

Astrobiologist

About Me

I study tiny organisms that survive in some of Earth's harshest environments, including deserts and Antarctica. My research helps scientists understand where life might survive on Mars. When I was twelve years old, I watched a Mars rover landing on television, and I knew I wanted to become a scientist.

What Matters Most

- Discovering whether life ever existed on Mars.
- Protecting places that could contain important scientific evidence.
- Helping young people become excited about science.

I'm Concerned About...

- Accidentally contaminating Mars with Earth microbes.
- Destroying evidence before scientists have a chance to study it.

During the Summit...

Think about:

- Should some areas of Mars be protected?
 - What evidence should scientists collect before humans settle there?
 - How can exploration and preservation happen together?
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Aerospace Engineer

About Me

I help design spacecraft and life-support systems that could someday carry astronauts safely to Mars. I love solving difficult engineering problems, but I also think about how every new technology should make life better here on Earth.

What Matters Most

- Keeping astronauts safe.
- Designing reliable spacecraft.
- Using engineering to solve problems.

I'm Concerned About...

- The enormous cost of long-duration missions.
- Sending astronauts before the technology is ready.

During the Summit...

Think about:

- What technology still needs to be developed?
- How safe is safe enough?
- Are the benefits worth the cost?

Environmental Scientist

About Me

I study fragile desert ecosystems and how small changes can affect plants and animals for many years. Growing up in the high desert of Arizona taught me that places that look empty often contain incredible life and history.

What Matters Most

- Protecting important environments.
- Learning from nature before changing it.
- Helping people understand ecosystems.

I'm Concerned About...

- Damaging Mars before we fully understand it.
- Repeating mistakes humans have made on Earth.

During the Summit...

Think about:

- Which parts of Mars deserve protection?
 - How much environmental impact is acceptable?
 - What can Mars teach us about caring for Earth?
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Space Physician

About Me

I study how space travel affects the human body. My work focuses on radiation, muscle loss, and keeping astronauts healthy during long missions. I became interested in medicine after helping care for my grandfather during a long illness.

What Matters Most

- Protecting astronaut health.
- Advancing medical research.
- Improving healthcare on Earth.

I'm Concerned About...

- Radiation exposure.
- Mental health during long missions.
- Limited emergency medical care on Mars.

During the Summit...

Think about:

- How much risk should astronauts accept?
- Should safety come before exploration?
- How could Mars research improve medicine on Earth?

Planetary Geologist

About Me

I study rocks, volcanoes, and ancient landscapes on planets. Every rock tells part of a planet's story. I believe Mars still has many secrets waiting to be discovered beneath its surface.

What Matters Most

- Understanding Mars' history.
- Searching for signs of ancient water.
- Protecting important geological sites.

I'm Concerned About...

- Losing valuable scientific sites.
- Rushing exploration without enough planning.

During the Summit...

Think about:

- Which locations are scientifically important?
 - Should some places remain untouched?
 - What can Mars' rocks teach us about Earth?
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Robotics Engineer

About Me

I design robots that explore places too dangerous for humans. My team develops robotic arms, cameras, and drilling equipment that can search for water, collect rock samples, and perform experiments on Mars. As a child, I loved taking apart old electronics just to see how they worked.

What Matters Most

- Using robots to answer scientific questions.
- Keeping astronauts out of unnecessary danger.
- Designing technology that benefits people on Earth.

I'm Concerned About...

- Sending people before robots finish exploring.
- Depending too much on technology that hasn't been fully tested.

During the Summit...

Think about:

- What jobs should robots do before humans arrive?
- Are there places robots should explore first?
- When is it worth sending people instead of machines?

Planetary Protection Officer

About Me

My job is to help prevent Earth microbes from contaminating other worlds and to protect Earth from anything that might someday be returned from space. I enjoy hiking and collecting fossils because they remind me how much we still have to learn about our universe.

What Matters Most

- Preventing contamination.
- Protecting scientific discoveries.
- Following international agreements.

I'm Concerned About...

- Accidentally carrying Earth organisms to Mars.
- Losing evidence of possible Martian life forever.

During the Summit...

Think about:

- What precautions should astronauts take?
 - Are some places too important to risk contaminating?
 - Who should enforce planetary protection rules?
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Science Communicator

About Me

I create museum exhibits, videos, and podcasts that help people understand space exploration. I believe science belongs to everyone, not just scientists. One of my favorite parts of my job is answering questions from curious students.

What Matters Most

- Helping the public understand science.
- Sharing discoveries openly.
- Inspiring future scientists and engineers.

I'm Concerned About...

- Misinformation about Mars.
- Important discoveries not being shared with the public.

During the Summit...

Think about:

- Who should have access to discoveries made on Mars?
- How can scientists explain difficult ideas clearly?
- How can the public stay involved in decisions about Mars?

Climate Scientist

About Me

I study Earth's changing climate and how planets evolve over millions of years. Learning why Mars became cold and dry may help us better understand Earth's future. I enjoy kayaking and spending time outdoors with my family.

What Matters Most

- Understanding planetary climates.
- Protecting Earth's future.
- Using Mars to answer questions about our own planet.

I'm Concerned About...

- Missing opportunities to learn from Mars.
- Assuming Mars can solve Earth's problems.

During the Summit...

Think about:

- What can Mars teach us about Earth?
 - Should solving Earth's problems come before settling Mars?
 - How can studying another planet benefit people here?
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Director, United Nations Office for Outer Space

About Me

I help countries work together on international science projects. Throughout my career, I've seen that solving big challenges requires cooperation, patience, and listening to many different voices. I believe Mars exploration should benefit all of humanity.

What Matters Most

- International cooperation.
- Peaceful exploration.
- Fair decision-making.

I'm Concerned About...

- One country or company controlling Mars.
- Conflicts over resources or territory.

During the Summit...

Think about:

- Who should make decisions about Mars?
- How can countries work together peacefully?
- Should Mars belong to everyone?

Space Psychologist

About Me

I study how people think, solve problems, and work together during long space missions. Astronauts may spend years away from Earth, so staying mentally healthy is just as important as staying physically healthy. I enjoy hiking and camping because they remind me how important teamwork can be in unfamiliar places.

What Matters Most

- Supporting astronauts' mental health.
- Building strong teams.
- Preparing people for long missions.

I'm Concerned About...

- Isolation and loneliness.
- Stress affecting important decisions.
- Conflicts developing within small crews.

During the Summit...

Think about:

- What challenges might astronauts face after years away from Earth?
 - How can teams prepare for stressful situations?
 - Should mental health be considered as important as physical health?
-

Controlled Environment Agriculture Specialist

About Me

I study how to grow food in places where farmland is limited, including greenhouses and indoor farms. Someday, similar systems could help astronauts grow food on Mars. I enjoy gardening with my family and teaching children how plants grow.

What Matters Most

- Producing healthy food.
- Conserving water.
- Creating sustainable communities.

I'm Concerned About...

- Running out of food during long missions.
- Depending too much on supplies from Earth.

During the Summit...

Think about:

- How will people grow food on Mars?
- What resources will future settlers need most?
- What can Mars farming teach us about growing food on Earth?

Space Ethicist

About Me

I study difficult questions about right and wrong in science and technology. There are rarely simple answers, but asking thoughtful questions helps people make wiser decisions. I became interested in ethics because I realized that every major scientific discovery also affects society.

What Matters Most

- Careful decision-making.
- Respect for different viewpoints.
- Thinking about future generations.

I'm Concerned About...

- Making decisions too quickly.
- Ignoring perspectives that differ from our own.
- Focusing only on technology instead of responsibility.

During the Summit...

Think about:

- What responsibilities come with exploring another planet?
 - How should we balance risks and benefits?
 - Who should have a voice when making important decisions?
-

Economist

About Me

I study how governments and organizations decide to spend money. Every dollar invested in one project cannot be spent somewhere else, so it's important to think carefully about costs and benefits. I enjoy helping students understand how economics affects everyday life.

What Matters Most

- Spending resources wisely.
- Supporting projects with long-term benefits.
- Improving people's quality of life.

I'm Concerned About...

- Spending money without clear goals.
- Ignoring important needs on Earth.
- Making decisions based only on excitement instead of evidence.

During the Summit...

Think about:

- How should governments decide whether Mars exploration is worth the cost?
- What benefits should people expect from investing in space exploration?
- How do we balance today's needs with tomorrow's opportunities?

Environmental Lawyer

About Me

I help create laws that protect important natural places while allowing people to use resources responsibly. Good laws can help prevent problems before they happen. I enjoy visiting national parks and learning how communities protect the environments they value.

What Matters Most

- Protecting important environments.
- Creating fair rules.
- Solving disagreements peacefully.

I'm Concerned About...

- Conflicts over who controls Mars.
- Damage to places scientists may want to study.
- Rules that are unclear or difficult to enforce.

During the Summit...

Think about:

- What rules should guide Mars exploration?
 - Who should enforce those rules?
 - How can laws encourage both exploration and protection?
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Middle School Science Teacher

About Me

Every day I help students ask questions, investigate evidence, and think critically about the world around them. One of my favorite parts of teaching is watching students realize that science isn't about memorizing facts, it's about curiosity and discovery. I hope today's students will solve tomorrow's biggest challenges.

What Matters Most

- Inspiring future scientists and engineers.
- Helping students think critically.
- Making science accessible to everyone.

I'm Concerned About...

- People making decisions without understanding the evidence.
- Students believing there is always one "right" answer to complex problems.

During the Summit...

Think about:

- What should young people know about Mars exploration?
- How can scientists help the public understand difficult decisions?
- How might today's students shape the future of space exploration?

Museum Educator

About Me

I create hands-on exhibits that help families explore science together. I've learned that people become excited about science when they can ask questions, experiment, and connect discoveries to their own lives. Every visitor brings a different perspective, and I enjoy helping people see science in new ways.

What Matters Most

- Making science engaging.
- Sharing discoveries with the public.
- Encouraging curiosity.

I'm Concerned About...

- Important discoveries staying inside laboratories.
- People feeling left out of conversations about space exploration.

During the Summit...

Think about:

- How should discoveries from Mars be shared?
 - Why is public understanding important?
 - How can everyone feel included in space exploration?
-

Science Journalist

About Me

I report on new scientific discoveries for newspapers, websites, and podcasts. My job is to ask good questions, check facts carefully, and help people understand complicated topics. I believe that accurate information helps people make better decisions.

What Matters Most

- Accurate reporting.
- Asking thoughtful questions.
- Helping people understand science.

I'm Concerned About...

- Rumors spreading faster than facts.
- Important information being misunderstood.
- Oversimplifying complicated issues.

During the Summit...

Think about:

- What information would the public want to know?
- Which evidence is strongest?
- What questions still need to be answered?

Parent and Community Volunteer

About Me

I have two children who love learning about space. I volunteer at our local library, helping organize family science nights and community events. While I'm excited about space exploration, I also think about how today's decisions affect future generations.

What Matters Most

- Creating opportunities for young people.
- Using resources responsibly.
- Leaving a better future for the next generation.

I'm Concerned About...

- Spending money without clear benefits.
- Ignoring important problems here on Earth.
- Making decisions that future generations may regret.

During the Summit...

Think about:

- How will today's decisions affect future generations?
 - What benefits should Mars exploration provide on Earth?
 - How should governments balance different priorities?
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High School Student

About Me

I'm a sophomore in high school and captain of my school's robotics team. I've dreamed of working in the space program ever since I watched videos of the Perseverance rover exploring Mars. I know I don't have all the answers, but I think young people should have a voice in decisions that will shape the future.

What Matters Most

- Learning new things.
- Exploring the unknown.
- Building a better future.

I'm Concerned About...

- Adults making decisions without thinking about the future.
- Missing opportunities to explore and discover.

During the Summit...

Think about:

- What kind of future do you hope to inherit?
- What discoveries are worth pursuing?
- What responsibilities do young people have in shaping tomorrow?

Special Rapporteur

United Nations on the rights of Indigenous Peoples

About Me

I work for the United Nations to make sure Indigenous peoples are treated fairly, including as humanity starts settling new places like Mars. My job would be to ensure Indigenous knowledge and voices are included in decisions about space settlement and to assess whether any group's rights or culture could be affected by new frontiers being claimed. I would then advise governments and space agencies on how to include Indigenous perspectives.

What Matters Most

- Making sure Indigenous peoples get a real seat at the table whenever new land, resources, or frontiers (even ones as far off as Mars) are being claimed or divided up.
- Protecting Indigenous knowledge and culture from being ignored or erased as new settlements and technologies expand into new territories.
- Learning from history so that expansion into new frontiers doesn't repeat the same harms of colonization on Earth.

I'm Concerned About...

- Treating Mars only as a resource to be used.
- Making decisions without listening to many different communities.

During the Summit...

Think about:

- What responsibilities come with exploring a new place?
- How can different cultures contribute to important decisions?
- How can exploration happen respectfully?

Emergency Management Director

About Me

I help communities prepare for floods, wildfires, earthquakes, and other emergencies. My job is to think about problems before they happen so people can stay safe. Space missions also require careful planning because emergencies can happen when help is very far away.

What Matters Most

- Preparing for unexpected situations.
- Protecting human life.
- Careful planning before taking risks.

I'm Concerned About...

- Emergencies that astronauts cannot escape.
- Sending people before backup plans are ready.

During the Summit...

Think about:

- What could go wrong on Mars?
- How should astronauts prepare for emergencies?
- What risks are acceptable?

Small Business Owner

About Me

I own a company that designs solar-powered water systems for communities with limited access to clean water. Many inventions developed for challenging environments eventually improve everyday life. I believe innovation is important, but it should solve real problems for people.

What Matters Most

- Practical solutions.
- Innovation that benefits society.
- Responsible use of resources.

I'm Concerned About...

- Spending money on projects that have little impact on life on Earth.
- New technologies being available only to a few people.

During the Summit...

Think about:

- How can Mars technology help people on Earth?
 - What inventions might come from Mars exploration?
 - How should new technologies be shared?
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Mission Planner

About Me

I coordinate teams of scientists, engineers, and astronauts working on future space missions. Every successful mission depends on thousands of people working together toward the same goal. I enjoy solving complicated problems that require many different kinds of expertise.

What Matters Most

- Teamwork.
- Careful planning.
- Balancing scientific goals with safety.

I'm Concerned About...

- Rushing important decisions.
- Overlooking one group's concerns while focusing on another's.

During the Summit...

Think about:

- How should different priorities be balanced?
- What should happen first?
- How can everyone contribute to a successful mission?

Future Mars Settler

About Me

I've volunteered to be considered for one of the first long-term missions to Mars if such a program is ever created. I understand the risks, but I believe exploration has always been part of the human story. At the same time, I know that living on Mars would mean leaving family, friends, and Earth behind for many years.

What Matters Most

- Helping humanity explore new worlds.
- Building a safe and supportive community.
- Learning how humans can thrive in space.

I'm Concerned About...

- The dangers of living so far from Earth.
- Whether future settlers will have enough support.
- Making sure settlements are built responsibly.

During the Summit...

Think about:

- What would everyday life on Mars be like?
 - What would future settlers need to live safely?
 - How should the first communities on Mars be designed?
-

Astronaut

About Me

I've spent more than 300 days living and working aboard the International Space Station. Looking out the window and seeing Earth from space reminded me that everyone shares the same home. Space exploration has taught me that teamwork, preparation, and trust are just as important as rockets and technology.

What Matters Most

- Keeping astronauts safe.
- International teamwork.
- Careful preparation before every mission.

I'm Concerned About...

- Sending astronauts before we fully understand the risks.
- Becoming so focused on reaching Mars that we overlook important safety concerns.

During the Summit...

Think about:

- What risks are astronauts willing to accept?
- How much preparation is enough?
- What lessons from past space missions should guide future Mars exploration?

Space Architect

About Me

I design buildings and living spaces for extreme environments, including ideas for future habitats on the Moon and Mars. A good home should help people feel safe, healthy, and connected to one another. I believe that thoughtful design can improve both physical and mental well-being.

What Matters Most

- Safe and comfortable living spaces.
- Designing communities where people can thrive.
- Creating habitats that use resources wisely.

I'm Concerned About...

- Building settlements that don't meet people's long-term needs.
- Forgetting that Mars settlements will become homes, not just workplaces.

During the Summit...

Think about:

- What would make a Mars settlement feel like home?
 - How can buildings protect people from Mars' harsh environment?
 - What should the first community on Mars include?
-

Accessibility Engineer

About Me

I design technologies and buildings that are easier for everyone to use, including people with disabilities. Good design doesn't help just one group—it usually makes life better for everyone. I believe future space exploration should be as inclusive as possible.

What Matters Most

- Designing for everyone.
- Solving problems creatively.
- Making technology accessible.

I'm Concerned About...

- Future Mars communities being designed for only a small group of people.
- Missing opportunities to create better technologies for everyone.

During the Summit...

Think about:

- Who should future Mars settlements be designed for?
- How can technology make exploration more inclusive?
- What can engineers do to help everyone participate?

Historian of Exploration

About Me

I study the history of exploration, from ancient voyages across the oceans to modern expeditions in Antarctica and space. History teaches us that exploration has led to incredible discoveries—but it has also caused conflicts and mistakes. Understanding the past can help us make wiser decisions in the future.

What Matters Most

- Learning from history.
- Respecting people and places.
- Making thoughtful decisions.

I'm Concerned About...

- Repeating mistakes made during earlier periods of exploration.
- Forgetting to learn from history before making new discoveries.

During the Summit...

Think about:

- What lessons from Earth's history apply to Mars?
- How can exploration happen more responsibly?
- What mistakes should humanity avoid repeating?

Youth Climate Advocate

About Me

I'm a university student studying environmental science and work with youth organizations that encourage people to protect Earth's environment. I think exploring Mars is exciting, but I also believe caring for Earth should always remain a priority. I enjoy organizing community clean-up events and helping students learn about climate science.

What Matters Most

- Protecting Earth's future.
- Encouraging young people to participate in science.
- Finding solutions that benefit both Earth and space exploration.

I'm Concerned About...

- People viewing Mars as a replacement for Earth.
- Ignoring environmental problems here at home.

During the Summit...

Think about:

- How can Mars exploration help protect Earth?
- Should caring for Earth and exploring Mars happen at the same time?
- What responsibilities do young people have in shaping humanity's future?