

News story: New funding for exciting STEM education projects

The projects are designed to inspire interest in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) and provide exciting contexts for the teaching of a range of subjects. This will, in turn, help the growth of the space sector, which is currently hampered by the lack of graduates and technicians with relevant qualifications.

The seven new projects were selected to support the aims of the Education and Skills Strategy, and build upon the Agency's investment in a number of areas, in particular:

- Earth Observation
- Satellite Launch Programme (UK spaceports and launchers)
- James Webb Space Telescope

Susan Buckle, Astronaut Flight Education Programme Manager, said:

"We are delighted to be funding all these projects and to work with a variety of different organisations – from the D&T Association with expertise in design and technology to the Triathlon Trust with expertise in getting children active, as well as the more traditional STEM organisations. Each project will fulfil the objective to inspire the next generation to study STEM and consider a career in the space industry, whilst having a lot of fun along the way."

The 7 successful projects to be funded are:

1. Glasgow Science Festival: Get me into orbit!
2. Triathlon Trust: Space to Earth view
3. Mangorolla CIC: Space zones 'I'm a Scientist' and 'I'm an Engineer'
4. Institute for Research in Schools: MELT: Monitoring the Environment, Learning for Tomorrow
5. The Design and Technology Association: Inspiring the next generation: design and technology in space
6. European Space Education Resource Office-UK: James Webb Space Telescope: Design challenge
7. Children's Radio UK (Fun Kids): Deep Space High – UK Spaceports

The MELT project will allow students to understand and analyse key earth observation data relating to the North and South Pole.

This work is in collaboration with Robert Swan on his Antarctic expedition, who said:

"I'm delighted to be working with IRIS on the MELT project. Students looking at Earth observation of the poles will be directly observing our South Pole Energy Challenge and seeing what a crucial role they have in understanding and taking care of their environment."

Emma Watson from The Design and Technology Association said:

“The Design and Technology Association are delighted to be working with the UK Space Agency to develop a series of curriculum based resources which will use the design and technology curriculum as a platform to motivate more young people to consider careers in the space industry.

“Structured around Earth Observation, Satellite Launch Systems and the James Webb Space Telescope, these innovative resources will inspire young people to imagine new possibilities, drawing on their existing STEM knowledge, and applying it to real-life space contexts.”

More details on each of the projects will be available as they develop their resources and activities.