

Letter from the Editors

We are witnessing a very exciting time in space exploration and innovation. Among many noteworthy highlights, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) is making steady and substantial progress with the Artemis missions which will return humans to the Moon for the first time in 50 years. In April of this year, the European Space Agency (ESA) launched the Jupiter Icy Moons Explorer (JUICE) mission, which is headed to our largest planetary neighbor to conduct experiments to help us better understand the gas giant planets in general and Jupiter's environment in particular. JUICE will investigate whether life might be possible beneath the icy layers of Jupiter's moons. In addition, just this summer, the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) launched Chandrayaan-3, a spacecraft that will place a rover on the Moon for further lunar study; if successful, this will make India only the fourth country to land a rover on the Moon. Additionally, companies such as SpaceX, Boeing, Blue Origin, Virgin Galactic, and others continue to push the boundaries of what is possible in the private sector.

Against the backdrop of national, international, and commercial progress, we are proud to present the July 2023 edition of the *Space Education and Strategic Applications (SESA) Journal*, which features a variety of research articles and commentaries on topics relevant to humanity's push towards manned exploration of space, including subjects, such as GPS strategy in warfare (Brown, 2023), the Debris Avoidance and Removal Technology cubesat concepts (Long, 2023), the moderating role of politics in space exploration (Mosila, 2023), and applications for open-source software in space mission design and operations (Labreche & Mladenov, 2023).

We are also pleased to announce an exciting new special-focus initiative of the SESA journal. We are currently accepting submissions for an upcoming special edition on *Warfare and Weaponization in Space*, with an anticipated publication date in Summer 2024. As the backbone of global communications, remote sensing, and earth observation, the space environment is critical to National Security interests. Protection of national assets is a key component of defense and relies on reliable and protected access to space. As humanity extends its reach outward into the Solar System, the development and implementation of practices and policies that protect national interests and assets, keep the peace, and guarantee equitable access to outer space resources for all become increasingly critical. This special issue seeks to explore these topics in depth. Relevant topics relating to *Warfare and Weaponization in Space* are multidisciplinary and may include space policy outlooks, cybersecurity, proxy warfare, satellites, evolution of tactics and doctrine, non-state actors, off-world endeavors, planetary protection, and others. We will

welcome original empirical research, critical analysis research, policy relevant essays, and book reviews for the special issue.

We remain grateful to our authors, reviewers, and readers for their continued support of our journal. We appreciate your efforts, and we look forward to continuing our contributions to the burgeoning space research community with this and future issues.

Dr. Kristen Miller & Dr. Gary Deel

Co-Editors-in-Chief, SESA Journal

References

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