FLORIDA
SPACE
SUMMIT
2026
FLORIDA
SPACE
SUMMIT
OCTOBER 20–21, 2026
Center for Space Education
Kennedy Space Center
Summit Program
Presented by the Florida Space Research Consortium.
Thank you to our Platinum host, Starfighters Space,
and our University host, the University of Florida Astraeus Space Institute.

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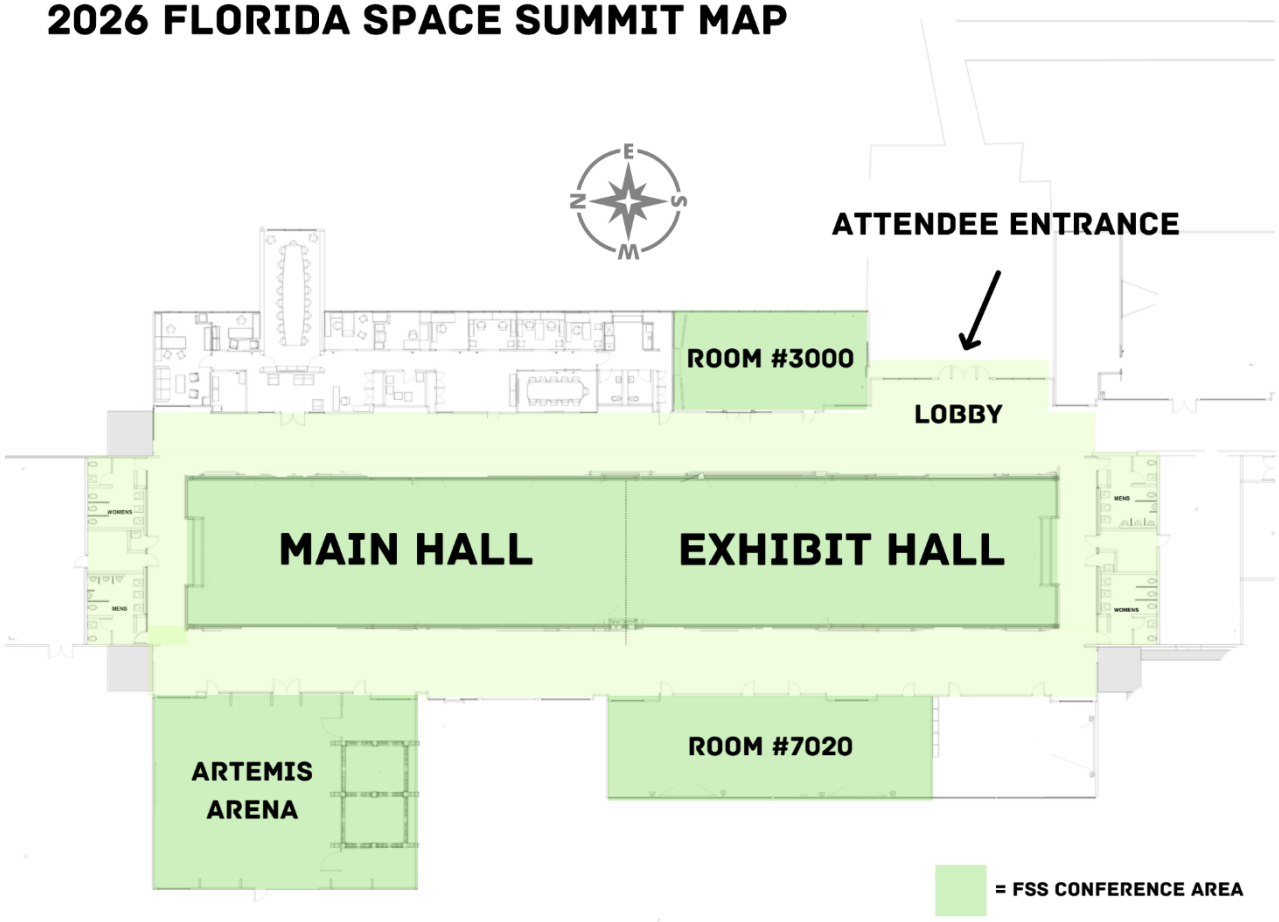
2026 FLORIDA SPACE SUMMIT MAP



October 20, 2026

Registration for the Florida Space Summit includes an access pass to the Kennedy Space Center Visitors Center. Participants are encouraged to explore the visitors center during break and lunchtime.

8:30am	**Parking Opens at Kennedy Space Center Visitors Center** **Conference Registration at KSC Visitors Center Entry Gate** *Check-in at gate, directions will be provided to meeting space*	**Visitors Center Front Gate**
9:00am	**Gates Open**	
	Conference Facility Opens - Center for Space Education Coffee and light breakfast provided	**Center for Space Education**
	Exhibit Hall Opens	**Exhibit Hall**
9:30am	**KSC Facility Tours Meet**	**Rm 3000**
10:00am	**KSC Facility Tours Depart**	
10:00am	**Industry Showcase** Alain Berinstain, Florida Space Research Consortium Director Ryan Reeves, Technical Director of Research & Innovation, ISS National Lab for CASIS Abigail Harrison, Research Lead, Ohio State University Starlab Consortium Johnathan Volk, Business Director Lead, Voyager Technologies Santha Sathya, CEO and Founder, LuftCar Cora Thiel, Chief Scientist, Director of International Relations, University of Zurich, Center for Space and Aviation Switzerland and Liechtenstein Christopher Jannette, CEO and Co-Founder, Blackstar Orbital Bailey Mendel, Business Development and Growth Manager, Yuri, USA Shannon Fedenko, CEO and Co-Founder, Aloft Biotechnologies Heath Mills, Chief Science Officer, Rhodium Scientific Edward Ellewood, Director of Communications, Starfighters Space Marchel Holle, Director of Civil Space, Varda Space Industries	**Main Hall**
11:00am	**Doing Business with NASA,** Kathy Loftin, Research and University Relations Manager, KSC	**Main Hall**
11:30am	**NASA STTR: How Universities can enable the growth of Space Startups,** Michael Vinje, Small Business Technical Advisor, KSC	**Main Hall**
12:00pm	**Lunch** *Boxed lunch will be provided for all registered participants* Participants are encouraged to explore KSC Visitors Center during the lunch break.	**Exhibit Hall**
1:15pm	**Opening Remarks** Rachael Seidler, Astraeus Space Institute Director and FSRC Subject Matter Experts Committee Chair David Norton, University of Florida Vice President of Research Brian Hughes, Kennedy Space Center Director Alain Berinstein, Florida Space Research Consortium Director Bill Nelson, Former U.S. Senator, NASA Administrator, and Astronaut	**Main Hall**

1:45pm **Seminars**

All seminars are listed with the presenting author, the abstract number, and talk title. The full abstract is available in the Florida Space Summit 2026 abstract booklet.

AI in Space — Rm 3000

Session Chair: Christina Boucher and Yaser Fallah

- 1:50 Tina Tran, #8, "PSI-Net: A Deep Learning-Based Optical Image Restoration Network for Lunar Plume-Surface Interaction"
- 2:05 Shuzhen Luo, #25, "Deep Reinforcement Learning-Driven Simulation of Human Locomotion and Exoskeleton Assistance in Reduced Gravity"
- 2:20 Bala Prenith Reddy Gopu, #126, "Reconstructing Non-Cooperative Space Objects from a Flyby using Neuralangelo"
- 2:35 Amy Miller, #202, "Automated detection of semi-resolved star clusters in the Magellanic Clouds and the morphology of young stellar systems"
- 2:50 Sweety Sarker, #48, "Overcoming Airframe-Induced Sensor Distortion: A Neural Network Approach to Wind Measurement on the Dragonfly Titan Lander"
- 3:05 Closing Remarks

Habitability Session #1: Space Plants & Fungi — Rm 7020

Session Chairs: Anna-Lisa Paul and Andrew Palmer

- 1:50 Shubha Dixit, #62, "A Compact Sealed Plant Health Monitoring Payload for Controlled-Environment and Future CubeSat Deployment"
- 2:05 Hunter Strickland, #77, "Built for Earth, Remodeled by Spaceflight: Long-duration spaceflight alters the cell wall matrix and inflorescence stem morphology of Arabidopsis"
- 2:20 Natasha Haveman, #92, "Evaluating the Effects of Carbon Dioxide (CO_2) Concentration and Airflow Level on Sporeless Pearl Oyster Mushroom (Pleurotus ostreatus)."
- 2:35 Haley Murphy, #127, "Systematic isolation of the mineral constituents of MGS-1 reveals cause of seed germination inhibition"
- 2:50 Sarah Ross, #154, "CHRGE: Comparing Hydroponics vs Regolith Growth and Evolution Between Two Generations"
- 3:05 Closing Remarks

Infrastructure Session #1: Space Manufacturing, Materials, and Inspection — Main Hall

Session Chair: Michael Tonks

- 1:50 Evan Bell, #10, "Swamp Works Regolith Compaction Technologies"
- 2:05 Curtis Taylor, #121, "Thermoplastic Composites for Lightweight Aerospace Structures and In-Space Manufacturing"
- 2:20 Michael Tonks, #23, "Physics-Based Predictive Modeling of Radiation-Hardened Electronics for Space Applications"
- 2:35 Xiang He, #76, "Structures and Electrochemical Behaviors of High-Entropy Oxides: A Case Study on the MnFeCoNiCuO Electrocatalyst"
- 2:50 Rajendra Prasath Palanisamy, #122, "Generalizable Acoustic Damage Detection in Complex Space Infrastructure"
- 3:05 Closing Remarks

2:45pm **KSC Facility Tours Meet** — **Artemis Arena**

3:00pm **KSC Facility Tours Depart**

3:15pm **Break**

3:30pm **Seminars**

All seminars are listed with the presenting author, the abstract number, and talk title. The full abstract is available in the Florida Space Summit 2026 abstract booklet.

Discovery Session #1: Exploration Cislunar to Distant Universe — Main Hall

Session Chairs: Anthony Gonzalez and Juan Carlos Palacios

- 3:35 Franco Criscola, #21, "Mission Concept for the Study of Cislunar Space Hazard from L4 Quasi-Periodic Orbits"
- 3:50 Simon Barke, #102, "From Gainesville to Deep Space: Florida's Role in LISA, the International Gravitational Wave Observatory"
- 4:05 Anish Damodaran, #113, "PHOENIX: A Photonics-Enabled Heterodyne Submillimeter/Far-Infrared Interferometer for Planet Formation, Star Formation, and Galaxy Evolution"
- 4:20 Nicholas Cicotte, #167, "Tracing the Sagittarius Stream Through the Galactic Disk"
- 4:35 Kingsley Ehrich, #193, Detectable Species in Exoplanet Atmospheres with a Space-Based High-Resolution Germanium Immersion Grating Spectrograph"
- 4:50 Closing Remarks

Habitability Session #2: Space Health — Rm 7020

Session Chairs: Rachael Seidler and Begum Mathyk

- 3:35 Heath Mills, #170, "Biomanufacturing Beyond Earth: Results from Rhodium Scientific's Industry Leading ISS Biomanufacturing Program"
- 3:50 Begum Mathyk, #50, "Beyond LEO: A Clinical Framework for Women's Health in the Artemis Era"
- 4:05 Sumire Sato, #94, "Combined effects of head-down tilt and hypercapnia on human glymphatic function"
- 4:20 Cuiping Zhang, #67, "Age and Gender Influence Mesenchymal Stem Cells' Osteogenesis during Spaceflight"
- 4:35 Courtney Wheelock, #117, "Effect of sex and age on central nervous system oxygen toxicity using a hyperbaric oxygen chamber model in rats"
- 4:50 Closing Remarks

5:00pm **Program Ends**

October 21, 2026

Registration for the Florida Space Summit includes an access pass to the Kennedy Space Center Visitors Center. Participants are encouraged to explore the visitors center during break and lunch times.

8:30am **Parking Opens at Kennedy Space Center Visitors Center**

Conference Registration at KSC Visitors Center Entry Gate
Check-in at gate, directions will be provided to meeting

9:00am **Gates Open** **Center for Space Education**

Conference Facility Opens
Coffee and light breakfast provided

Exhibit Hall open all day **Exhibit Hall**

10:00am **General Session** **Main Hall**

Rachael Seidler, Astraeus Space Institute Director and FSRC Subject Matter Experts Committee Chair

Piercarlo Ciacchi, COO and Lead Pilot, Starfighter Space

Alain Berinstein, Florida Space Research Consortium Director

Lisa Carnell, Division Director of the Biological and Physical Sciences Division

Dorit Donoviel, Executive Director of Translational Research Institute for Space Health (TRISH)

Keynote Speaker

Elizabeth "Zibi" Turtle, Planetary Scientist at Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory, Dragonfly Mission Principal Investigator

12:00pm **Poster Session and Lunch** **Artemis Arena**

Boxed lunch will be provided for all registered participants in the Exhibit Hall.

Student poster presentations supported by the Florida Space Grant Consortium.

12:00pm – 12:45pm Posters Session 1: Even Number Posters Hosted

12:45pm – 1:30pm Posters Session 2: Odd Number Posters Hosted

1:45pm **Habitability Fireside Chat** **Main Hall**

Exploration and Science: Moonbase and Beyond

Lisa Carnell, Division Director of the Biological and Physical Sciences Division

Dorit Donoviel, Executive Director of Translational Research Institute for Space Health (TRISH)

2:35 Suman Chowdhury, #208, "Multiscale Biomechanical Digital Twin Framework for Space Health and Performance Research"
2:50 Jennifer Young, #18, "Human Sustainability in Future Space Settlements"
3:05 Tie Liu, #5, "From Spectral Signatures to Smart Agriculture: Integrating Hyperspectral Imaging, Multi-Omics, and AI to Advance Sustainable Space Crop Production"

1:45pm **Seminars**

All seminars are listed with the presenting author, the abstract number, and talk title. The full abstract is available in the Florida Space Summit 2026 abstract booklet.

Discovery Session #2: Moon, Mars, and Exoplanet Exploration — Rm 3000

Session Chairs: Stephen Elardo and Addie Dove

1:50 Caldon Whyte, #34, "3D Climate-Chemistry Modeling of White Dwarf Exoplanets"

2:05 Brent Christner, #54, "Lunar Underground eXplorer (LUX): a hovering mobility platform for subsurface science and exploration"

2:20 Césarine Graham, #74, "A Contiguous South Polar Map of Martian Araneiforms and Periglacial Features with Topographical Analysis"

2:35 Bernard Isaiah Lo, #209, "Full-Stokes Spectropolarimetry for Detecting Chiral Biosignatures"

2:50 Stephen Elardo, #171, "Findings and Recommendations from NASA's South Pole-Aitken Basin Sample Return and Exploration (SPARX) Science Definition Team Report"

3:05 Closing Remarks

Infrastructure Session #2: Thermal-Fluid Modeling & Propulsion — Rm 7020

Session Chairs: Sunjae Kim and Tyler Dolmetsch

1:50 Jeremy Smith, #40, "Fuel Performance Modeling of Nuclear Thermal Propulsion Rockets"

2:05 Jeongwon Kim, #53, "Investigation of Azimuthal Velocity Effects on Detonation Stability in Rotating Detonation Rocket Engines Using a Reduced-Order Model"

2:20 Joshua Whitehead, #31, "Interfacial Energy Modification for Passive Contact Line Control in Microgravity"

2:35 Anup Mannem, #73, "Machine learning modelling for LN2 transient two-phase pressure drop during chill down."

2:50 Sunjae Kim, #177, "In-space Cryogenic Propellant Management – Impact of Reduced and Partial Gravity"

3:05 Closing Remarks

3:15pm Break

3:30pm Seminars

All seminars are listed with the presenting author, the abstract number, and talk title. The full abstract is available in the Florida Space Summit 2026 abstract booklet.

Discovery Session #3: Human Dimensions of Space Exploration: Ethics, Access, and Education — Rm 3000

Session Chair: Robert Fleck and Terry Harpold

3:35 Todd Bates, #152, "Boundaries Without Ownership: Geomatics and Governance Beyond Earth"

3:50 Ata Sarajedini, #59, "Human Mission to Mars: Using an Interdisciplinary Grand Challenge to Transform Undergraduate Learning"

4:05 Jeffery Johnson, #140, "Team Dynamics in Space Analogs: Shared Cognition, Informal Social Roles, and Team Cohesion, Viability, and Conflict"

4:20 Alan Hanstein, #166, "From Curiosity to Career: Building Florida's Space Talent Pipeline"

4:35 Serena DeCandia, #198, "Touching the Cosmos: A Systems Engineering Approach to Accessible Tactile Astronomy Models"

4:50 Closing Remarks

Habitability Session #3: Space Microbes, Crops, and Closed-Loop Life Support

Main Hall

Session Chairs: Andrew Palmer and Anna-Lisa Paul

- 3:35 Nils Averesch, #26, "The Plastic Ceiling — Opportunities and Limitations of Microbial Carbon Recovery in Crewed Spaceflight"
- 3:50 Kelly Rice, #61, "Transcriptional profiling of Staphylococcus aureus grown under simulated microgravity using a random positioning machine"
- 4:05 Amy Padolf, #188, "Growing Beyond Earth: Expanding Space Crop Research Through Distributed Classroom Science"
- 4:20 Ellen Garcia, #44, "Leveraging Hyperspectral Imaging as a Molecular Proxy for Autonomous Crop Monitoring in Space Agriculture"
- 4:35 Gauri Mahesh Desai, #103, 'Physiological Characterization of Anabaena 33047 to Enable Extraterrestrial Biomanufacturing"
- 4:50 Closing Remarks

Infrastructure Session #3: Space Systems, Sensing, & Autonomy

Rm 7020

Session Chairs: Daewon Kim and John Conklin

- 3:35 Andrea D'Ambrosio, #20, "Physics-Informed Orbit Determination for Sustainable Space Domain Awareness Operations"
- 3:50 Peng Jiang, #42, "Reconfigurable Nanooptics and Smart Chromogenic Sensors Enabled by Multi-Stimuli-Responsive Shape Memory Polymers for Space Applications"
- 4:05 Corey Richardson, #104, "Impact of Solar Energetic Particle Events on LISA Charge Management System Performance"
- 4:20 Aidan Rowell, #162, "The Advanced Underground Resource Observation lunar surveyor (AURORA), Mission Concept and State of Development"
- 4:35 Ethan Butz, #163, "GRATTIS Payload Integration: Micrometer-Level Metrology on a Dual Inertial Sensor Assembly"
- 4:50 Closing Remarks

5:00pm Program Ends