

Launch of competition for young people to help make UK spaceflight history



PUBLISHED JUN 9, 2021
BY [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk)

competition launched by government to inspire the next generation of British space scientists

young people asked to design a 'nanosatellite' with the winning entry destined for space

as G7 and COP26 hosts, the design will also support the UK's ambitious net zero targets by helping to monitor the effects of climate change

Young people will have the chance to send their own small satellite into space as a competition to inspire the next generation of British space scientists and entrepreneurs launches today (9 June 2021).

Transport Secretary Grant Shapps was at Goonhilly Earth Station in Cornwall today to announce the contest, which is looking for nanosatellite designs that can help support the UK's ambitious decarbonisation targets.

Nanosatellites are small satellites that can be used to gather scientific data, such as on climate change, as well as improving data for satellite navigation systems - making journeys better for everyone across Britain.

The £600,000 prize fund will mean the winner can further develop or build their satellite, making it launch-ready, with the potential for it to be launched into space from UK soil.

In 2022, the UK is set to become the first country in Europe to host small satellite launches, with Spaceport Cornwall, in Newquay, set to be the first operational spaceport.

Transport Secretary Grant Shapps said:

As hosts of the G7 and with the first space launches from British soil firmly within our grasp, I want to support the UK's brightest minds and creative ideas to launch this exciting competition.

This will help to secure a future spaceflight legacy for Great Britain, by inspiring young adults to build the skills needed to work within this growing sector.

With its ambition to double the UK's global market share of the space sector to 10% by 2030, Britain's space exploration programme is set to create new high-skilled jobs and economic benefits for communities and organisations across the country.

As international leaders convene in Cornwall for the G7 Summit, the government is accelerating its vision for the UK to be at the global forefront of small satellite launch and emerging space transportation markets.

Science Minister Amanda Solloway said:

We are committed to putting British innovation at the heart of the global effort to understand and minimise the effects of climate change, cementing our position as a science superpower and helping us to build back greener from the pandemic.

As we anticipate with excitement the first satellite launches from British soil next year, this competition gives young people across the UK an opportunity to be part of our country's thriving space sector and shape a better future for everyone.

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Press release distributed by Media Pigeon on behalf of GOV.UK, on Jun 9, 2021. For more information subscribe and follow us.

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