



Cosmic Girls Foundation

Impact Report 2025

Empowering the next generation of women in space

January 2026

Introduction

Mission

Empower girls aged 14-19 globally to see themselves as leaders in space, STEM – and beyond



Founded by NASA Highly Qualified astronaut candidate and commercial spaceflight trainer, the Foundation nurtures **curiosity, confidence, and capability**—preparing girls to thrive in the new space economy and help shape humanity's future in space.



Dr. Mindy inspiring girls to dream big



Theory of Change

Problem to solve

Girls remain significantly under-represented in STEM fields – and even more so in space-related careers.

Despite talent and ambition, many lack access to role models, real-world challenges, and supportive environments that reinforce the belief, “I belong here”.

Cosmic Girls Foundation closes the gap between inspiration and participation:

- **Education** - Through our international STEM and leadership programs, girls acquire practical skills that prepare them for future academic and career pathways. Our Cosmic Forum connects girls globally to collaborate on real-world STEM and space challenges
- **Inspiration** - Girls experience the realities of working in space and STEM through our webinar series, and connecting directly with female space professionals around the world and grounding ambition in lived experience.
- **Identity** - We support girls in seeing themselves as scientists, engineers, astronauts, and leaders – not as exceptions, but as participants.

We believe lasting change happens when confidence grows alongside competence.

Steps to bring about change



Spark curiosity through real-world space challenges



Build self-belief by showcasing diverse female role models



Encourage systems thinking, creativity and problem solving

6



Create a global supportive community where girls feel seen and heard

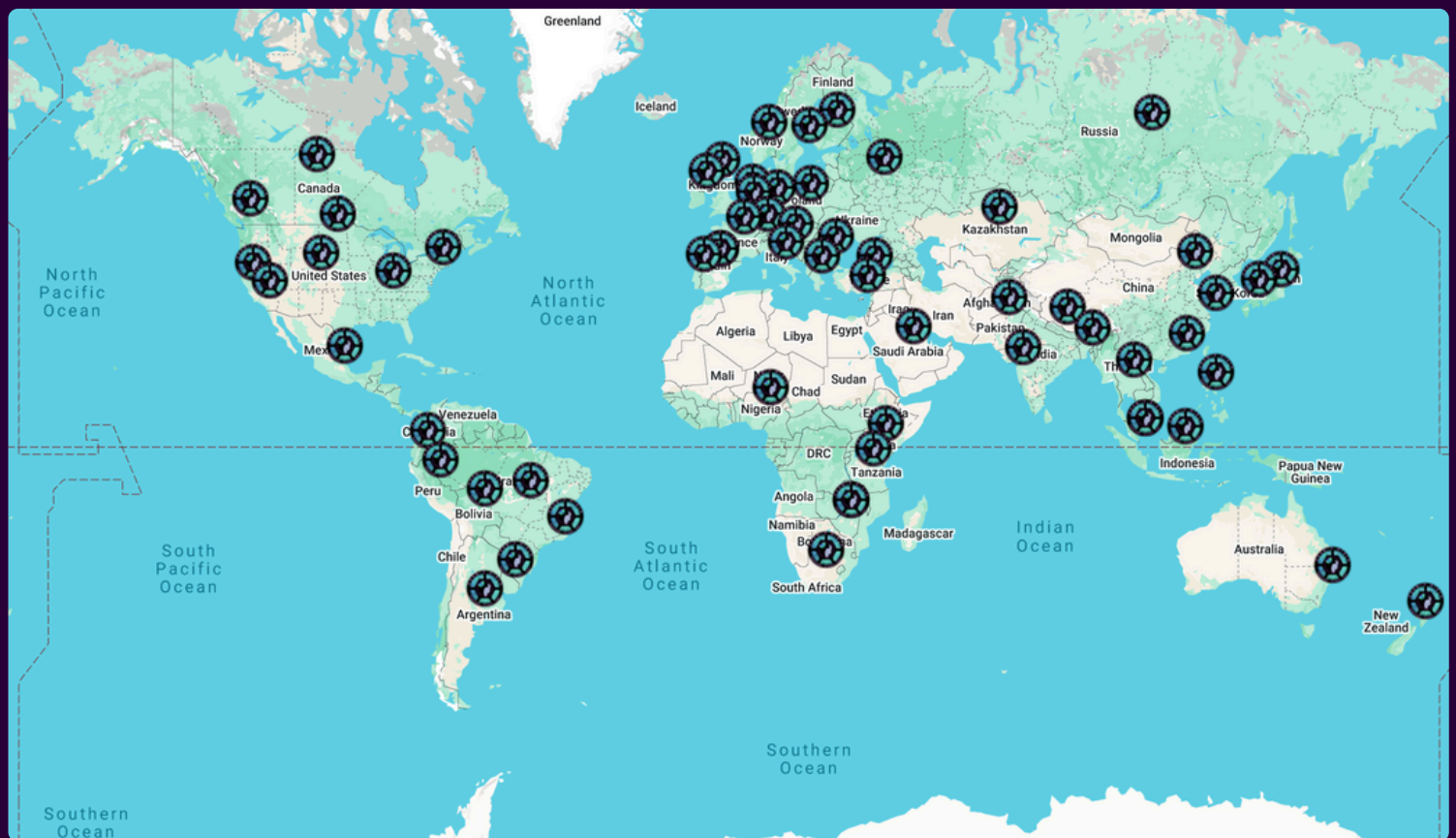


Impact in Numbers

The Foundation has continued to expand its community of girls aged 14–19 through a range of engagement channels and activities.

Girls impacted worldwide

Total participants	1100+
Countries represented	140+
Participants enrolled in partner programs	400+



Cosmic Girls around the globe: this map shows some of our participants — our network extends far beyond these locations.



Impact Questionnaire

Belief is in the breakthrough: girls reported exceptionally strong belief in their futures, with the highest scores in aspiration and self-belief

On a scale of 1 (low) to 5 (high):



Likelihood of pursuing
STEM subjects



Belief they can achieve
anything they set their
minds to



Positivity towards
pursuing astronaut
ambitions

Equally important, girls reported strong confidence in their capabilities, inclusion, and life skills:

Confidence taking part
in competition

4.45

Feeling capable to
participate

4.57

Confidence in key
life skills

4.53

Feeling authentic in their
environment

4.32

Feeling included in
Cosmic Girls

4.20

Feeling included in
the partner program

4.23

These results tell a clear story: Cosmic Girls is not just sparking interest — we are reinforcing identity, confidence, and long-term belief in what girls can become.



Our Global Community

Cosmic Girls is more than a program; it is a global learning ecosystem building the female talent and leadership pipeline for the space sector.

Participants benefit from:

- Peer connection with like-minded girls who share ambition in STEM and space-related fields
- Direct exposure to women actively working in STEM and the space sector, expanding networks and career visibility
- Psychologically safe environments to ask questions, test ambition, and build confidence without fear of judgment
- Intentional community growth, paced to preserve trust, depth of engagement, and meaningful interaction

A selection of interactions in the Cosmic Girls forum

“It was -4°C last night, which is about as cold as it gets where I’m from. Plus there’s just been a full moon. Despite these two events, I still wanted to go stargazing – so I did, and here’s what happened!”

“Which space mission are you most excited about? There are so many current and upcoming space missions happening across planetary science, astronomy, and human spaceflight, and I’m curious which ones stand out to you!”

“Over the past period, I’ve had the incredible opportunity to meet and speak with extraordinary people who shape our understanding of the universe. [including] five astronauts, and each of these moments was truly special.”

“There’s one lesson that the universe constantly throws my way. It’s in science, it’s in human relationships, it’s in missions, and it’s while writing this piece. It’s something every human eventually acknowledges... Patience.”



Community engagement

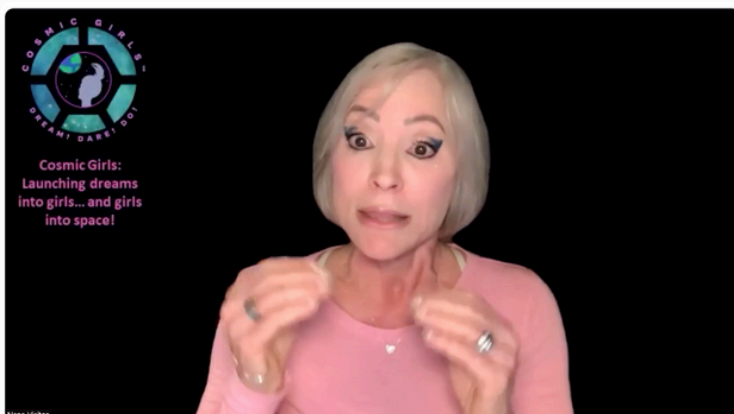
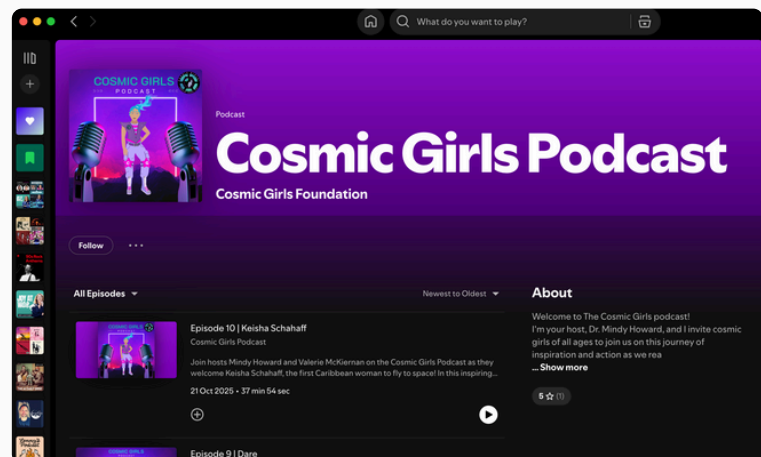
From webinars to podcast episodes, we found new ways to engage with our community and extend our reach.

Our popular webinar series, “A Day in the Life,” showcased women professionals across the space industry, giving girls a firsthand look at careers in STEM and space and demystifying what it’s like to work in this field.

During World Space Week, we hosted a special webinar featuring *Star Trek* actress Nana Visitor, alongside our astronaut ambassadors. Together we explored the challenges women face in the space industry and examined how representation, imagery, and storytelling in entertainment influence how girls see their futures.



Episode 2 | The cosmic journey of Alyssa Carson



Claiming Power, Creating Equity, Women Shaping the Future WSW 2025



Episode 10 | Keisha Schahaff

A selection of the webinars and podcasts ran this year

Ambassadors & Role Models

In 2025, Cosmic Girls was supported by an inspiring group of ambassadors and team members active in:

- Space science and exploration
- Engineering and technology
- Research, education, and innovation

By sharing their stories and visibility across LinkedIn and social platforms, our ambassadors play a crucial role in showing girls what is possible—and what their future could look like.



Katya Echazarreta, Astronaut



Keisha Schahaff, Astronaut



Alyssa Carson, Cosmic Ambassador



Amy Imhoff, Cosmic Ambassador



Program Engagement

Working with our international partners

400+ girls developed critical space & STEM skills,
through our global partnership programs:

- **Space systems thinking** through analog missions and foundational astronaut training
- **Scientific research & engineering** including coding, satellite design, and PCB development
- **Advanced technology literacy** using immersive simulations and frontier technologies
- **Leadership, collaboration & resilience** in mission-style team environments
- **Communication & confidence** through public speaking and creative expression



“What draws me to space science is how it connects curiosity, teamwork, and global cooperation.”

Program participant



STEM Challenges

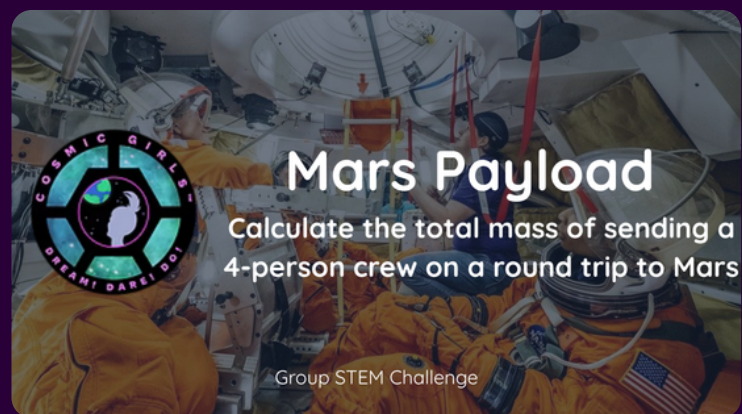
Learning by doing

This year, we introduced interactive STEM challenges designed to simulate real astronaut decision-making.

One highlight was the “Mars Payload Challenge”, where participants were asked to select a personal object to take on a Mars mission—balancing emotional significance, mission constraints, and human psychology.

These challenges are designed to:

- Build systems thinking
- Encourage ethical and emotional intelligence
- Normalize girls imagining themselves as astronauts



“I know what I’d bring up if I were an astronaut. I’ve always wanted to ask my family and friends to give me one of their favorite possessions – a necklace, stuffed animal, etc. I would take it to space, bring it back, and give it to them. I feel like it would be a really special way to hold the people you love close in space and on Earth!”

Participant in ‘Mars Payload’ challenge



Challenge Submissions

A selection of what the teams worked on

COSMIC GIRLS STEM CHALLENGE 2 - MARS PAYLOAD PUZZLE

DESIGNING MARS PAYLOAD

A four-astronaut mission has set out for Mars. They will spend 900 days aboard a spacecraft bound for the Red Planet, then orbit it and return to Earth. The question is, how much cargo will they need for this long, intriguing journey?

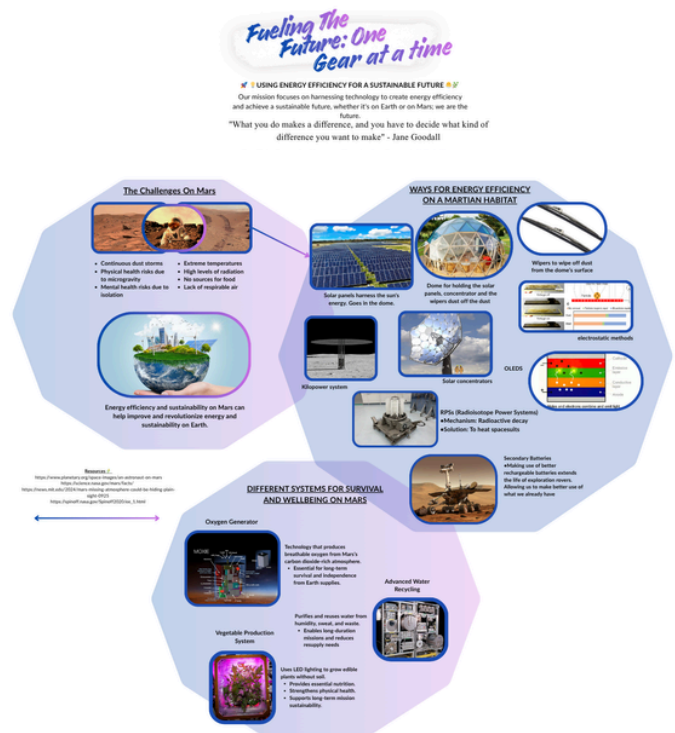
- 1 FOOD**
we would need around 2 to 3 kg of food per day for one astronaut
- 2 WATER**
each astronaut would need around 3-5 liters of water per day - for drinking and e.g. washing
- 3 OXYGEN**
we need around 0,9 kg of oxygen to breathe per each day
- 4 PERSONAL ITEMS**
for personal belongings, astronauts should have about 1 kg available in the total mass of cargo on the spaceship
- 5 MEDICAL + HYGIENIC STUFF**
astronauts would need around 1 kg of medical and hygienic stuff per 5 days
- 6 TOOLS AND SPARES**
this is a very important issue - and at the same time, very difficult, as the tools weigh a lot. each astronaut would need about 2-3 kg of tools per day

RECYCLING EFFICIENCY
We must remember to use everything on board as efficiently as possible - recycle up to 90% of used water, up to 50% of used oxygen, as well as limit the use of e.g. bags and repair broken tools

FROM SPACEX DATA
SpaceX rockets are designed to lift payloads of up to 150 tons on multiple trips to LEO, or up to 250 tons on a single trip. This is significantly more than our calculations suggest, so astronauts will be able to carry more personal items!

Without recycling, the total weight of the entire load would be approximately 47 tons

source : <https://www.spacex.com/humanspaceflight/mars>



Project SatVer Pole - Explore the Martian poles safely with robotics

Rover

Thick tread wheels for driving on ice caps provide friction: the force that occurs when objects rub against each other, that helps stabilise the rover

Satellite

Technology: science used in practical ways

- Spectroscopic satellite detecting ice, using water's signature absorption of light
- Observing both north and south pole of the Mars

Data transmission: how we communicate the satellite will send information to the rover to help it navigate when nearby both maintain contact with Earth's ground network to send scientific findings

Power systems: how energy is produced and used

- sunlight is variable at the poles, so solar panels are used while light is available most/all of the time (summer)
- during darkness, batteries help provide safe and reliable storage and use into the night

Affordability: how to make the mission more accessible

- launched on a reusable rocket, which also lowers carbon footprint

precise location of water or other raw materials analysis
spectral analysis detects various molecules

Value - this mission could help find a water-rich landing site for future astronauts, and maybe even discover life



Social Media

Across our platforms, Cosmic Girls surpassed our social media goals, reaching over **6,000 followers**.

Our website also saw a dramatic surge in traffic, with 14,725 unique visitors (a 422% increase from last year) and 26,441 site sessions (a 391% increase). This visibility reflects a growing global interest in our mission.



3,613



2,083



430



124

Please remember to
like, follow and



SUBSCRIBE



Cosmic Girls Foundation

@CosmicGirlsFoundation · 127 subscribers · 33 videos

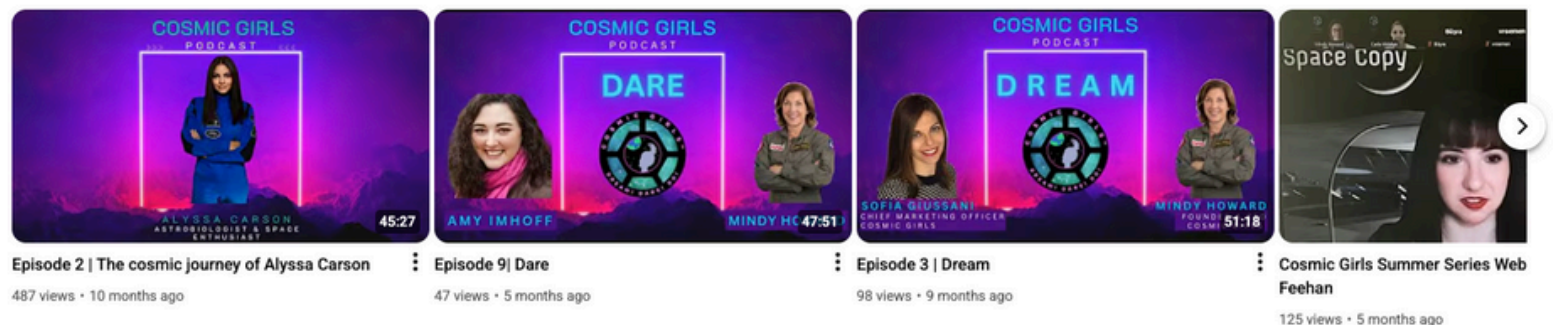
Launching Dreams in Girls... and Girls into Space 🚀 ...more

[instagram.com/cosmicgirls_foundation](https://www.instagram.com/cosmicgirls_foundation) and 4 more links

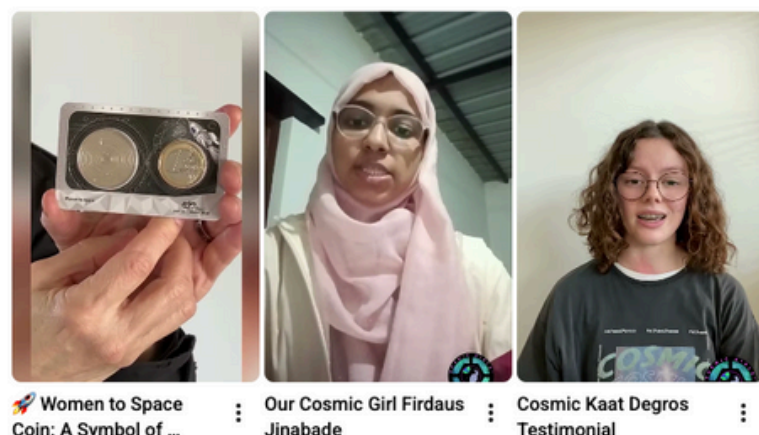
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For You



Shorts



New Partners



United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs

- Official MOU signed with Cosmic Girls Foundation
 - Expand space education for young women globally
 - Support gender equality initiatives and contribute to UNOOSA's Landmark Study
-



- Recruit Blue Origin mentors and speakers for the “Day in the Life” webinar series
- Co-host joint events and workshops, both virtual and in person
- Deliver STEM and space education programs worldwide



Our Competition

Last year, we launched the **6 Girls, 6 Continents** global competition.

Hundreds of applications poured in from every corner of the world, with participants joining both our Cosmic Forum and the competition.

This year, we extended the program to allow even more girls to join our growing community. From this talented pool, six finalists – one from each continent – will be selected to undergo world-class commercial astronaut training at international facilities, with one winner ultimately earning a spaceflight opportunity.



“I just want to say how truly grateful I am to have been part of this forum and this competition. Growing up, I stopped telling people about my dream of becoming an astronaut because so many said it wasn’t possible.

But being part of Cosmic Girls has reminded me that dreams are worth holding onto and worth fighting for.”

– Forum participant



Looking ahead to 2026

2026 will be a pivotal year — one of strategic fundraising, community activation, and continued growth.

We now have the visibility, partnerships, and platform to transform that awareness into lasting support.



Together, we are inspiring girls around the world to see themselves in space — and building the foundation to make that dream a reality.

With the continuation of our 6 Girls, 6 Continents competition, we are poised to deepen our impact and strengthen our financial foundation.

We remain steadfast in our commitment to upskilling young girls and proving that space truly belongs to everyone. Together, we are breaking barriers, inspiring dreams, and shaping the future of space exploration.

**A future where girls lead humanity's
next great frontier**





Thank you

None of this impact is possible without our community—our girls, ambassadors, partners, donors, and supporters. Together, we are not just preparing girls for space.

We are preparing space for girls.

Learn more

Our website

<https://www.cosmicgirls.org>

YouTube

<https://www.youtube.com/@CosmicGirlsFoundation>

Instagram

https://www.instagram.com/cosmicgirls_foundation/

Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/CosmicGirlsFoundation/>

Linkedin

<https://www.linkedin.com/company/cosmic-girls-foundation/about/>

TikTok

https://www.tiktok.com/@cosmicgirls_foundation

