Evaluation Summary of the Space Expertise and Proficiency Program

What is the Space Expertise and Proficiency Program?

The Space Expertise and Proficiency program of the Canadian Space Agency aims at developing and enhancing Canada's space capacity by supporting research in public or private organizations and sustaining the development of highly qualified personnel in science and engineering.

About the evaluation

Evaluation covers the period of April 2011 to March 2016.

Conducted in 2016-2017 by Prairies Research Associates (PRA) on behalf of the Canadian Space Agency in response to the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat's Policy on Results (2016).

The evaluation's purpose is to provide decision-makers and Canadians an **evidenced-based, neutral assessment** of the Space Expertise and Proficiency program's value for money with respect to both the program's continued relevance and performance.

The evaluation used a **mixed-methods approach** that combined **qualitative and quantitative analyses** which included:

- Documents and archival data review
- 68 interviews with 90 key informants (program recipients, industry representatives, other federal government departments, other space agencies, and CSA employees)
- 6 case studies.

What have we learned?

The program is effective and its objectives are consistent with both federal and departmental priorities to **promote science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM), develop highly qualified personnel (HQP)**, and **advance space science and technology knowledge.**

There is a need for the program to **continue supporting the development of the Canadian space capacity**.

"Our project would not have happened without CSA support"
"There's nothing else like it in the country"
(Space Expertise and Proficiency program recipients)

How can we improve the program?

The Space Science and Technology directorate should ensure that **its objectives and activities are aligned not only with current but also emerging needs of Canadian universities and research institutions** to advance space science and technology knowledge, while also **facilitating the work transition of the developed HQP** towards sectors, including but not limited to the Canadian space sector, where their advanced technical and behavioural competencies (soft skills) can be best applied.

Link to full evaluation report including the Management Action Plan

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*The program spent **$56 M** over the 5 year evaluation period. Most expenditures were dedicated to funding **space science and technology** projects and **providing expertise and access to infrastructure and demonstration facilities.***

1588 **publications** were released by funding recipients, of which ⅔ were peer reviewed publications

15 **Canadian payloads** were tested on stratospheric balloons, engaging academics, students and industry

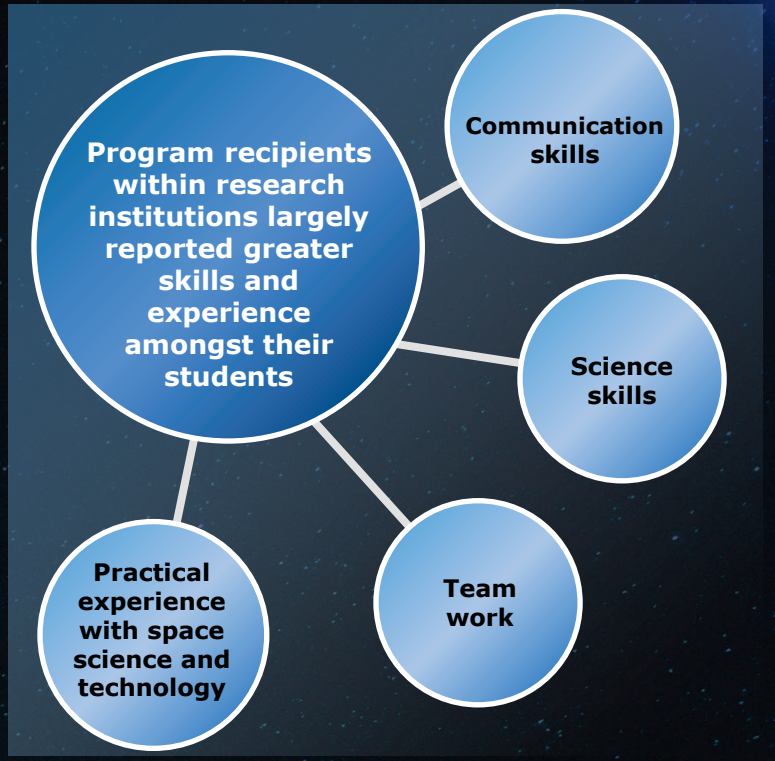
In 2015-2016 alone,

579 individuals were involved in funded projects, among which

355 were undergraduate or graduate students

"The research experience students gain is complementary to what they get in university; it is incredibly valuable and, without the CSA funding, it would not be possible"

(Space Expertise and Proficiency program recipient)



*The program produced **good value with respect to use of public funds** by developing highly qualified personnel and facilitating space science and technology knowledge growth.*

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