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Learn More About the 2022 Breakthrough Discuss Conference

Our Friends · Tuesday, September 6th, 2022

Breakthrough Discuss is an annual conference that is designed to be a place for those involved in space exploration and astrobiological programs to meet and discuss programs and topics that are key to their community. This annual conference, which took place this year on June 22 and June 23, 2022, at UC Santa Cruz in Santa Cruz, California, is part of a program that was created by Yuri Miler. [Yuri Milner is known for writing the “Eureka Manifesto”](#) and helping to create the Breakthrough Initiatives as part of his Giving Pledge. This year’s conference was titled: “Watch This Space! Innovations for a Low-Cost Future.” Read on to learn more about the three segments of the conference.

A Bigger Bang for Your Buck

At the 2022 Breakthrough Discuss, A Bigger Bang for Your Buck was the very first topic that was discussed. Some of the presenters that spoke during this segment included Shirley Ho, Maura McLaughlin, Suzanne Staggs, Ritoban Basu Thakur, and Andrea Gallo Rooss. The focus for this segment was on what changes could be made to space exploration to help scientists and explorers get more bang for their buck. Space travel and exploration are not inexpensive, and unfortunately, that high cost inhibits further exploration. By coming together and discussing some of the key ways that costs could be cut or saved, the group hoped to make space travel and exploration slightly more affordable.

Low-Mass Transit

At the 2022 Breakthrough Discuss, the second topic that was discussed was called Low-Mass Transit. Some of the speakers for this segment included Mahmooda Sultana, Francis Nimmo, Tom Pike, Konstantin Batygin, and Sarah Gibson. The focus for this segment also had a tie-in to the first segment in those cheaper ways to explore space were again discussed. However, unlike the first segment, the segment had a key focus on light, fast and cheap ways to explore the solar system. Many of the spacecraft that explore space are heavy and take years or decades to reach their targeted destination. Finding ways to make spacecraft lighter and faster, may make it easier to explore new regions of space, which, ultimately, can help everyone learn more about the world around them.

New Outlooks on Life

At the 2022 Breakthrough Discuss, the final topic that was discussed was called New Outlooks on Life. Some of the key speakers for this section included Chenoa Tremblay, Jason Wright, James

Davenport, Noemie Glubus, David Deamer, and Cherry NG. The focus of this segment revolved around different ways to detect life outside of Earth and whether those lifeforms may be intelligent. A lot of this discussion involved biosignatures and how those biosignatures may be used to help identify life in the solar system and cosmos. Trying to determine if there may be life outside of Earth has long been a topic that many scientists and explorers have been keen on learning. [Yuri Milner](#) touches on it in his “Eureka Manifesto” and why learning about potential new lifeforms may be so important to our survival in the centuries to come.

Yuri Milner, the writer of the “Eureka Manifesto,” creator of the Breakthrough Initiatives, and a [participant in the Giving Pledge](#), has a vision, of which the Breakthrough Discuss conference is one element. He hopes that as more of these conferences take place, scientists can come together, share ideas and resources, and ultimately, further explore space. Further space exploration will help us all learn more about Earth, as well as the Universe beyond it.

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This entry was posted on Tuesday, September 6th, 2022 at 12:16 am and is filed under [Check This Out](#)

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