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**ART
IN
SPACE**

**OK
GO SANDBOX**

Rock band OK Go launches contest for student art that will be sent into space

Students from around the world can submit imaginative ideas for art experiments that will be launched on the Blue Origin New Shepard spacecraft

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 5, 2019 – Grammy award-winning rock band [OK Go](#) is inviting students around the world, ages 11-18, to submit ideas for art experiments that will take place in space aboard the [Blue Origin New Shepard](#) launch vehicle. OK Go is hosting the “Art in Space” contest in partnership with the [Playful Learning Lab](#) at the University of St. Thomas, and sponsor [Cognizant Technology Solutions](#).

OK Go is known for its audaciously experimental music videos, including [Upside Down and Inside Out](#), in which the band members choreographed an entire performance while floating in microgravity in a plane. Now, the band wants to help middle through high school students see their ideas come to life by sending student art projects up in an actual spacecraft.

“Creativity is really the joy of experimentation. When we made our video in microgravity, we were just experimenting - pushing our ideas and our understanding further and further through trial and error and play,” said OK Go lead singer Damian Kulash. “We’ve made music videos by

performing all sorts of art experiments that overlap with math, and science, and engineering. Now we want students to dream up their own experiments, and we will help them get their art in space.”

Teams of students - even entire classes - are eligible to submit ideas for experiments. Submissions do not have to be fully engineered projects - just ideas that can be turned into space-worthy experiments with the help of OK Go’s expert partners. Previously, such experts have helped OK Go do everything from creating a [4-minute Rube Goldberg machine](#), to [stretching a 4.2-second chain reaction into a 4-minute song](#), and recording [an entire music video](#) in zero gravity.

In May, entries will be judged on a number of criteria, with two ideas being chosen by a team of judges including OK Go band members, engineers from the University of St. Thomas Playful Learning Lab, and aerospace experts. The winning teams will work in collaboration with Playful Learning Lab engineers to develop their art projects and prepare to send them as a payload on a Blue Origin spacecraft. Blue Origin’s New Shepard is a reusable spacecraft designed to take payloads -- and soon people -- into suborbital space.

The contest is a project of the [OK Go Sandbox](#), a nonprofit venture that helps teachers use OK Go videos in the classroom. Founded in 2018, OK Go Sandbox showcases new videos, challenges, and activities, based on the band’s music videos. Led by Damian Kulash, OK Go’s lead singer, and Dr. AnnMarie Thomas, director of the University of St. Thomas Playful Learning Lab, OK Go Sandbox has worked closely with educators from around the world to develop new ways to help kids experience the joy and wonder of learning.

“This is about bringing STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, Math) concepts to life for students and inspiring engineers, mathematicians, makers, scientists, artists, thinkers and more,” said Thomas. “This contest will give students a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to see their ideas floating in space.”

Cognizant, the sponsor of “Art in Space,” is one of the world’s largest technology companies, and committed to promoting creativity and inspiring interest in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) among students from grade school through high school, as well as a broader mission to promote skills that help ensure a competitive American workforce. The company provides grants through its Making the Future education initiative for young learners, and supports technology skills education and training for adults through various corporate partnerships, and programs made possible through the [Cognizant U.S. Foundation](#).

“Cognizant helps our clients across industries - including healthcare, life sciences, banking, retail, energy and technology - solve some of the world’s most complex challenges, and we will look to the next generation of creative thinkers to further our work,” said Jim Lennox, Cognizant’s Chief People Officer. “The resources provided by OK Go and Playful Learning Lab

to help teachers inspire students is so important. We look forward to seeing how young minds around the world respond to the 'Art in Space' challenge."

The rules of the contest are:

- Teams must include three or more students between the ages of 11 and 18, along with one adult mentor.
- Submissions must include a 500-word essay and pictures or videos of the concept.
- Submissions must be from students, but teachers and parents can help.
- Be creative, but ideas have to be technically feasible to build in real life.
- The deadline for the contest is May 6, 2019, at 11:59 p.m. CDT.

For details and to apply, visit okgosandbox.org/artinspace.

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OK Go

OK Go has built a unique career at the intersection of music, visual art, technology, and science, emerging at the forefront of a class of artists whose 21st-century brand of experimental creativity dissolves the traditional boundaries between disciplines. OK Go have collaborated with dance companies and tech giants, cosmonauts and Muppets, scientists and entrepreneurs. Their videos have been encoded on strands of actual DNA. They've penned New York Times op-eds and testified before the US Congress, and they were President Obama's selection to perform at his 50th birthday party. OK Go received the 2016 Smithsonian American Ingenuity Award for Visual Art, and they've been honored with a Grammy, three MTV Video Music Awards, eighteen Cannes Lions International Festival of Creativity awards, six CLIO awards, three UK Music Video Awards, two Webby Awards, and have had their work presented at The Guggenheim, MoCA, LACMA, The Hirschhorn, The Hammer Museum, and Seattle's Museum of Pop Culture.

Cognizant

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Blue Origin

For more information about Blue Origin, you can visit their website at www.blueorigin.com or email them at media@blueorigin.com.

University of St. Thomas

Located in the Twin Cities of Minnesota, the University of St. Thomas is a private, liberal arts university that emphasizes values-based education and career preparation. With approximately 10,000 students, it is Minnesota's largest private, nonprofit college or university. Inspired by Catholic intellectual tradition, the University of St. Thomas educates students to be morally responsible leaders who think critically, act wisely and work skillfully to advance the common good. The university has three campuses: St. Paul, Minneapolis and Rome, Italy.