

Wales' first satellite set to blast off as part of UK's first rocket launch

Wales' first satellite will launch this evening as part of the first orbital rocket launch from British soil – marking the start of the UK's space race. ForgeStar-0 is the first satellite designed and built in Wales which was created by Cardiff startup [Space Forge](#).

The Welsh satellite will be [one of a small number of shoe-box sized satellites](#) due to be blasted into space from Cornwall Airport in Newquay. The launch will take place today (Monday January 9) after 10pm.

The initial window opening at 10.16pm, with additional back-up dates continuing into mid and late January.

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The mission involves a modified [Boeing 747 – called Cosmic Girl – from Richard Branson's company Virgin Orbit](#). The small satellites will be carried on Virgin Orbit's Launcher One rocket which will be attached to the 747's wing.

The rocket will be released at around 35,000 feet for onward flight into space, carrying the satellites into Low Earth orbit. It is a huge development for the UK and for Cornwall which has been building a space cluster of tech firms and organisations around this launch.

Space Forge's ForgeStar-0 satellite is a fully returnable and reusable platform to enable in-space manufacturing. It will test the process of using satellites to manufacture high-value materials and components in space that are much more difficult to make on Earth.

Following this initial mission, Space Forge has said it will focus on producing material and products – reducing the environmental impact of production on earth to unlock new value and innovation.

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Manufacturing these materials in space could reduce CO2 emissions by 75% in high-value infrastructure, such as EV charging stations and cloud computing data centres.

Co-founder of Space Forge Andrew Bacon said: “ForgeStar-0 is the dress rehearsal for a new class of satellites that can both survive launch and re-entry without leaving any debris behind. This opens up new possibilities to the advanced materials community to make use of ultra-perfect conditions space provides to challenge the way some of our most polluting industries are run. I am brimming with pride for our team who stepped up to build this satellite in record time and we are eagerly awaiting the lessons that it can teach us about how our technology performs in space before our first fully functional space factory is launched next year.”

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