

Over 18,300 apply for 14 astronaut jobs

22nd February, 2016



A record number of people have applied to NASA to be part of its astronaut training program. NASA said it received over 18,300 applications for just 14 jobs. This is a record for the administration. Human resources officials at NASA will now spend the next 18 months looking at the applications

to select the best ones. It plans to announce the successful applicants in the middle of 2017. Brian Kelly of NASA said it would be a lot of work. He added: "It's heartening to know so many people recognize what a great opportunity this is to be part of NASA's exciting mission. I look forward to meeting the men and women talented enough to rise to the top of what is always a pool of incredible applicants."

It seems there is a great desire to work on America's space program and perhaps go to Mars. NASA's Charlie Bolden said: "It's not at all surprising to me that so many Americans from diverse backgrounds want to personally contribute to blazing the trail on our journey to Mars." The top applicants will have an interview at the Johnson Space Center in Houston, Texas. The chosen candidates will then get two years of initial training. They will learn skills such as spacewalking, teamwork and operating spacecraft systems, and learn Russian. After that, they could go to the International Space Station or work for companies making spacecraft for tourists, such as Boeing and SpaceX.

Sources: *SpaceReporter.com* / *Space.com* / *TheMonitorDaily*

Writing

An astronaut has the best job in the world. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

record / astronaut / training / program / applications / opportunity / talented / space / desire / surprising / diverse / backgrounds / candidates / teamwork / spacecraft

True / False

- NASA has received its biggest ever number of applicants for jobs. T / F
- It will take NASA 1½ years to choose the best applicants. T / F
- NASA will announce the successful job applicants in 2018. T / F
- Applicants will have to go into a pool and rise up. T / F
- A NASA spokesman was surprised at how diverse the applicants were. T / F
- The top applicants will be interviewed at Cape Canaveral in Florida. T / F
- The applicants will learn spacewalking after two years of training. T / F
- The applicants could join private companies such as Boeing. T / F

Synonym Match

- | | |
|----------------|-----------------|
| 1. program | a. give |
| 2. received | b. chance |
| 3. next | c. unbelievable |
| 4. opportunity | d. working |
| 5. incredible | e. upcoming |
| 6. desire | f. varied |
| 7. diverse | g. course |
| 8. contribute | h. like |
| 9. such as | i. wish |
| 10. operating | j. got |

Discussion – Student A

- What do you know about NASA?
- Why do so many people want to be astronauts?
- What do you think it would be like to go into space?
- What job would you be best at?
- How far will humans go in space?
- What do astronauts do every day when they are in space?
- What do you think of the idea of living in space?
- What advice do you have for NASA's job applicants?

BreakingNewsEnglish - The Mini Lesson

Phrase Match

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. A record number of people | a. the best ones |
| 2. select | b. training |
| 3. recognize what a great opportunity | c. to the top |
| 4. be part of NASA's | d. desire |
| 5. rise | e. our journey to Mars |
| 6. great | f. have applied |
| 7. so many Americans from diverse | g. this is |
| 8. blazing the trail on | h. for tourists |
| 9. two years of initial | i. exciting mission |
| 10. companies making spacecraft | j. backgrounds |

Discussion – Student B

- Would you be a good astronaut? Why?
- What do astronauts do in their training?
- How good or bad are you at job interviews?
- How important is a nation's space program?
- How do people learn to do spacewalks?
- What are the bad things about being an astronaut?
- If you could choose any job, what would you do?
- What questions would you like to ask the boss of NASA?

Spelling

- A record number of people have paeldpi to NASA
- Human oeeursrsc officials
- csteel the best ones
- what a great opuproyttin this is
- be part of NASA's exciting ionssmi
- a pool of rednclieb applicants
- a great idrsee
- Americans from rivdsee backgrounds
- personally nutoecitbr
- our neoyrju to Mars
- two years of iliinta training
- making spacecraft for rttsuosi

Answers – Synonym Match

1. g	2. j	3. e	4. b	5. c
6. i	7. f	8. a	9. h	10. d

Role Play

Role A – Physical fitness

You think physical fitness is most important for an astronaut. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't so important. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): being a team player, engineering skills or a sense of humor.

Role B – Team player

You think being a team player is most important for an astronaut. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't so important. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): physical fitness, engineering skills or a sense of humor.

Role C – Engineering skills

You think engineering skills is most important for an astronaut. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't so important. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): being a team player, physical fitness or a sense of humor.

Role D – Sense of humor

You think a sense of humor is most important for an astronaut. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't so important. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): being a team player, engineering skills or physical fitness.

Speaking – Applicants

Rank these with your partner. Put the most important things for an astronaut at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- | | |
|---------------------|------------------------|
| • physical fitness | • leadership qualities |
| • high intelligence | • good at engineering |
| • good at physics | • good sense of humor |
| • team player | • aviation background |

Answers – True False

a	T	b	T	c	F	d	T	e	F	f	F	g	F	h	T
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.