
Susmita Mohanty



Susmita Mohanty is a spaceship designer, serial entrepreneur and space diplomat. Susmita is the Director General of Spaceport SARABHAI (S2) - India's first and only 'space' think tank which she co-founded in 2021. S2's mission is to present and strengthen India's voice both public and private, as a space power worldwide. Alongside this quest, S2 seeks to provide research-based policy guidance to the government, accelerate India's transformation into a developed space economy, promote international dialogue and foster space sustainability.

Susmita is unique as a space entrepreneur. Perhaps, she is the only one to have co-founded companies on 3 different continents: EARTH2ORBIT, Bangalore (2009-2021), LIQUIFER Systems Group, Vienna (2004-ongoing), and MOONFRONT, San Francisco (2001-2007). In 2005, Susmita was honoured on Capitol Hill with an International Achievement Award from Women in Aerospace for promoting international cooperation through her orbital enterprise.

Via EARTH2ORBIT, her 3rd entrepreneurial venture, she played a pivotal role in enabling the first-ever historic launch agreement between an American satellite constellation company Skybox and Antrix, the Indian space agency's commercial arm - despite seemingly unsurmountable legal and export control hurdles. This half-a-decade 'technology diplomacy' saga paved the way for many more American satellites to be launched onboard the Indian PSLV rocket.

Prior to turning entrepreneur, Susmita worked on Shuttle-Mir missions at NASA Johnson in Houston and later for the International Space Station Program at Boeing in Huntington Beach. Since 1998, Susmita has worked with the Americans, Japanese, Europeans and Indians in various capacities, as employee, consultant, contractor, entrepreneur and advisor.

From space agencies to universities, from industry associations to investment firms - institutions and companies the world over consult Susmita on space-related matters. She was one of the experts invited by the Principal Scientific Advisor to the Prime Minister of India to share insights on the role of start-ups in creating a thriving space economy. She was invited by the Swiss Space Office to provide inputs for crafting the 2023 Swiss Space Policy.

In 2019, she was selected as one of BBC's 100 Women laureates who inspire and influence a femaleled future. In 2017, she was featured on cover of Fortune Magazine. In 2012, she was voted into the Financial Times' list of '25 Indians to Watch'. On the occasion of India's 75th anniversary of its independence, Susmita was one of the 75 women honoured by the Indian government with the Women Transforming India (WTI) Awards.

Susmita serves on Advisory Boards of the global alliance for Earth-Space Governance and the Space Centre at École Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne (EPFL), Switzerland. She was a Member of the World Economic Forum (WEF) Global Future Council for Space Technologies from 2016-2024. She is a member of the Board of the Centre for Space Futures, part of the WEF Centre for the Fourth Industrial Revolution (C4IR). She is a former non-resident scholar at Carnegie India. She shares opinions on #CriticalThinking, Brussels based think tank Friends of Europe's online policy magazine. She served on the Senate of the National Institute of Design (NID), Ahmedabad (2019-2021). Between 2017-2019, at the invitation of the Chief Minister of the state of Odisha (India), Susmita served on his staff in the rank of Minister of State on a mission to empower and improve state-run schools.

Educated in India, France, and Sweden, Susmita holds multiple degrees including a PhD. She seamlessly straddles the worlds of technology, business, diplomacy, design and architecture. An ardent traveler and explorer, she might just be the only person in the world to have visited both the Arctic and Antarctica, on invitation.