

Rosetta mission grand finale set for 30 September!



Rosetta approaching comet

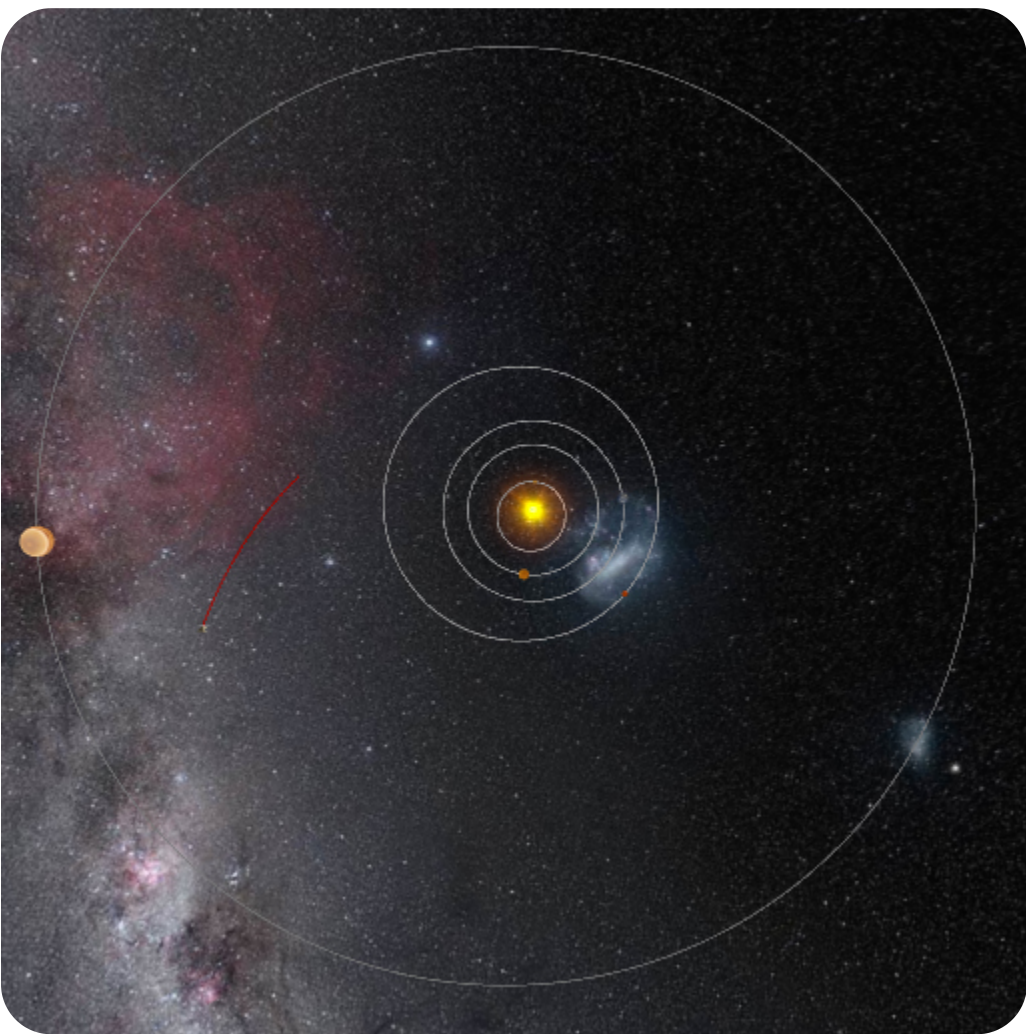
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On 30 September ESA's Rosetta mission will come to a spectacular finish. It will begin what is known as a "controlled descent", bringing it closer and closer to the comet, before finally crashing onto the surface!

Rosetta has been orbiting the comet, officially known as Comet 67P/Churyumov-Gerasimenko, since 2014. Later that year Rosetta deployed a small probe called Philae, which then landed on the surface of the comet. This was a remarkable feat!

Rosetta then continued to orbit the comet, gathering lots of data for scientists on Earth to study. But now the comet and Rosetta are very far away in the cold depths of space. Here the Sun's light is very faint. This is bad news for Rosetta as its solar panels cannot collect enough light to provide power to the heaters to keep it warm enough to continue working while at these far distances.



Where will Rosetta be on 30 September?

[Access the image](#)

Also, Rosetta has been hard at work in space for over 12 years, with two years spent close to the dusty comet. This is a long time for a probe, and parts of it will probably break down soon.

So, knowing that it will soon become too difficult to keep Rosetta working properly, the decision has been made to go out with a bang! Purposefully crashing Rosetta into the comet means that it can take incredible close-up photos during its final minutes, sending back pictures and data that will keep scientists busy for years.

Who knows what Rosetta will discover during its final descent? We will find out very soon!

Cool fact: ESA have made a website where you can find out where the Rosetta probe is in our Solar System right now! Check it out here: http://sci.esa.int/where_is_rosetta

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