

IIAS Researcher Kellie Gerardi to Fly as Payload Specialist on 'Galactic 05' Research Spaceflight with Virgin Galactic

Flight Window Opens November 2, 2023

BOULDER, CO, USA, October 19, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [International Institute for Astronautical Sciences \(IIAS\)](https://www.einpresswire.com/) bioastronautics researcher and payload specialist Kellie Gerardi will represent the Institute on the 'Galactic 05' research spaceflight with [Virgin Galactic](https://www.virgin.com/), with a flight window opening November 2, 2023.

In 2021, IIAS announced Kellie as the world's first industry-sponsored researcher contracted to fly on a commercial spacecraft. Her role as payload specialist on the upcoming Galactic 05 research spaceflight will advance the scientific knowledge gained from a number of previous IIAS reduced gravity flight campaigns performed here on Earth, including with the National Research Council of Canada and the Canadian Space Agency.

During the spaceflight, Kellie will operate three payload experiments focused on fluid dynamics, human biometrics, and glucose monitoring.

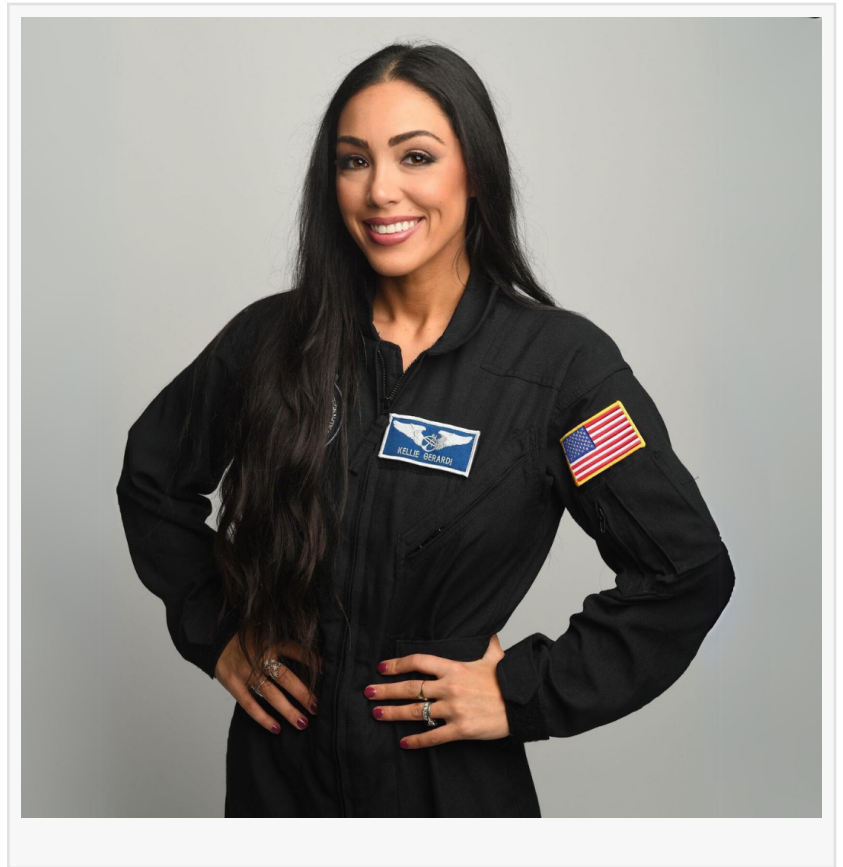
Kellie will also be evaluating the researcher experience itself in order to improve science and operational protocols for future IIAS-sponsored research spaceflights and training programs. Virgin Galactic and IIAS have collaborated closely on payload integration and in-flight choreography to maximize the science and technology advancements that will be gained from the research conducted on the Galactic 05 mission. IIAS researchers Yvette Gonzalez, Dr. Aaron Persad, and Dr. Shawna Pandya will join Kellie on-site at Spaceport America for payload integration support and post-flight data analysis.



“IIAS has long been dedicated to producing professionals who enable an inclusive spacefaring future led by research of global benefit,” said IIAS Executive Director Dr. Jason Reimuller. “Throughout her work with IIAS, Kellie has consistently demonstrated an exceptional ability to further novel research in dynamic, operational environments and we are proud to celebrate the milestone of our first research spaceflight together with Virgin Galactic.”

Kellie Gerardi said, “It’s the honor of a lifetime to represent our community on Galactic 05. Flying to space as a payload specialist is the culmination of a lifelong dream, but it’s also the

beginning of a new, bigger dream-- enabling the same opportunity for my many talented colleagues who will follow, using space as a laboratory to benefit humanity.”



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IIAS Researcher Kellie Gerardi

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