

# ASCENDxTexas

26–27 FEBRUARY 2026 • HOUSTON, TEXAS

## SPACE LEADERS CONVERGE IN HOUSTON TO DISCUSS THE FUTURE OF THE SPACE ECONOMY

Building momentum toward **ASCEND 2026**, **ASCENDxTexas** once again united the space community for meaningful conversations and actionable insight. Nearly **400 leaders and decision makers gathered 25–26 February in Houston** to examine the innovation, resilience, and collaboration required to navigate the rapidly evolving space economy.

Framed around the theme “**Interlocking Orbits**,” the summit explored how civil, commercial, and national security stakeholders are converging into a unified ecosystem and what that convergence means for **investment, policy, workforce development, and mission execution**.

At a pivotal moment for human spaceflight — as NASA transitions beyond the International Space Station and the commercial low Earth orbit market takes shape — **AIAA convened the leaders building the future of space**.

With representatives from **NASA, the U.S. Space Force, commercial space companies, Texas state government, academia, and the investment community**, **ASCENDxTexas** served as a critical gathering point for the Texas space ecosystem.

The result: **two days of focused dialogue advancing human space exploration in low Earth orbit, on the moon, and beyond**.

**ASCENDxTexas** demonstrated AIAA’s role as the neutral convener where the space community comes together to advance real outcomes.

### EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

ASCENDxTexas 2026 brought together leaders from government, industry, academia, and the entrepreneurial space sector to examine the opportunities shaping the next phase of space activity.

Discussions emphasized how increasingly interconnected space ecosystems require new partnership models, innovation across the industrial base, and coordinated strategies for exploration and commercialization.

Across panels, keynotes, and networking sessions, participants explored how collaboration across sectors will sustain momentum in **low Earth orbit, the moon, and beyond**.



## FEATURED VOICES

- > **NASA Deputy Associate Administrator Casey Swails** outlined NASA's exploration priorities and how commercial partners can align with the agency's evolving roadmap.
- > **Vanessa Wyche, Director of NASA Johnson Space Center**, highlighted exploration milestones and JSC's expanding collaboration with commercial and international partners.
- > **Col. Omar Perea, U.S. Space Force**, addressed national security priorities and collaboration between government and commercial space organizations.
- > Leaders from **Axiom Space, Blue Origin, Vast, and Starlab Space** discussed the future of commercial low Earth orbit destinations following the International Space Station.
- > **U.S. Representative Brian Babin (TX-36) and Texas House Appropriations Chair Dr. Greg Bonnen** delivered keynote perspectives on Texas's legislative commitment to advancing the space economy.
- > Leaders from the **Texas Space Commission and TARSEC** presented a strategic vision for strengthening Texas's position as a leading U.S. space hub.

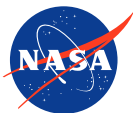
## ATTENDEE SNAPSHOT

389 PROFESSIONALS. ONE FOCUSED AGENDA.

- > **68% Texas-based**, reinforcing Houston's role as the center of gravity for U.S. human spaceflight
- > Strong representation from AIAA **corporate member organizations**
- > Disciplines represented across **engineering, program leadership, policy, investment, and business strategy**



## ORGANIZATIONS WITH THE LARGEST REPRESENTATION

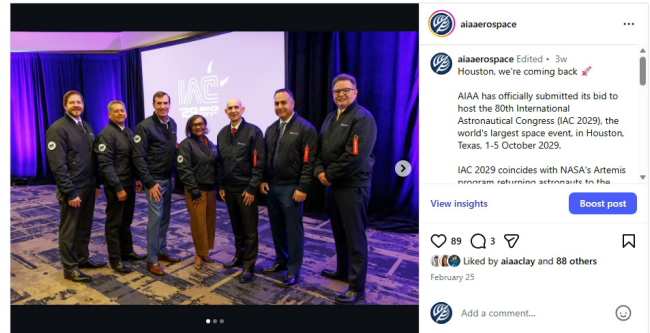


## DIGITAL ENGAGEMENT

**129,637**      **3.34%**      **602**  
**IMPRESSIONS**      **ENGAGEMENT RATE**      **NEW FOLLOWERS**

ASCENDxTexas generated strong online engagement before, during, and after the event.

CAMPAIGN METRICS (22 FEB–2 MAR 2026)



## SPONSORS & SUPPORTERS

ASCENDxTexas sponsors played a key role in creating a dynamic and engaging environment for attendees. From interactive displays to branded experiences, sponsor activations helped bring the event to life and strengthened connections across the space community.

### FEATURED ACTIVATIONS INCLUDED:

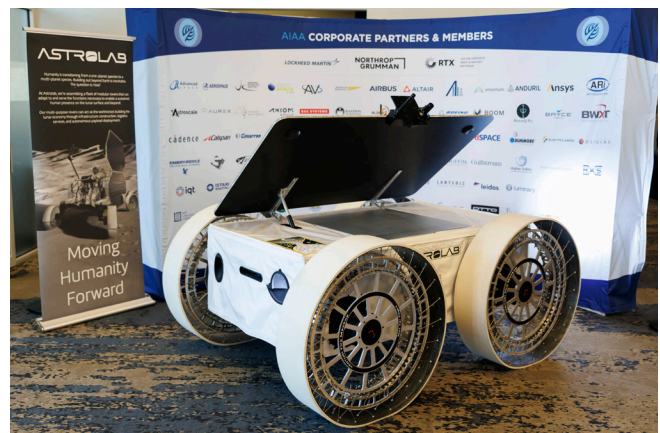
- › Interactive technology demonstrations
- › Branded networking spaces and attendee experiences
- › On-site engagement opportunities and giveaways

## NEW IN 2027!

### POP-UP KIOSKS!

A new opportunity for sponsors to showcase their brand with **small footprint displays designed for high visibility and easy setup.**

These kiosks provide a flexible way to engage attendees, highlight innovations, and participate in the ASCENDxTexas experience.



# INTERESTED IN SPONSORING OR EXHIBITING AT ASCENDXTexas 2027?

ASCENDxTexas brings together the organizations shaping the future of the space economy and provides sponsors with direct access to decision-makers across government, industry, and academia.

Contact our team to learn more: [salesinfo@aiaa.org](mailto:salesinfo@aiaa.org)

## IN PARTNERSHIP WITH



## SPONSORS & SUPPORTERS

