

Training for astronauts

Mission X: Carmen Possnig inspires 460 pupils at the Ars Electronica Center

(Linz, June 4, 2024) On Monday, June 3, the Ars Electronica Center became a meeting place for young astronauts between the ages of 10 and 14: At the end of the ‘Mission X – Train Like an Astronaut’ competition. Pupils and their teachers came together to talk about mission planning, European space travel and teamwork in space. Special guest: Carmen Possnig, ESA reserve astronaut.

School classes taking part in ‘Mission X’ learn how space travelers physically prepare for their missions and how important STEM subjects are for space exploration. Over the course of a school year, various ‘missions’ prepared by the European and American space organizations (ESA and NASA) have to be mastered.

In Austria, the Mission X competition is organized by ESERO Austria (European Space Education Resource Office), an ESA initiative that has been based at the Ars Electronica Center since 2016. This year, 53 teams registered for secondary level I, with 17 teams making it through to the final. The final event of the 2023/24 school year for this age group took place on site for the first time.

Reports from antarctica and flight into the universe

460 pupils followed the invitation to the Ars Electronica Center, were awarded certificates of participation for their achievements and took part in a 3-station program focusing on space technology and space travel. The visitors travelled through the solar system in Deep Space 8K (Uniview) and engaged in discussions with experts from PEAK Technology and AAC; both are Austrian providers of technical solutions in the aerospace industry. Carmen Possnig, a medical doctor and Austrian ESA reserve astronaut, invited the guests to the Sky Loft – and inspired them with insights into the Concordia research station in Antarctica and reports on scientific body experiments in weightlessness.

An outlook: Astronaut Franz Viehböck reports

On Monday, June 24, the focus will once again be on space exploration, when the Mission X participants at primary school level will be congratulated for their achievements. The guest speaker will be Franz Viehböck – an Austrian astronaut who began his career in 1991 as part of the Soviet-Austrian space project *Austomir 91* and later worked in Austrian industry.

Further inquiries

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