

Your Place in Space Challenge

Virtual information session transcript

Rebecca Meyer (00:01)

I see we have some of our attendees joining us now. Thank you for waiting, we're getting started just at 2:02 Eastern time here. As you join us, you'll see that I'm launching just a poll. We would love to see who is with us in the room today and you can also feel free to post in the chat where you're joining us from. Already seeing some coast-to-coast representation from New York to SoCal, Texas, North Carolina and Seattle. Wow, oh my goodness and now they're coming in fast and furious, this is really exciting. Ooh, and and from the Challenger Center in DC, so it's some space representation.

Rebecca Meyer (00:55)

Okay, I'm going to go ahead and close our poll just so that we can see who is joining us today and I'll share the results. So with us today, we have a lot of CTE teachers, which is terrific. We also have a lot of other folks with us, so students, parents, school administrators, other teachers, industry partners. I'd just like to recognize that today or this week is Teacher Appreciation Week and we are so thrilled to be honoring teachers and really excited to be sharing this information session with you.

Rebecca Meyer (01:31)

So really glad to see the representation of teachers here with us today. We also wanted to get a sense of how frequently space comes up in the classroom. For those of you who have joined us, and seeing that for about 20% of you, you regularly bring space into the classroom, which is really terrific to see. But for the rest space education might be something newer to you or something that comes up less frequently. And I think that is really, you know, what we're looking to capture with this challenge is to both get the word out to teachers who are more familiar with space and also those folks for whom this is a newer topic area. So we're really glad to have all of you with us today.

Rebecca Meyer (02:21)

Okay, we'll now get started with the presentation. So first things first, my name is Rebecca Meyer, and I'm an Engagement Manager here at Luminary Labs. Luminary Labs is a strategy and innovation consultancy based in New York City, and we've been engaged by the US Department of Education to run the Your Place in Space Challenge. We'll get into more intros in just a minute, but first I wanted to give you a sense of what we'll cover with our time today. The purpose of this one-hour session is to provide an overview of the Your Place in Space Challenge and answer any questions that you may have."

Rebecca Meyer (03:04)

The US Department of Education will begin by providing background information on the CTE Momentum series. This challenge is the first in that series, and further context will be shared. A featured speaker from NASA's Office of STEM Engagement will discuss how this challenge relates to the space industry. Next, I will guide you through the challenge structure, selection criteria, submission process eligibility, and prizes. Towards the end, we will reserve time for questions, both those submitted in advance and those asked during the session through the Q&A function. Feel free to submit questions throughout. It's important to note that this session is being recorded, and the slides and recording will be published on the challenge website after the webinar. We will now begin with introductions from the US Department of Education, and I will pass it over to Jenny Lambert.

Jenny Lambert (04:09)

Welcome to this info session. Here, we have listed the leadership at the Office of Career Technical and Adult Education, including Dr. Amy Loyd, Luke Rhine, Emily Lamont, and Dr. DeAndre Jones. On the next slide, you'll find the leadership at the Office of Career Technical Education, specifically in the division of Academic and Technical Education, with Dr. Sharon Miller, Robin Utz, Daphne Bonaparte, Jim Means, and Jenny Lambert. The following slide introduces our featured speaker, Kris Brown, whom you'll hear from shortly. Moving on, Luminary Labs is a contractor working with the Department of Education to implement this challenge. Rebecca Meyer has already introduced herself. Other individuals involved include Emily Coombs, Maeser Allen, Harrison Diskin, and Janna Gilbert.

Rebecca Meyer (05:09)

Thank you so much, Jenny. And just so folks know, the Luminary Labs team is on hand to respond to any questions and we'll be dropping links in the chat throughout so you can keep an eye on that as well.

Jenny Lambert (05:25)

Thanks Rebecca, so just a little of overview. The Your Place in Space Challenge is a first annual challenge in the CTE Momentum series. Through this annual prize competition, the Department of Education seeks to amplify access to career and technical education, also known as CTE and better prepare high school students for rewarding careers. The series builds on prior prize competitions led by the Department which have focused on increasing CTE access because we know that CTE is an effective way to prepare students for the workforce. Each challenge in the CTE Momentum series will follow a similar timeline and structure to allow teachers to plan for and incorporate challenges in their classrooms each year.

Jenny Lambert (06:19)

We're going to dig into the details of today's topic, specifically, the Your Place and Space Challenge, right. It's an invitation for high schools to submit designs for a product or service that contributes to space missions and exploration. In doing so, students will connect the dots between the skills they're building in their CTE programs and the fulfilling careers they can have in the space industry. It's always good to hear from field experts. So let me turn it over to our featured speaker, Kris Brown, to learn more about the space industry.

Kris Brown (06:57)

It's great to be with you all today. I'm delighted to be part of this event and we at NASA are really thrilled to be working with the Department of Education on this initiative. I'd like to touch on first, why we're doing this and why this challenge is important. And you'll see here that there are elements of a strong business case and the need for the work we do in engaging students with our other federal agency partners that have investments in efforts in space.

Kris Brown (07:26)

The space industry is an exciting and growing field and an important segment of our nation's economy, employing thousands of people and billions of dollars in investment and economic value. Our work in space is vital to life here on our home planet from understanding our earth and climate, enabling scientific discovery, facilitating navigation and connectivity, supporting security and much more. As you see here,

the space industry is estimated to triple in size over the next three decades, employing over one and a half million people and generating close to \$800 billion in economic activity by 2050. In order for us to have a vibrant space industry, we're actively working to build a future diverse skilled workforce. At NASA, in our work with Department of Education and our other federal agency partners, this is a core part of our mission in reaching students. We're leveraging the exciting work we do in space and building connections to the amazing people who do that work each and every day, in attracting and engaging students on STEM pathways. And through that work, we're also connecting with students who will forge pathways that lead across a broad spectrum of space careers that are not all STEM-based. You want to go to the next slide please.

Kris Brown (08:51)

We have a large and diverse group of space people. They are for many walks of life and with a variety of expertise areas and talents and skills who are key contributors to our work and are passionate about the work that we do. You see some examples here, technicians and welders who build spacecraft and rockets. Architects who not only work on designing buildings here on earth that we work in, but also designing habitats in space. Chefs that prepare food for the astronauts and trainers that help them to prepare, including divers in our neutral buoyancy lab in Houston that help train them for space walks. We have employees who specialize in business and financial management, communications and public engagement facilities, human resources and many other fields of study that are essential to our mission success. So while mainstream representations of space industry careers tend to focus on astronauts and those rocket scientists like me, there is a wide diversity of careers in space. And we believe it's important for us to build more career awareness; many students likely don't know what careers are out there and, thereby, can't envision how their skills may translate into the exciting work we do in space. If you go to the next slide, please.

Kris Brown (10:12)

So that brings us back to why we're here today. The Your Place in Space Challenge is about first creating engaging learning opportunities for students to explore the challenges and opportunity space in the things that we do. Second, connecting programs with a wide variety of space careers, and third, inspiring students to be able to envision and pursue space careers. In other words, it really exposes them to the exciting work we do in a way that they can connect to. We're really excited about the prospects and seeing what you all come up with in working with students. And for more on what the teams will be doing, I'd like to turn it back over to Rebecca.

Rebecca Meyer (10:59)

Thank you so much, Kris. I think that was a really inspiring view of the space careers landscape and I did not know prior to February that there was such a thing as divers working for NASA. And I think that illustrates just how diverse the career pathways can be in the space industry.

Rebecca Meyer (11:21)

So one thing that we wanted to discuss is what teams will actually be exploring and what they might be designing. So as you heard, the challenge invites high schools to submit designs for a product or service that contributes to space missions and exploration, but that's quite broad. What might that mean? So first and foremost, we want teams to get creative. Teams can explore designs in any area that they like. The possibilities like space itself are limitless. If you need some inspiration, we've included a few examples here, such as design an approach that will help address the problem of space debris. Design a device that benefits workers on the International Space Station. Design a restaurant, hotel or entertainment concept for space travelers and design an app that uses data captured from space to support an

environmental effort. We want to see each team's unique skills and expertise in these designs. So consider one of these four options or choose your own. I would start by thinking about what problems might exist in space that your students would be able to address through product or service design and start your brainstorming there. We've also included resources on the challenge website to help you get started with identifying a problem and brainstorming potential solutions.

Rebecca Meyer (12:44)

Teams will be sharing their designs through the submission form which you can find on the challenge website. I'll note that we're looking for ideas in these designs, not necessarily fully developed, ready to implement products or services with prototypes. But instead, we're asking teams to share their ideas in the form of primarily short form answer responses. That submission form has a few key components, so one is a school and team overview to introduce the people who worked on the design. Second is a design overview to describe the idea, the problem it solves and how it will contribute to space missions and exploration. In this section, teams will also submit a short video that shares the thinking behind the design. The third section is the design development and implementation section in which teams will consider what it would take if they were to further this concept. Who would be involved in bringing this idea to life? And what would the next steps be? Finally, all teams must secure written approval from a principal or district administrator. The full submission form is published and open on the challenge website under the submit tab.

Rebecca Meyer (13:58)

Okay, let's dive into the details. So looking at the timeline, we launched the challenge at the end of March and we are now in the open submissions period. Teams will have until the end of October to submit their ideas, giving teachers the chance to assemble teams and lead students in brainstorming, refining and writing their submission form responses. Judging will begin after submissions close in the fall on October 30th, 2023, and we expect to announce up to 10 winners in early 2024.

Rebecca Meyer (14:36)

Moving into eligibility, so who can participate? Schools must meet the definition of an eligible recipient which is outlined in Perkins V and be eligible to receive Perkins V funding. Teams must be led by a career and technical education teacher or a CTE coordinator at the school and those team leads must be over 18 years old. And you can find all information on eligibility, including links to relevant information on the Official Rules, Terms and Conditions page of the challenge website. So we encourage you to read those and visit that page for your questions.

Rebecca Meyer (15:20)

How will teams be evaluated? So submissions will be evaluated by an independent judging panel who will select up to 10 winners. When reviewing submissions, judges will assign up to 20 points in each of the following categories. The call to action, so the extent to which the submission demonstrates a design for a product or service that will contribute to space missions and exploration. CTE connection, the extent to which the submission demonstrates an ability and an intention to incorporate available CTE programs and includes CTE students at the school. Learning outcomes, the extent to which the submission demonstrates an ability and intention to improve student knowledge and hands-on exposure to space skills and multidisciplinary content. Student populations, the extent to which the submission focuses on students from special populations and underserved student populations. And finally, community engagement, the extent to which the submission describes how the entrant plans to engage the broader educational ecosystem that includes, but is not limited to students, parents, industry partners, local governments and community organizations. These criteria are also listed on the challenge website. So I encourage you to visit the selection criteria page and review these closely.

Rebecca Meyer (16:41)

Prizes, so up to 10 winners will receive an equal portion of the prize pool totaling \$5,000 each. Winning teams may also receive in-kind prizes. classroom equipment, site visits, or other experiences. You can stay tuned and check the challenge website to stay up to date on the prize pool and learn of any updates. We encourage you also to sign up for the newsletter where we'll share announcements about updates to the prize pool as well.

Rebecca Meyer (17:18)

So what's next? So you can contact the challenge team at hello@yourplaceinspacechallenge.com with any additional questions. I would recommend that you add that email address to your address book to make sure that important messages and updates on the challenge are not marked as spam. And you can visit the challenge website to sign up for news, browse those resources that I mentioned, and start working on your submission. So again, we'll put in a plug for the challenge website at yourplaceinspacechallenge.com to learn more and sign up for the latest challenge news.

Rebecca Meyer (17:56)

As we mentioned, you can stay tuned for updates by signing up for the newsletter. We'll also be publishing this webinar as well as our question and answer responses on the challenge website. And you can reach out to the challenge team at the hello@yourplaceinspacechallenge.com email as well and we will get back to you with an answer. So thank you all for joining. Thank you so much to Jenny, to Kris, and to the teams at the US Department of Education and at NASA. We are so excited to be working on this challenge and really excited to see what you all come up with. So thank you and happy Teacher Appreciation Week. I hope everyone has a really wonderful rest of your week.