



NASA International Space Apps Challenge 2020

OCTOBER 2-4, 2020

Participant FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions)

What is the NASA International Space Apps Challenge 2020?

On October 2-4, NASA is inviting coders, entrepreneurs, scientists, designers, storytellers, makers, builders, artists, and technologists to come together in a global, *virtual* hackathon. During a period of 48 hours, participants from around the world will come together to create virtual teams and solve challenges using NASA's open-source data.

In light of the COVID-19 pandemic and in the interest of our global community's health and safety, this year's hackathon will be an all-virtual event. In other words, all local events will be moved online. In this unprecedented time, the Space Apps community exists as a reminder that we have the tools and talents to tackle the challenges that face our planet, as well as the ability to unite across boundaries and borders of all kinds.

Our theme for this year's event -- "Take Action" -- is a critical reminder that you can make a difference, even from the comfort and safety of home.

What is the purpose of Space Apps?

Space Apps, which started in 2012, has now become the largest global hackathon. While NASA provides awards to the top projects (see more below), Space Apps is all about collaboration! Our mission is focused on the following objectives:

- To inspire collaboration, creativity, and critical thinking
- To foster interest in Earth and space science and exploration
- To raise awareness of NASA data around the world
- To encourage growth and diversity of the next generation of scientists, technologists, designers, engineers, artists, etc.



Who should participate in Space Apps?

Space Apps is for everyone! This includes those who have never “hacked’ before! All passionate problem solvers are encouraged to join - students, experts, engineers, makers, artists, and storytellers. While some of our challenges are technical, others ask you to use your artistic skills, your business acumen, and your historical imaginations!

In other words, you do *not* need to be a coder or data expert to be part of Space Apps. In fact, the most diverse teams are often the most successful.

SAVE THE DATES

What are the most important dates and times for Space Apps 2020?

The Space Apps Challenge is a 48-hour hackathon taking place on October 3-4, 2020. However, there are other important dates, below.

Mark your calendars for participant registration

August 14

Sign up to be a Space Apps 2020 participant!

Visit 2020.spaceappschallenge.org to register to participate at a local all-virtual event near you. Is there no event in your city? Register for the Universal Event -- welcoming participants from all over the globe!

Once you have your Space Apps account and register for a location, connect with your Local Leads to ask questions and find potential teammates.

Review the challenge statements and resource links posted on 2020.spaceappschallenge.org/challenges

Early September

Choose a challenge to work on with your team over Space Apps weekend! We will send all



registered participants a message when the challenges are posted.

Prepare yourself with the Virtual Bootcamp September 19 - October 2

Watch videos posted on the [Space Apps YouTube channel](#) to fulfill your curiosity and learn valuable insights for your Space Apps expedition! We will send all registered participants a message when the Virtual Bootcamp begins.

Log into the chat rooms in order to connect with the global community, including potential teammates September 24

Register your team (starting now through hackathon weekend)

Get ready for Space Apps weekend alongside the Space Apps community! We will send all registered participants a message when the chat rooms open.

When you have your team (or when you are ready to start a team and connect with potential team members), register your team on www.spaceappschallenge.org.

The hackathon begins!

Saturday, October 3 at 9 AM (local time)

Teams are able to submit their projects on www.spaceappschallenge.org.

Happy hacking!

After the hackathon begins, we know you'll be working with your team tirelessly to create your Space Apps solution. Don't forget to take breaks, stay hydrated, and balance your hard work with fun!



Visit the chat rooms to connect with NASA challenge creators and other subject-matter experts who will be available to answer questions about the challenges and data and to provide guidance on developing elements of your solution.

The hackathon ends!

Sunday, October 4 at 11:59 PM (local time)

Project submission closes. Finish updating your project page on the Space Apps website by 11:59PM on Sunday, October 4, in accordance with the local time of the location for which your team is registered. *If your team is registered for the Universal Event, your project must be submitted in accordance with the local time of the member in the latest time zone.

WEBSITE AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

When is the Space Apps website launching?

The Space Apps website is now live at www.spaceappschallenge.org. Check the website frequently for updates and to see new material.

What social media is used for Space Apps?

[Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), and [YouTube](#) are three of the primary channels we use to connect with the global Space Apps community. For updates, please follow us on social media at @SpaceApps. We also encourage Space Apps participants to communicate with us and with each other on social media by using the hashtag #SpaceApps! Let us know how your Space Apps journey is going!

What is the “Virtual Bootcamp”?

Prior to hackathon weekend, please tune into our website and social media accounts to access exclusive content from NASA, Local Leads, Space Apps Ambassadors, previous Global Winners, and more. Guests will provide relevant workshops and tips for having a successful hackathon experience. This is a wonderful opportunity to tap into the broader Space Apps community. Subscribe to our [YouTube](#) channel and turn on notifications to be the first to see our Space Apps 2020 Virtual Bootcamp in the lead-up to October 2-4.

You can also view previous Virtual Bootcamp videos to help you prepare! Please see our [YouTube](#) channel or [Space Apps COVID-19 Challenge Virtual Bootcamp webpage](#).

What is Space Apps Chat? Can I meet people there?

In the Space Apps chat rooms, you will be able to connect with other participants and a number of community members who are available to support your journey. This includes:

1. **The Global Organizing Team (GO-Team):** The team behind Space Apps dedicated to guiding and supporting you through a successful Space Apps journey!
2. The GO-Team’s work is bolstered by a committed **Community of Volunteers:**
 - **Subject-Matter Experts:** NASA and partner agency experts, including many who have developed the challenges and have knowledge about the “Example Resources” provided for each challenge statement.
 - **Local Leads:** Volunteers based in cities all around the globe who organize the Space Apps local virtual events (known as locations). Visit 2020.spaceappschallenge.org/locations to find a location in a city near you!
 - **Ambassadors:** Volunteers supporting you over the course of Space Apps weekend by providing their expertise in Space Apps and NASA data.

PARTICIPANT REGISTRATION

When does registration open and close?

Participant registration for Space Apps 2020 will open on August 14, 2020 and extend through the end of the hackathon on October 4, 2020.

How do I register?

Registration for Space Apps requires that you sign up for a Space Apps account and then register for a location. You will not be able to participate in the hackathon until you have registered for a location.

- If you do *not* already have a Space Apps account, please create one from the Login/Sign Up page or select “Register Now” on one of the location pages: 2020.spaceappschallenge.org/locations.
- If you *do* have a Space Apps account, you can log in and select “Choose Location” from the user dashboard. Or you can register through one of the location pages: 2020.spaceappschallenge.org/locations.
- Everyone can change their location in the user dashboard, after creating an account. You can unregister yourself from the specific location’s page and then re-register on any other page. Or you can select a new location from the user dashboard by selecting “Change Location.”

While participant registration will be open throughout Space Apps weekend, we encourage all participants to create accounts and register for a location at least one to two weeks before the hackathon in order to join the chat rooms and form teams. You’ll begin to build your project submission pages over the course of Space Apps weekend.

Who are the “Local Leads” on my location page?

The location pages (2020.spaceappschallenge.org/locations) contain the contact information for your “Local Leads” -- Space Apps volunteers from your city who can answer your questions and help connect you to potential teammates prior to the hackathon. These Local Leads will be your primary point of contact and be there to support your virtual hackathon experience. They will also be available in the chat rooms in the week leading up to the hackathon and during the hackathon. Please reach out to them as you prepare!

Is the registration individual or by team?

Participants register on www.spaceappschallenge.org as individuals, not as teams. Forming your team is a separate process. Please see below.

What is the minimum age for participants?

We do not set a minimum age for participation in Space Apps, and many youth and children have participated in past events. However, participants under 13 must have a parent or

guardian register for them, as per the Space Apps Participant Terms and Conditions:
www.spaceappschallenge.org/legal.

FORMING A PROJECT TEAM

In the coming weeks, we will post a detailed *Team Formation Guide* on the Space Apps resources page (www.spaceappschallenge.org/resources) and on your user dashboard.

Do I need a team?

An individual is allowed to work and submit a project independently. However, we encourage all attendees to be part of a team. We have found that the most successful solutions come from teams of individuals with diverse skill sets and backgrounds. If participants come from a non-technical background, we encourage them to connect with developers, designers, and people with scientific backgrounds to form a team.

How many members should a team have? Are there limits to the size of my team?

The sweet spot for teams is typically 4 to 5 people. The limit for a team is 6 people. If a team gets too big, it can be difficult for the team to focus; if it is too small, the team may not have all the skills/knowledge needed to solve a challenge.

When are teams formed?

Participants may start to form their teams before the hackathon begins. On September 24 (the week prior to the hackathon), you will be able to *officially* register your team on the Space Apps website. (We will send a dashboard message to all registered participants when team formation opens on the website.) You may also wait to form your team until hackathon weekend. You may add members to your team until the hackathon closes at 11:59pm on October 4.

Regardless of when your team forms, participants are not permitted to start working on their solutions until the Space Apps event begins on October 3.

How do I find teammates?

We encourage you to invite your friends and community members along to participate. You can also self-organize into teams before the event with the help of your Local Lead, who may know other registered participants looking for teammates. Find the contact information for your Local Leads on your location page: 2020.spaceappschallenge.org/locations.

On September 24 (the week prior to the hackathon), the Space Apps chat platform will open. In the chat channels, you will be able to search for teammates. We will send you a message when the chat rooms open.

You will also be able to search for and request to join an existing team! Detailed information about this process will be included in the *Team Formation Guide*, which will be posted on the Space Apps resources page (www.spaceappschallenge.org/resources) and on your user dashboard before team formation opens.

THE CHALLENGES: TURNING YOUR IDEAS INTO SOLUTIONS

For each hackathon, NASA personnel develop challenges. These challenges encompass a wide variety of topics and encourage our community of artists, storytellers, coders, scientists, designers, engineers, and others to get creative and develop out-of-this-world solutions! Find a challenge, build a team, get started hacking!

When and where will the challenges be published?

The challenges will be published on 2020.spaceappschallenge.org/challenges in early September. (When the challenges are released, we will send a message to all registered participants.)

Can people start working on the challenges as soon as they are published?

We appreciate the enthusiasm of participants who want to start as early as possible, but we ask that participants start the actual work when the hackathon begins on October 3.



Because the hackathon is only 48 hours, please note that participants are not expected to have a fully developed project at the end. The purpose, rather, is to inspire innovative ideas and develop solutions in a collaborative, team environment.

What if I have questions about one of the challenges or datasets?

If you have questions about the challenges or resources, Subject-Matter Experts from NASA (and partner agencies, if applicable) will be available on hackathon weekend (October 3-4) in our chat channels. They will be ready to engage with your questions! Each challenge will have a dedicated chat channel.

“Space Apps Ambassadors” will also be in the chat channels. Ambassadors are experienced volunteers who will be available to provide support related to the challenges, data, and project submission.

Can I translate the challenges?

Yes! If you or your team do translate the challenges into other languages, we encourage you to share the translation with us.

Can teams work on more than one challenge?

Participants and teams are encouraged to focus on one project and one solution, as the hackathon only lasts one weekend! If your team feels that your solution is relevant to multiple challenges, please choose the challenge that is most aligned with your project.

Is it possible for a team to come up with their own project, or is it mandatory to pick one of the challenges?

To be eligible for global judging (see details below), teams must respond to one of the given challenges.

However, you will have the option to “Invent your challenge” and create a solution of your choosing. While projects in this category are wonderful, please note that they will not be eligible for global judging or awards from NASA.

PROJECT SUBMISSIONS

In the coming weeks, we will post a detailed *Project Submission Guide* on the Space Apps resources page (www.spaceappschallenge.org/resources) and on your user dashboard.

How are projects/solutions submitted?

Every team (whether you are working individually or with teammates) needs to create a project page to describe their work. We encourage teams to create their project page as soon as Space Apps weekend begins, and to add information as the weekend progresses. Participants must be registered and be identified on their team's project page in order to be eligible for judging and awards.

What is expected in my project submission?

Additional details regarding project submission will be outlined in the *Project Submission Guide* (coming soon). However, please keep in mind that your project will need to meet these minimum requirements to be considered for an award.

- + Develop a project in response to one of the official Space Apps 2020 challenge statements.
- + Clearly show how NASA and other provided data or resources were integrated into your project.
- + Include a link to code in a public repository on your project page (if applicable). Space Apps is all about open data and collaboration!
- + Provide a demonstration of your project (in the form of slides or a short video).
- + Ensure that all your team members are registered and identified on the team's webpage.
- + Finish updating your project page on the Space Apps website by 11:59PM on Sunday, October 4, in accordance with the location for which your team is registered. *If your team is registered for the Universal Event, your project must be submitted in accordance with the local time of the member in the latest time zone.
- + If you are linking to resources beyond the project page (i.e. file-hosting platforms), ensure that the links are working properly, that the file is publicly accessible, and that the file does not require permission or registration to access them.

JUDGING AND AWARDS

In the coming weeks, we will post a detailed *Judging and Awards Guide* on the Space Apps resources page (www.spaceappschallenge.org/resources) and on your user dashboard.

Will Space Apps 2020 have winners?

While the main purpose of the hackathon is to encourage collaboration and cooperation, Space Apps 2020 will have winners. In previous years, awards have been given for the following categories. However, NASA reserves the right to change the award categories.

- Best Use of Data
- Best Use of Hardware or Technology
- Galactic Impact
- Most Inspirational
- Best Mission Concept
- Best Use of Science

What will be the award for Space Apps 2020 winners?

Space Apps winners will be featured on the Space Apps website and social media, and they will receive an invitation to present their projects to NASA personnel (and space agency partners, if applicable).

If travel is deemed safe, the winners will also be invited to visit a NASA site with the Space Apps Global Organizing Team to view a spacecraft launch. Each member of each winning team and one guest each will be invited and will be responsible for covering their own costs for their personal travel, meals and incidental expenses, and accommodation expenses. Winners typically conduct fundraising activities to cover the costs of their trips.