

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



September 25, 2026

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 25th Annual Space Oktoberfest on September 29, 2026

On September 29, 2026, the German Space Agency at DLR (German Aerospace Center) and Arianespace SA, an international commercial space transportation company will co-host its 25th Annual Space Oktoberfest at the Dacha Navy Yard, 79 Potomac Ave. SE, Washington, DC, from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. The purpose of the reception-style event is to bring together members of the international space industry community in the Washington, DC area for an informal professional networking gathering, relationship-building opportunity.

Approximately 400 people have been invited to attend. Attendees will have a diversity of views or interests and will include Congressional representatives and staffers, academia, industry representatives, international organizations and foreign space agencies, trade associations, other Federal Agencies, and media. Guests of attendees are invited. The estimated cost of the event, including all food and beverages, is \$50 per person.

The hosts are in control of the organizing and planning for this event. Attendance at this event will allow NASA attendees to exchange information regarding various NASA programs. I find that the event meets the requirements of a "widely attended gathering" as defined in 5 C.F.R. § 2635.204(g)(2).

I further determine that there is an Agency interest in having NASA personnel attend the event because it will provide an opportunity for the invited persons to exchange ideas and views pertaining to NASA's policies, programs and operations. NASA employees, who do not have a significant role in a matter affecting the interests of the hosts may accept an invitation for free attendance for themselves and a guest to the event. In those circumstances, I find that the Agency's interest in attendance outweighs any concern that the individual may be, or may appear to be, improperly influenced in the performance of their duties.

However, NASA employees who have a significant role in any pending matter affecting the interests of the hosts, 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 the invitation.

KATHLEEN SPEAR

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Kathleen T. Spear