

SPACE EDUCATION AND OUTREACH SYMPOSIUM (E1)
Water from Space: Societal, Educational and Cultural Aspects (6.-E5.4)

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LAUNCH:WATER – ACCELERATING INNOVATION FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE.

Abstract

NASA is incubating a new collaborative concept we've called, LAUNCH – a global initiative to identify and support the innovative work poised to contribute to a sustainable future and accelerate solutions to meet urgent challenges facing our society. Department of State, USAID and Nike are founding partners.

NASA created LAUNCH to help these innovators – in labs, garages, companies, organizations, and charities around the world – accelerate from where they are to where they need to be, as they strive to achieve success. LAUNCH starts with a global search for these innovations, channeling them into key challenge areas necessary for a sustainable future: water, air, food, energy, mobility, and sustainable cities.

The needs of these nascent organizations are many and varied: re-imagining their business models, accessing capital/investment or charitable donations, refining their designs and engineering, linking to a new technology partner, securing key management, scaling their operations, gaining advocacy, opening up new markets and programs. The difference between failure or stagnation and success are often small pivotal changes in approach and the ability to move quickly and confidently to secure key allies and partners.

To meet these needs, LAUNCH has envisioned a new and unique approach. LAUNCH will identify 10 innovative, often disruptive world-class ideas, technologies or programs that show great promise in making tangible progress for society in each of the key challenge areas. These innovators will be invited to be part of the LAUNCH Sustainability Forum – a high-level impact event where they present their innovative ideas to LAUNCH and engage in a collaborative discussion.

We've chosen water as the first challenge and identified 10 disruptive innovations. The inaugural LAUNCH: Water will be held on March 16th to 18th, 2010. LAUNCH: Water is designed to be a collaborative conversation between the participants —the LAUNCH team, the LAUNCH Council and the 10 selected Water Innovators — with the intent of contributing tangible progress to some of the greatest water challenges facing our planet.

The event however, is just the starting point, post-event the Innovators will become part of the LAUNCH Accelerator, an on-going effort which utilizes the collective power of the networks, resources and expertise of the LAUNCH organization to create and execute an action plan accelerating them from where they are to where they need to be to successfully have a positive impact on global sustainability.