

## Introducing ESA’s new astronauts



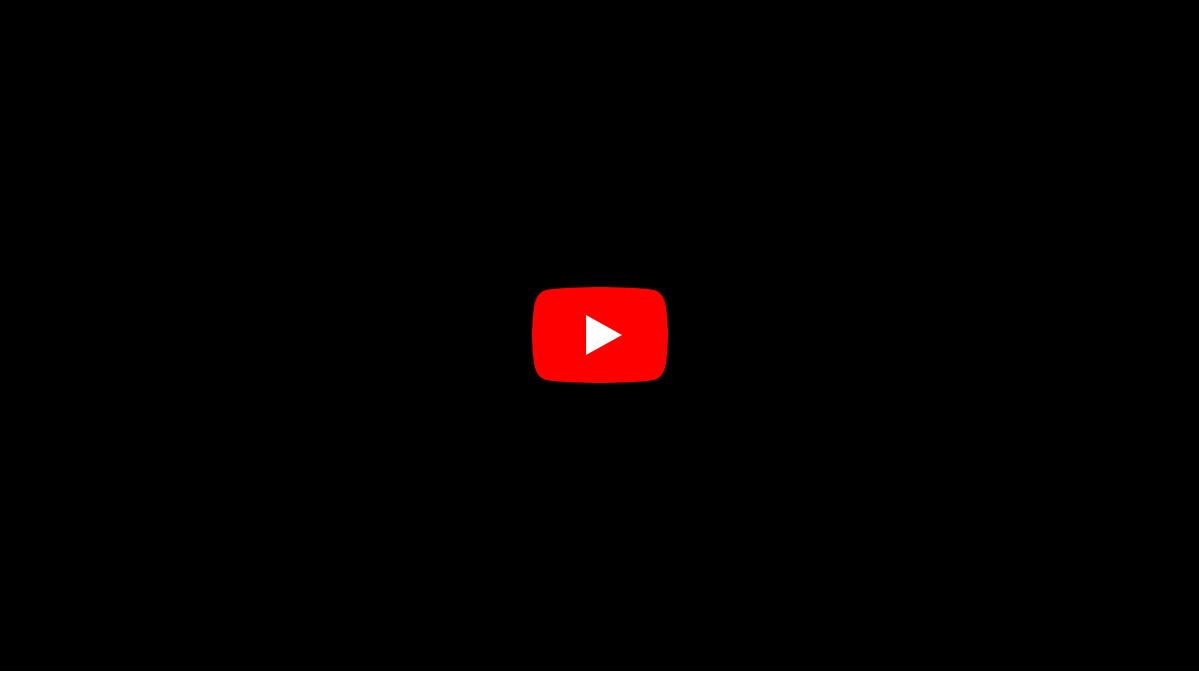
The successful astronaut candidates! Copyright: ESA - P. Sebirot

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### 21 December 2022

Is being an astronaut your dream job? It is for many people! In 2021, ESA asked for potential space explorers to apply for intensive astronaut training to go the International Space Station, and perhaps even beyond. More than 22,500 people from different [ESA Member States](#) applied. A rigorous selection process gradually reduced this number, and now, at long last, 17 new astronaut candidates have been chosen!

Five of those selected will soon be on duty at the [European Astronaut Centre](#) in Cologne, Germany. From spring 2023 they will have a year of intensive training to give them the skills needed to be a good all-round astronaut. After completing that phase, they will undergo more training for the International Space Station, and eventually have specific lessons based on whichever mission they are assigned.



Frank De Winne is head of the European Astronaut Centre and ESA's International Space Station Programme Manager. He says, “We are excited to welcome the new ESA astronaut class of 2022 and I am looking forward to see all these ambitious young career astronaut candidates joining us for their first training at ESA's European Astronaut Centre in spring 2023, going forward to explore and shape space exploration.”

ESA also selected one astronaut candidate – [John McFall](#), from the UK -- with a physical disability. When he was 19, John was in a motorcycle accident that resulted in his right leg being amputated. John will take part in the [Parastronaut Feasibility Project](#), which aims to include more astronauts with physical disabilities in future space missions. When asked what message he has for young people today who are passionate about space and science, he said “Science is for everyone and space travel, hopefully, can be for everyone!”



John McFall, from the United Kingdom, is a member of the ESA Astronaut Class of 2022. Copyright: ESA - P. Sebirot

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The remaining 11 successful candidates will be part of a reserve group of astronauts. These are people that have passed the selection process but cannot be fully recruited at this time. They will begin training if a suitable opportunity for them arises.

Would you like to be an ESA astronaut? Maybe you can apply for a future class of trainee astronauts!

*Cool fact: Parastronaut John McFall became a professional track and field athlete in 2005, going on to represent Great Britain and Northern Ireland as a Paralympic sprinter!*