



## News Release

November 20, 2020

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The Andy Thomas Space Foundation has been launched this morning to provide an interface between the space community and the wider Australian community.

It will complement the work of the Australian Space Agency and the many institutions involved in space-related education and training.

Key targets will be the stimulation of support for space as a platform for innovation and economic growth, support for education and training from primary to tertiary levels, generation of career opportunities, and to promote space as a domain for international cooperation and peaceful co-existence.

Foundation CEO Nicola Sasanelli AM says the ATSF will support projects such as the Australian Space Discovery Centre - scheduled to open in Adelaide in March - and scholarships for international training and industry experience.

“The Foundation will ignite the imagination and enthusiasm for space in this and future generations,” he says.

Mr Sasanelli complimented South Australian NASA astronaut Andy Thomas for stamping the Foundation with his name, as well as South Australian and Australian governments over several years for their vital support for space industry institutions and enterprises.

“Government support for space activities has been instrumental in Australia - and particularly South Australia - participating in the space community in a very meaningful way.

“That participation will take a step forward with the creation of the Andy Thomas Space Foundation, which is committed to driving progress in education, research and innovation to ensure that the space sector is a key contributor to economic transformation at state and national levels.”

Dr Andy Thomas described the formation of the Foundation as a “great milestone” which would open “myriad options” for young people to become inspired about space.

“It will help them define their future career goals and help establish them on a good education path,” he said.

Dr Thomas was speaking from the US, where he watched his wife, Shannon Walker, and three other astronauts earlier this week leave on a NASA/SpaceX mission to the International Space Station.

Mr Sasanelli says the Foundation intends to fund its activities through membership fees, philanthropic donations, grants and revenue from space-related public events.

South Australian Premier Steven Marshall was to launch the Foundation at Lot 14 this morning (Friday), but because of covid19 restrictions has issued a statement, hailing the Foundation as “a great asset to supporting the State Government’s commitment to growing South Australia’s space industry”.

He said the Government was pleased to provide funding to the Foundation, “allowing it to inspire the next generation of space leaders, and to help create jobs in this vital new industry for the State”.

For further comment or information please contact :

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Video messages from Dr Andy Thomas, Premier Steven Marshall and Australian Space Agency CEO Dr Megan Clark are available on the ATSF website :

[www.andythomas.foundation](http://www.andythomas.foundation)