfer. Moreover, the affordable cost of Cubesats provides a unique opportunity to involve the emerging Countries in space activities and, in turn, to provide a new spin to their economy. In this scenario, ASI has started several projects involving national and foreign Research Institutes, Universities and industries, as well as, by collaborating with other Space Agencies.