

Europlanet NA1 Expert Program Report

Name: **Lukasz Lamza**

Institution: **Tygodnik Powszechny / The Pontifical University of John Paul II**

Host: **University College London / Open University, UK**

Visit date: **15-19 Jan 2018**

Report:

I have spend 3 full days in and around London, visiting the main seat of University College at Gower St. on January 16th 2018, the Open University in Milton Keynes on Jan 17th and the Mullard Space Science Laboratory on the 19th.

At each of the institutions, I was introduced by Anita Heward to a group of researchers and engineers working on current planetary science projects. Altogether, I have met personally and had a chance to talk to, usually for ca. 30-60 minutes, ca. 20 people. This made for some very intensive time, but also extremely productive.

The range of subjects that I had a chance to discuss was extraordinary: from the purely scientific issues related e.g. to plasma or solid state physics, interstellar chemistry, planetary and galactic astrophysics, through more practical, engineering issues, such as creating miniaturized or more robust versions of Earth-tested mass spectrometers or imaging instruments ready for space missions, to practicalities of doing science, communicating with journalists etc.

I came to United Kingdom mostly as a journalist and science writer/public speaker, but I'm also working as a lecturer/researcher at a university, so I have benefited twice from the visit. First, I have made a number of extremely useful contacts, and now I have straightforward direct or indirect access to people working on most European and international space missions, such as JUICE, SMILE or ExoMars. Even now, as I write this report, a journalist colleague of mine has scheduled an interview with Prof. Nigel Mason from the Open University, inspired by my conversation with Prof. Mason and the fact that we have now established a direct 'contact line'. Second, I have had a chance to deepen my scientific interests for the benefit of my students (I teach philosophy, specializing in philosophy of science, scientific methodology and cosmology).

Overall, I can say with confidence that through this short visit I have vastly increased my understanding of the current activities of the European planetary/space science community, and that it will translate directly into journal articles, popular science talks, and university-level lectures.