

Launch Day for NASA's TESS Satellite Arrives *Revolutionary Satellite Promises to Discover Thousands of Exoplanets*

Fort Worth, TX - NASA will greatly expand the search for terrestrial planets outside our solar system with the launch of the Transiting Exoplanet Survey Satellite, or TESS, this afternoon. The satellite will be transported by a SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket which will launch from Florida's Cape Canaveral Air Force Station, this afternoon at 5:32 PM CST.

Scientists believe over the next two years, TESS could discover thousands of exoplanets in the Milky Way Galaxy. TESS will monitor more than 200,000 stars for temporary drops in brightness caused by planetary transits. As the first-ever space-borne all-sky transit survey, TESS is expected to provide much more detailed information than is possible through ground-based surveys and could discover an array of planets ranging from Earth-sized to gas giants that have a range of stellar types and orbital distances.

The Fort Worth Museum of Science and History's Director of Scientific Production, Dr. Morgan Rehnberg, explains, "The study of planets around other stars is the most exciting field in modern astronomy and the launch of TESS will provide an important new capability. By identifying the closest and most easily observable exoplanets, TESS will form the foundation for future observation around the world."

Dr. Morgan Rehnberg will provide insight on TESS and answer your questions live on Facebook, today at 4PM CST. To learn more, or schedule an interview with Dr. Rehnberg, please contact acanipe@fwmslh.org.

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About the Fort Worth Museum of Science and History

The Museum was established in 1941 and is accredited by the American Alliance of Museums. Anchored by its rich collections, the Museum is dedicated to lifelong learning. It engages guests through creative, vibrant programs and exhibits interpreting science and the history of Texas and the Southwest. The Museum is open daily, except Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. Visit www.fortworthmuseum.org for more.