

Space Apps COVID-19 Challenge

MAY 30-31, 2020

Participant FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions)

What is the Space Apps Covid-19 Challenge?

On May 30-31, NASA (the National Aeronautics and Space Administration), along with ESA (the European Space Agency (ESA)), JAXA (the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency), the Canadian Space Agency (CSA), and the National Centre for Space Studies (CNES), is inviting coders, entrepreneurs, scientists, designers, storytellers, makers, builders, artists, and technologists to come together in a global, virtual hackathon. During a period of 48 hours, participants from around the world will create virtual teams and solve challenges related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

What is the purpose of the Space Apps Covid-19 Challenge?

Since the start of the global outbreak of COVID-19, specialists from NASA, ESA, JAXA, CNES, and CSA have been exploring ways to use unique Earth observation data to understand the spread of the virus and its impact on the Earth. The purpose of this event is to get you - our citizen scientists! - engaged with these issues and with the data that scientists from these agencies and their partner organizations are looking to for clues. Together we can discover solutions!

The challenges for this hackathon will focus on the following themes:

- + Learning about the virus and its spread using space-based data
- + Local response/change and solutions
- + Impacts of COVID-19 on the Earth system/Earth system response
- + Economic opportunity, impact, and recovery during and following COVID-19

I am familiar with Space Apps. Is this event separate from the annual Space Apps event?

Yes. The Space Apps COVID-19 Challenge is a special edition of NASA's International Space Apps Challenge, the annual event that takes place every October. Since its inception in 2012, Space Apps has become the world's largest global hackathon, engaging citizens across the world to use NASA's open data to build innovative solutions to challenges we face on Earth and in space. Every year, local communities come together, think intensely, and create solutions to important problems. Space Apps 2019 included over 29,000 participants at 225 events in 71 countries. This year's annual event (Space Apps 2020) is scheduled for October 2-4, 2020. We hope you will join us for that event, too! More information about the annual event can be found at spaceappschallenge.org.

SAVE THE DATES

What are the most important dates and times for the Space Apps COVID-19 Challenge?

The Space Apps COVID-19 Challenge is a 48-hour hackathon taking place on May 30-31, 2020. However, there are other important dates, below.

Participant registration opens	May 12 Once you have your Space Apps account and register for a region, connect with your regional Local Leads to ask questions and find potential teammates.
Virtual Bootcamp	May 23-May 29 We will send all registered participants a message when the virtual bootcamp begins.
Challenge statements and resource links are posted on covid19.spaceappschallenge.org	Week of May 25 We will send all registered participants a message when the challenges are posted.
Registered participants get access to Rocket Chat in order to connect with potential teammates	Week of May 25 We will send all registered participants a message when Rocket Chat opens.



The hackathon begins!

Saturday, May 30 at 9 AM (local time)
Teams are able to submit their projects on
covid19.spaceappschallenge.org.

The hackathon ends!

Sunday, May 31 at 11:59 PM (local time)
Project submission closes. If your team spans
multiple time zones, your project must be
submitted in accordance with local time of
the member in the latest time zone.

WEBSITE AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

When is the Space Apps COVID-19 Challenge website launching?

The Space Apps COVID-19 Challenge website is now live at covid19.spaceappschallenge.org.
Check the website frequently for updates and to see new material.

What social media is used for Space Apps?

Twitter and Facebook are two of the primary channels we use to connect with the global Space Apps community. For updates, please follow us on social media at @SpaceApps. We also encourage Space Apps participants to communicate with us and with each other on social media by using the hashtag #SpaceApps! Let us know how your Space Apps journey is going!

What is the “Virtual Bootcamp”?

Starting Saturday, May 23, please tune into our social media accounts and website (select “Bootcamp” in the menu bar) to access exclusive content from NASA subject-matter experts, space agency partners, Local Leads, and Space Apps Ambassadors. Guests will provide data workshops; tips for having a successful hackathon experience; and updates about what Earth science specialists are doing to understand and tackle the COVID-19 pandemic. This is a wonderful opportunity to tap into the broader Space Apps community.

PARTICIPANT REGISTRATION

When does registration open and close?

Participant registration for the Space Apps COVID-19 Challenge will open on May 12, 2020 and extend through the end of the hackathon on May 31, 2020.

How do I register?

Registration for the Space Apps COVID-19 Challenge requires that you sign up for a Space Apps account and then register for a region. You will not be able to participate in the hackathon until you have registered for a region.

If you do *not* already have a Space Apps account, please create one from the Login/Sign Up page or select "Register Now" on one of the region pages: covid19.spaceappschallenge.org/locations. You will be asked to select your country/location and will be placed into a region.

If you *do* have a Space Apps account, you can log in and select "Choose Region" from the user dashboard. Or you can register through one of the region pages: covid19.spaceappschallenge.org/locations.

Everyone can change their regions in the user dashboard, after creating an account, by selecting "Change Region."

We encourage all participants to create accounts and register for a region at least one week before the hackathon in order to join the chat rooms, form teams, and build your project submission pages over the course of the weekend.

Who are the "Local Leads" on my region page?

The region pages (covid19.spaceappschallenge.org/locations) contain the contact information for your "Local Leads" -- Space Apps volunteers from your region who can answer your questions and help connect you to potential teammates prior to the hackathon. They will also be available in the chat rooms in the week leading up the hackathon and during the hackathon. Please reach out to them as you prepare!

Is the registration individual or by team?

Participants register on covid19.spaceappschallenge.org as individuals, not as teams. (Forming your team is a separate process, please see below.)

What is the minimum age for participants?

We do not set a minimum age for participation in Space Apps, and many youth and children have participated in past events. However, participants under 13 must have a parent or

guardian register for them, as per the Space Apps Participant Terms and Conditions:
covid19.spaceappschallenge.org/legal.

FORMING A PROJECT TEAM

During the week of Space Apps, we will post a detailed *Team Formation Guide* on the Space Apps resources page (www.spaceappschallenge.org/resources) and on your user dashboard.

Do I need a team?

An individual is allowed to work and submit a project independently. However, we encourage all attendees to be part of a team. We have found that the most successful solutions come from teams of individuals with diverse skill sets and backgrounds.

If participants come from a non-technical background, we encourage them to connect with developers, designers, and subject matter experts.

How many members should a team have? Are there limits to the size of my team?

The sweet spot for teams is typically 4 to 5 people. The limit for a team is 6 people. If a team gets too big, it can be difficult for the team to focus; if it is too small, the team may not have all the skills/knowledge needed to solve a challenge.

When are teams formed?

Participants may start to form their teams before the launch of the hackathon, or teams may form or add additional members on the first day of the Space Apps COVID-19 Challenge event. Regardless of when teams form, participants are not permitted to start working on their solutions until the Space Apps event begins on May 30th.

How do I find teammates?

We encourage you to invite your friends along or self-organize into teams before the event with the help of your region's Local Leads. Find the contact information for your Local Leads on your region page: covid19.spaceappschallenge.org/locations.

We are also going to open Rocket Chat, the chat platform used by Space Apps, the week of May 25 (several days before the hackathon begins), so that you can find teammates in the chat rooms online. We will send you a message when the chat rooms open.

Moreover, you will be able to request to join an existing team that is looking for new members! Detailed information about this process will be included in the *Team Formation Guide*, which will be posted on the Space Apps resources page (www.spaceappschallenge.org/resources) and on your user dashboard the week of Space Apps.

Can I form a team with members from different regions?

Absolutely! While you may wish to coordinate with people from your region, please consider joining a team from another region or accepting people from other regions to join your team. There are no limits to who can be on your team. Diversity is an asset!

What is the project submission deadline if my team has members from different regions?

All projects must be submitted by midnight (local time) on Sunday, May 30. If the members of your team span multiple time zones, your project must be submitted in accordance with local time of the member in the latest time zone.

THE CHALLENGES

When and where will the challenges be published?

The challenges will be published on covid19.spaceappschallenge.org/challenges during the week of Space Apps (several days before the hackathon begins), so that you can familiarize yourself with them. When the challenges are released, we will send a message to everyone who is registered to let them know.

Can people start working on the challenges as soon as they are published?

We appreciate the enthusiasm of participants who want to start as early as possible, but we ask that participants start the actual work when the hackathon begins on May 30. The 48-hour hackathon is designed to inspire innovative ideas and develop solutions in a collaborative, team environment, and participants are not expected to have a fully developed project at the end.

What if I have questions about one of the challenges or datasets?

If you have questions about the challenges or resources, Subject-Matter Experts (SMEs) from NASA, JAXA, ESA, CSA, CNES, and affiliated organizations will be available on hackathon weekend (May 30-31) in our Rocket Chat channels. They will be ready to engage with your questions! Each challenge will have a dedicated chat channel.

“Space Apps Ambassadors” will also be in the chat channels. Ambassadors are volunteers with experience who are available to provide additional support.

Can I translate the challenges?

Yes! If you or your team do translate the challenges into other languages, we encourage you to share the translation with us.

Can teams work on more than one challenge?

A team can create more than one project, but it can be very difficult for a team to do this successfully. Participants and teams are, therefore, encouraged to focus on just one project and one solution, as the hackathon only lasts one weekend! If your team feels that your solution is relevant to multiple challenge statements, please choose the challenge that is most aligned with your project.

Is it possible for a team to come up with their own project or is it mandatory to pick one of the challenges?

For the Space Apps COVID-19 Challenge, all teams must respond to one of the given challenges.

PROJECT SUBMISSIONS

During the week of Space Apps, we will post a detailed *Project Submission Guide* on the Space Apps resources page (www.spaceappschallenge.org/resources) and on your user dashboard.

How are projects/solutions submitted?

Every team (whether you are working individually or with teammates) needs to create a project page to describe their work. We encourage teams to create their project page as soon as Space

Apps weekend begins, and to add project information as the weekend progresses. Participants must be registered and be identified on their team's project page in order to be eligible for judging and awards.

What is expected in my project submission?

All projects that are submitted during the hackathon, and which meet the [Participant Terms and Conditions](#), will be viewable on our website. If your team would like to be considered for an award, your project will need to meet (at minimum) the following requirements. Additional requirements may be found in the *Judging and Award Guide*, once posted.

- + Develop a project in response to one of the official Space Apps COVID-19 Challenge statements.
- + Clearly show how NASA, ESA, JAXA, CNES, and/or CSA datasets, products, or resources were integrated into your project.
- + Provide a demonstration of your project in the form of a public link to slides or screenshots (up to 5) or a video (30 second limit).
- + Include a link to code in a public repository on your project page (if applicable). Space Apps is all about open data and collaboration!
- + Ensure that all your team members are registered and identified on the team's webpage.
- + Use English language on your project page.
- + Finish updating your project page on the Space Apps website by midnight, Sunday, May 31 in your local time zone. If your team spans multiple time zones, your project must be submitted in accordance with local time of the member in the latest time zone.

JUDGING AND AWARDS

During the week of Space Apps, we will post a detailed *Judging and Awards Guide* on the Space Apps resources page (www.spaceappschallenge.org/resources) and on your user dashboard.

Will the Space Apps COVID-19 Challenge have a winner?

While the main purpose of the hackathon is to encourage collaboration and cooperation, the Space Apps COVID-19 Challenge will have winners and offer an award to the top projects. Stay tuned for more information.