

Inspiration in the space sector - a student's perspective

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SPACE GENERATION ADVISORY COUNCIL

- ▶ Non-governmental organisation and professional network for 18-35 year olds
- ▶ Aims to represent university students and young space professionals to the United Nations, space agencies, industry and academia
- ▶ Good forum for young people to establish networks and gain experience - opportunities help students and YPs to stay on the path
- ▶ But members have an 'inspiration bias' - if active in SGAC, likely already have an abundance of self motivation



Space School UK

- Summer schools run by the University of Leicester for students between 13 and 18 years old
- ~2400 alumni over 30 years
- Paper “*Assessing the Impact of Space School UK*” presented at 3rd Symposium on Space Educational Activities 2019 finds:
 - Women and students from non-selective school backgrounds report a stronger influence from SSUK to join the space industry

3rd Symposium on Space Educational Activities, September 16-18, 2019, Leicester, United Kingdom

Assessing the Impact of Space School UK

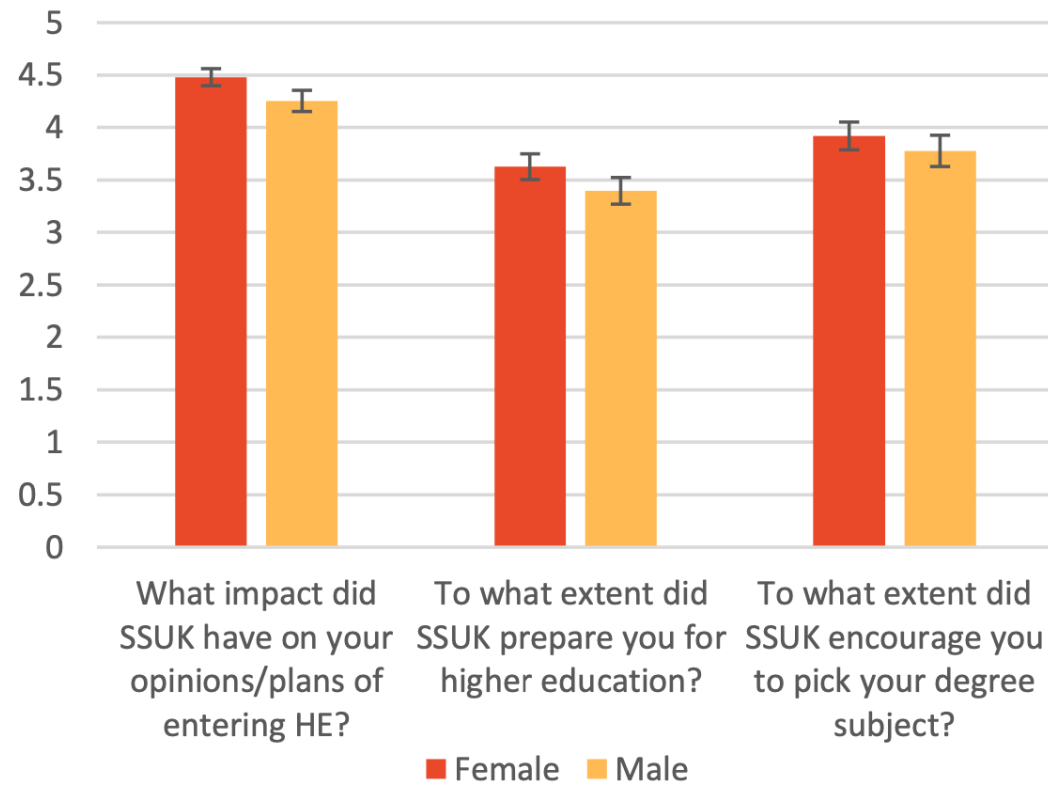
Daniel Robson^{1,2}, Henry Lau¹, Áine O'Brien^{1,3}, Lucy Williams¹, Ben Sutcliffe^{1,4}, Heidi Thiemann^{1,5}, Louise McCaul¹, George Weaver¹ and Tracey Dickens¹

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Space School UK (SSUK) is a series of summer residential programmes for secondary school aged students, held at the University of Leicester over 3 weeks each year. Each programme involves space-related activities run by a team of mentors - currently including university students, graduates, teachers and young professionals associated with the space sector - all of whom attended

STEM undergraduates, e.g. lectures, small group practical experiments and problem-solving workshops. Students also learn other space-related skills such as scuba diving, which gives them an experience of astronaut training and an understanding of the effects of microgravity on the human body. Students stay in university accommodation, except for one night of camping

Assessing the Impact of Space School UK



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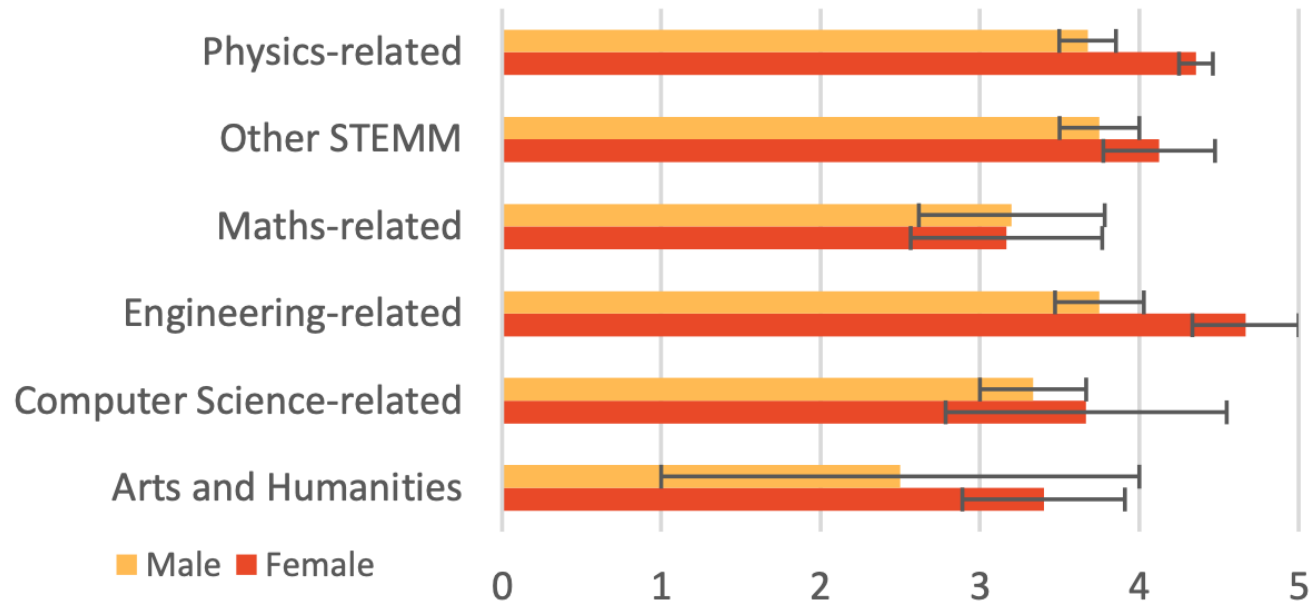


Fig. 7. Average score of answers to 'To what extent did Space School influence you to consider a STEM career?' displayed by gender

Assessing the Impact of Space School UK

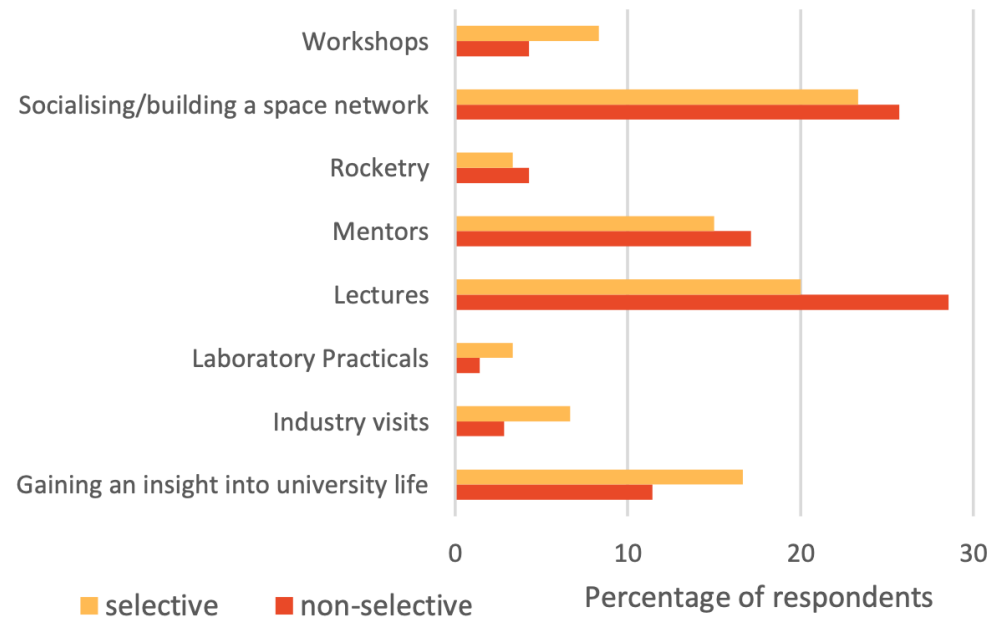


Fig. 12. Percentage of selectively and non-selectively schooled respondents' answers to 'Which of these categories would you say has helped you most with your studies/career?'

Falling off the escalator - common refrains from other students

- ▶ “I’ll never get in to a technical job - the competition is too high and I’m not a genius at engineering/programming”
- ▶ “I’m just not *that* passionate about space. Isn’t space something for people who are really inspired?”
- ▶ “The city/finance/consulting pays more”
- ▶ “I’m not interested in just doing rocket science and engineering”
- ▶ “I’d rather use my skills to make a difference in more important fields like energy/climate, and have an impact on society”

Encouraging inspiration

- ▶ Help young people to build a like-minded space community - people drive passion, and role models drove motivation
- ▶ Sell space more pragmatically to non-space STEM students, as:
 - ▶ A field with a wide range of jobs, *including* business and consultancy components - **room to customise**
 - ▶ An industry with growth, funding, and a skills shortage - **room to succeed**
 - ▶ A tech and coding field with many options, from industry to academia, to start-ups - **room to innovate**
 - ▶ A green field with tangible benefits to life on Earth - reclaiming the narrative from the 'billionaires' playground' - **room for impact**