

Applications for 2023 Out Astronaut Contest Being Accepted

Contest serves to address the under-representation of LGBTQ+ individuals in STEM fields

BOULDER, CO, UNITED STATES, June 1, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Out Astronaut](#) announced today that applications for the 2023 Out Astronaut contest are now being accepted.

No professional astronaut has been selected who was an openly-identifying member of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer (LGBTQ+) community at the time of their selection. Out Astronaut believes – and

research confirms – that the lack of such role models contributes to LGBTQ+ under-representation in STEM professions. More than 40 percent of LGBTQ+ people in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) fields are not out, according to a recent poll conducted by Pride in STEM, and LGBTQ students are less likely to follow an academic career.

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Dr. Jason Reimuller

The Out Astronaut Contest serves to address this issue. The three-phase competition is open to those who are part of the LGBTQ+ community and are involved in STEM fields. Out Astronaut seeks individuals who openly embrace their role in the LGBTQ community, want to serve as role models to LGBTQ+ youth, and become representatives of their community as pioneers of astronautical science.



2021 Out Astronaut Contest Winner Brian Murphy in suborbital mission training

“The goal of Phase One is to create visibility and representation by providing a platform for LGBTQ-identified individuals in the STEM fields to share their stories publicly.” said Out Astronaut Executive Director Dr. Jason Reimuller, “As available, Phase Two funds will provide Phase One

grant recipients a professional, thesis-driven education so that they may become respected professionals in the industry. Ultimately, Phase Three seeks to manifest a Phase Two graduate on a dedicated research spaceflight."

The winner of the 2023 Out Astronaut Contest will be enrolled in the [International Institute for Astronautical Sciences](#) (IIAS) and receive a grant to attend the next 'Fundamentals of Astronautics' program, hosted at Florida Tech in Melbourne, Florida. Upon successful completion of AST 101, the candidate will be eligible to compete for Phase Two grants.

Applicants must be between 18 and 39 years old; be a resident of the U.S., Canada, Mexico, the Caribbean or Central America; have earned a bachelor's degree or be currently enrolled in an accredited degree program; and be able to obtain a U.S. Federal Aviation Administration Class III Flight Physical (or equivalent).

In addition to administering student contests, Out Astronaut continues to remove barriers faced by LGBTQ+ individuals in STEM through outreach, advocacy, professional publications, and addressing LGBTQ-specific gaps in aeromedical knowledge. Last April 17th, Out Astronaut inaugurated a novel gravity-offset laboratory developed by the IIAS and established at Florida Tech in Melbourne, FL. As part of the test, a Pride flag was planted into the simulated lunar regolith by a space suit evaluator working in an Extra-Vehicular Activity (EVA) space suit to provide visibility and inspiration to aspiring LGBTQ+ professionals in science and space.

Prior Out Astronaut Phase One Contest winners include Shannon Gatta (2019) and Brian Murphy (2021). Applications for the 2023 Phase One contest are due by 30 June and are accepted through the Out Astronaut website at outastronaut.org.



Out Astronaut Plants a Pride Flag in IIAS's High-Fidelity, Gravity-Offset Laboratory



Out Astronaut

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About Out Astronaut

Out Astronaut is sponsored through the International Institute for Astronautical Sciences (IIAS) to address the under-representation of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer (LGBTQ) people in science and space. Out Astronaut highlights the contributions of LGBTQ+ members currently working in science and space and provide grants to promising LGBTQ+ students currently pursuing professions in space-related fields. More information at outastronaut.org.

About the International Institute for Astronautical Sciences

Founded in 2015, the International Institute for Astronautical Sciences (IIAS) is a 501c3 nonprofit research and education organization with licensure from the State of Connecticut. With students from over 50 different countries, IIAS provides educational services and research opportunities in aeronomy, bioastronautics, microgravity science, space suit evaluation, operational science, and flight test engineering through partnerships with the National Research Council of Canada, Florida Tech, Survival Systems USA, NAUI, and the Canadian Space Agency. IIAS hosts 'Project PoSSUM' and 'Project OTTER' research programs for aeronomy and EVA space suit evaluation research, respectively. Additionally, IIAS also sponsors three outreach programs designed to serve under-represented minorities in STEM: PoSSUM13, Out Astronaut, and Space for all Nations. More information at astronauticsinstitute.org.

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