

CAREERS IN SPACE

We, as humans, have been exploring space since we first looked up at the night sky. We have successfully sent satellites to the edge of the Solar System, put people on the Moon, built an International Space Station, landed probes on other planets and used telescopes in space to study galaxies far away. To achieve this took lots of different kinds of experts and skilled people.

The space industry is made up of governments, international groups and some private companies. Space Agencies are large organisations that are responsible for developing science and technology related to space. Examples of Space Agencies are the UK Space Agency, the European Space Agency and NASA.

Generally speaking, many roles in the space industry require a background in science and engineering, but this isn't always a necessity. For example, the space industry also needs lawyers, fitness instructors and spacesuit costume designers!



ACTIVITY 1: MANAGING A SPACE AGENCY

You are the manager of a space agency.

What is the name of your agency?

Researchers have recently discovered a new dwarf planet in the outer Solar System and you want to plan a crewed mission to visit. Using a newly developed rocket engine, it will only take 2 years to get there.

Your Mission: Scope out the planet's surface for potential future base camp locations. You need to assemble a team of people. What job roles do you think are important for this mission?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

If you were a part of this crew which role would you most like to fill:

ACTIVITY 2: CAREER FOCUS

Choose one of the jobs to focus on. What type of person do you think would be needed to do this role? Think about what they studied at school, what their skills are and what they do for fun. Create a CV for this person – be as imaginative as you like or you can base it on your own interests.

The CV will need the following sections:

Name:

About me:

Education:

Skills/Expertise:

Experience:

ACTIVITY 3: JOB TASKS

What are the main tasks your chosen person will have to do as part of their mission to the new dwarf planet? List them and explain why the tasks are important to the mission.

Extra Activity:

Go to schoolobservatory.org/careers to explore the careers profiles of some real people working in the space sector – you may want to concentrate on the ‘Exploring’ and ‘Spaceflight’ sections to find people who might make it onto your mission crew.

Or maybe you are more interested in influencing people or managing the space agency? What about numbers and data? Many careers in space and astronomy rely heavily on maths. Are you interested in making things? What about rocketry? Or working on some of the biggest telescopes on Earth?

There are a wide range of careers in this sector. One of them could be right for you!