

## Astrobiology and Society in Europe Today

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### Abstract

The poster entitled 'Astrobiology and Society in Europe Today: The White Paper on ethical, societal and political consequences of astrobiology research' gives an outline of a recently completed joint work of Working Group 5 Philosophy and History of Astrobiology, a part of a Trans-Domain European COST Action LIFE-ORIGINS TD1308 Origins and evolution of life on Earth and in the Universe. With contributions from authors in twenty countries and over thirty scientific institutions worldwide, the document illustrates the societal implications of astrobiology and the positive contribution that astrobiology can make to European society.

### 1. Introduction

The poster introduces the White Paper on societal implications of astrobiology research in European context and its relation to society at large. Astrobiology is inherently interdisciplinary and based on collaboration between disciplines, universities and countries. For Europe to take a leading role in this research, it is very important to have a stable structure that can coordinate research, research infrastructure, funding and relations to the surrounding society in an efficient way. In detail, the poster highlights the two main objectives of the Astrobiology and Society White Paper:

(1) It recommends the establishment of a European Astrobiology Institute (EAI) as an answer to a series of challenges relating to astrobiology but also European research, education and the society.

(2) It also acknowledges the societal implications of astrobiology, and thus the role of the social sciences and humanities in optimizing the positive contribution that astrobiology can make to the lives of the people of Europe and the challenges they face.

### 2. Poster Outline

With the aim of the poster is to inform space science professionals as well as interested public about the document, the poster provides overview of sections related to contributions of astrobiology to society, advancement of science in Europe, environmental protection, as well as societal challenges from astrobiology, and potential conflicts of interest between astrobiology and commercial use of space. Furthermore, the poster aims to point out to the timely role of an organised initiative in astrobiology education and popularisation of science.

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### References

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