

News story: Youngsters Learn about careers on offer in growing Earth Observation sector

The youngsters, aged 12-15, enjoyed talks from experts in Earth Observation, including the Environment Agency, the European Space Agency and the Satellite Applications Catapult, as well as the UK Space Agency.

The event, at the STFC Rutherford Appleton Laboratory in Harwell, also included a "Careers Carousel", which gave the children a chance to speak to a dozen organisations about the potential jobs on offer.

Space is one of the UK's fastest growing sectors in the UK and it is estimated an additional 30,000 new staff will be required by 2030. The latest figures from the 'UK space industry: size and health report' show that Earth Observation services, such as data for climate change and agriculture, is a significant growth area, supporting £92 billion of GDP and growing at a rate of 25% per year.

Beth Greenaway, Head of Earth Observation at the UK Space Agency, said:

Earth Observation is a rapidly growing area of the space sector so it was fantastic to have the opportunity to tell so many young people about the huge variety of exciting careers available to them.

Our aim is that over the next decade innovative new technologies developed by the UK Earth Observation space sector will make substantial contributions to economic growth, new jobs and societal benefit. It's vital that we have enthusiastic young people coming through to help continue to realise the potential of Earth Observation.

The Government's modern industrial strategy is supporting the space sector, including through a £50 million programme to enable the launch of small satellites, which could be used in the future for Earth Observation missions. Last week, Orbex unveiled its 'Prime' rocket that could be used to launch such satellites from a proposed spaceport in Sutherland, Scotland.

The students attending the careers event were from Didcot Girls' School, King Alfred's Academy in Wantage, John Mason School in Abingdon and Space Studio, in London.

Companies taking part included Geocento Ltd, Deimos Space and Telespazio VEGA UK, which has just secured new contracts worth €12 million over the next three years. These new contracts are from the European Space Agency and the European Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasts – both international

partnership bodies we will remain members of. The contracts cover climate services and quality assurance of Earth Observation data, from some of the most cutting edge new commercial satellite mission.

Graham Turnock, CEO of the UK Space Agency, said:

These new contract wins are an excellent example of where the UK is taking leadership on the global stage, including through our membership of the European Space Agency, and Copernicus in the exploitation and use of high quality Earth Observation and Climate services.

This should enable significant impact and growth in the form of applications and space enabled services to the wider user community, and we congratulate Telespazio VEGA UK on these important success stories.

By 2040 it is expected that satellite Earth Observations will provide the data to underpin mass market and business applications, global cutting-edge science, and also policy and operational decision making.