



Mars and the Earthlings: Can we, and should we, go to Mars?

A training school dedicated to the scientific, ethical, medical, economical, political, and legal questions around the human exploration of the red planet



Location: Obernai (near Strasbourg), France.

Date: 8–13 October 2026.

Organizing institutions: European Astrobiology Institute, and the Cluster of Excellence *The Martian Mindset* (University of Bremen).

Organising committee: Lucie Poulet, Cyprien Verseux, Frédéric Foucher, Muriel Gargaud, Michel Viso.

For whom: PhD students, early-career researchers, engineers, journalists, economists, lawyers, artists.

Official language: English.

Description: This training school stemmed from the European Astrobiology Institute's Project Team "Mars and the Earthlings", whose goal is to provide reliable information and foster healthy, evidence-based discussions on human Mars exploration. This project team gathers space exploration experts including astronauts, astronomers, planetary scientists, geologists, legal experts, biologists, philosophers and economists. The lectures will be given by some of them.

The learning contents draw largely from the book « Mars and the Earthlings: A Realistic View on Mars Exploration and Settlement », written by Project Team members and published in January 2025 by Springer. Among the topics to be covered are the Martian geology and climate, robotic missions to Mars, crewed orbital flight, permanent settlements on Mars, and terraforming. On top of technical and scientific challenges, each topic will be looked at from economic, legal, societal, psychological, and medical perspectives.

Since this training school targets an interdisciplinary audience, the first day will be dedicated to contextualising the human exploration of Mars, with classes ranging from an introduction to crewed space missions to the search for life on Mars and the crewed exploration of celestial bodies, including the effects of microgravity on the human body, the risks associated with space missions, and the current status of Mars exploration.

In parallel to lectures, students will work on a group project aiming at developing a detailed and realistic scenario of the human exploration of Mars, with each group exploring one aspect of the mission (engineering, science, law, economics, ethics, etc.).

Two excursions are planned: one at the European Council and a surprise activity.

The working programme can be seen [here](#).

Interested? To be informed when registrations open, please register [here](#), now!