

National Aeronautics and Space Administration

**Mary W. Jackson Building NASA Headquarters**  
Washington, DC 20546-0001



December 22, 2021

Reply to Attn of: General Law Practice Group

**TO:** Distribution

**FROM:** Alternate Designated Agency Ethics Official

**SUBJECT:** Determination Regarding Attendance by NASA employees at the Reception and Dinner Related to the James Webb Space Telescope (JWST) Launch in Kourou, French Guiana, on or about December 24, 2021

Representatives from NASA have been invited to attend a series of events in conjunction with the launch of the James Webb Space Telescope (JWST) Launch in Kourou, French Guiana. The JWST is intended to enable representatives from the space industry, space users, space policy makers, students, young professionals, researchers and academicians to meet and exchange experiences, ideas and views pertaining to NASA's policies and operations, and to develop world-wide cooperation programs. Arianespace, Inc, a registered lobbying organization, and the European Space Agency (ESA), an international organization based in Paris, France that is a governmental authority for purposes of the Foreign Gifts and Decorations Act, are in control of the planning, organizing, and hosting the following events on launch day, currently anticipated to be on or around December 25, 2021:

1. **The launch delay Brunch:** The ESA will host a brunch at the launch site in Kourou, French Guiana at 5:30 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. Approximately 120 people are expected to attend, including from the U.S. legislative branch, international partner governments, industrial partners, and other dignitaries in the space exploration community. The breakfast will include food and beverages valued at approximately \$79 per person.
2. **Post-Launch Dinner Reception:** The ESA will host a dinner reception at the launch site in Kourou, French Guiana at 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. Approximately 120 people are expected to attend the dinner. Expected attendees include individuals from the U.S. legislative branch, international partner governments, industrial partners, and other dignitaries in the space exploration community. The dinner reception will include food and beverages valued at approximately \$113 per person.

In accordance with 5 C.F.R. § 2635.204(g), and 14 C.F.R. § 1207.103, I find that the events listed above meet the definition of a "widely attended gathering." I further find that there is an agency interest in having NASA employees attend the events, as they will have the opportunity to further agency programs and operations through the exchange of views and

information with other attendees. Accordingly, NASA employees who have been invited to attend may accept free attendance.

However, NASA employees who are in non-career positions for which they are required to sign an ethics pledge under Executive Order 13989 may only attend these events if they reimburse the hosts the value of the events they attend.<sup>1</sup>

NASA employees who have a significant role in any pending matter affecting the host of an event in this determination, such as procurement duties, program management, or negotiating or administering a Space Act Agreement, should seek a separate determination from their local ethics counselor as to whether they may accept an invitation of free attendance.

Attendees are reminded to exercise any COVID-19 precautions appropriate to their individual situation.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. Greenstone', written in a cursive style.

Adam F. Greenstone

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<sup>1</sup> Regardless, NASA employees including employees subject to the ethics pledge may accept free attendance at both launch events without reimbursing the hosts if they are speaking at either event.