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Communities
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AURP Announces Formation of Air and Space Caucus Launching Communities of Innovation

Tucson, AZ and College Park, MD, August 24, 2022 – AURP today announces the formation of the AURP Air and Space Caucus, expanding its organization scope to include communities of innovation in air and space technologies.

AURP, the leading North American innovation association, already represents research institutions and innovation districts, including those focused on air and space technologies, such as Embry Riddle University Research Park, FL; National Aviation and Technology Park of New Jersey, NJ; Aero Park Innovation District, MD; plus research parks with significant air and space components including: Purdue Research Park, IN; Oklahoma City Innovation District, OK; Wichita State University Research Park, KS; University of Maryland (UMD) Discovery District, MD, Cummings Research Park, AL.

AURP also announce the naming of these influential Caucus Chairs: **Erin Koshut**, Executive Director of Cummings Research Park (Huntsville, AL) and AURP Vice President; **Christine Kretz**, Vice President of Programs and Partnerships, Center for Advancement of Science in Space (CASIS), which manages the International Space Station National Laboratory for NASA; and **Matt Scassero**, Director for Research, Innovation and Outreach, UMD's Clark School of Engineering at University System of Maryland at Southern Maryland (USMSM).

CASIS and the International Space Station National Laboratory became the world's first orbiting research park when it joined AURP in 2021. At its 2021 International Conference at the University of Utah Research Park, AURP hosted an event on *How Aerospace and Space Technologies are Building Communities of Innovation on the Ground* featuring: Falcon Hill National Aerospace Research Park, UT; speakers from NASA, CASIS, Northrup Grumman and BAE; and space business roundtables and associations from Arizona, Maryland, New Mexico and Alabama.

Earlier this year, at AURP's annual BIO Health Caucus, AURP hosted a panel of leading private space firms advancing biotechnology in low earth orbit, including Sierra Space, Space Tango and Axiom Space.

"Both air and space sectors are growing in the U.S.," said Brian Darmody, AURP Chief Strategy Officer. "The Space Foundation estimates the size of the space industry at \$447 billion in 2022. The FAA predicts the direct impact of the aviation industry is \$850 billion. U.S. organizations are

seeking to leverage this growth with the likes of Boom Technology’s supersonic manufacturing facility at Piedmont Triad Airport (NC) and Axiom Space’s new headquarters at Houston Spaceport (TX).”

“Last month’s passage of the federal CHIPS + Science Act provides billions of dollars for funding of technology hubs, including air and space clusters, that will create new public/private place-based partnerships across the country,” said Erin Koshut, Executive Director, Cummings Research Park and AURP Vice President. “The AURP Air and Space Caucus will work with state aviation and space business councils and associations, research universities and national groups such as the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and Space Foundation to advance national and regional networks and public policies supporting communities of air and space innovation.”

The [AURP 2022 International Conference](#), September 19-22 in Toronto, will feature a panel on space research, technology and manufacturing in low-earth orbit, including the International Space Station and [Redwire](#) on September 21. For more information visit: <https://international.aurp.net/>

The AURP Air and Space Caucus will commence in Fall 2022 in conjunction with the AURP Annual Conference. Institutions or businesses planning, building or managing air or space communities are encouraged to join AURP, plus partner with AURP by contacting AURP Chief Strategy Officer, Brian Darmody at briandarmody@aurp.net.



Figure 3 – Current and Proposed U.S. Spaceports

About AURP:

AURP, a not-for-profit international association, with headquarters in Tucson, AZ at the University of Arizona Tech Park and offices in the Washington, DC area at the University of Maryland Discovery District, focuses on creating communities of innovation and education for research parks both operating and planned, plus innovation districts, incubators, accelerators, and the businesses that support this research-based network. AURP and its global membership promote research, institute-industry relations, and innovation districts to foster innovation and facilitate the transfer of technology from such institutions to the private sector. Learn more: www.aurp.net

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Background on AURP’s Air and Space Caucus:

- [How Regions Can Leverage Space Technologies on the Ground: Site Selection Magazine, June 2022](#)
- [Launching an Advanced Manufacturing Institute in SPACE \(Space Promoting Advanced Competitive Engineering\): ITIF](#)
- [International Space Station and CASIS Joins AURP as First Orbiting Research Park](#)