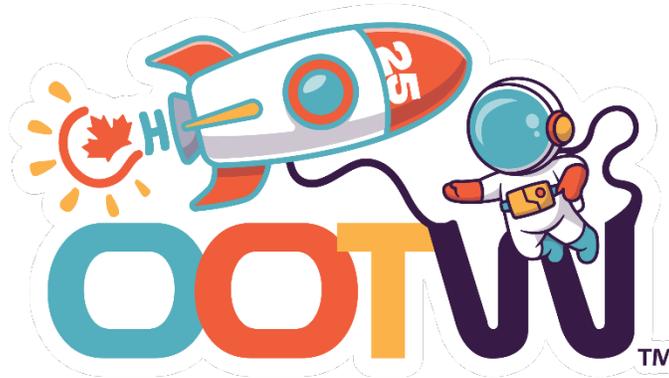




# Press Release

For immediate release



## Marking 25 Years since the First Canadian Walked in Space with National Education Initiative Led by CanHist and McMaster Children & Youth University (MCYU)

*Hamilton, Ontario & Dufferin County, Ontario – February 19, 2026*

McMaster Children & Youth University (MCYU), with the support of the McMaster University Office of Community Engagement (Office of the Vice-Provost, Teaching and Learning), has partnered with Canadian Historical Education Services Ltd. (CanHist.ca) to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the first spacewalk by a Canadian — Col. Chris Hadfield’s April 2001 Mission STS-100 — a defining moment in Canada’s history and international collaboration.

The partnership will deliver Out of This World 25 (OOTW25), a two-year national project launching April 1, 2026, funded jointly by the federal Ministry of Identity and Culture, CanHist.ca, and McMaster University as core project partners.

Set against the backdrop of NASA’s upcoming Artemis II mission, which will see Canadian astronaut Commander Jeremy Hansen travel around the Moon in 2026, the initiative

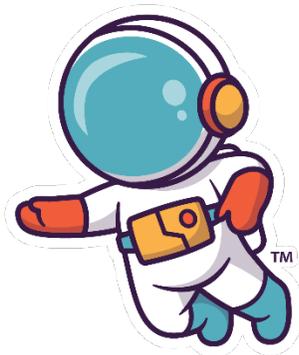
connects Canada's historic first spacewalk to the country's next chapter in deep-space exploration. By linking Artemis II back to STS-100, OOTW25 highlights 25 years of Canadian leadership in science, research, technology, and international cooperation.

At its heart, OOTW25 is about science communication — how Canadians teach, understand, and talk with one another about science. At a time when scientific literacy has never been more important, the project focuses on sharing Canada's science history in clear, engaging, and accessible ways for young people and families.



*Left to Right: Rebecca Young, Dr. Kim Dej (Vice Provost, Teaching and Learning, McMaster), Dr. Sandeep Raha, Dr. Rebecca Collins-Nelsen, Neil Orford.*

Drawing on MCYU's expertise in hybrid and experiential learning and CanHist's strength in storytelling and historical interpretation, the initiative positions MCYU as one of Canada's leading learning hubs for science communication while expanding CanHist's national education programming.



### Through this collaboration, OOTW25 will deliver:

- Interactive learning experiences for Hamilton-area schools and communities
- Free digital programming and curriculum-connected resources for educators and families across Canada
- Hands-on activities and storytelling that connect history, geography, and science
- Opportunities for students to engage with Canadian leaders in space exploration, aerospace engineering, and research
- National partnerships that bring Canada's space story into classrooms coast to coast

Joining the partnership are multiple private, academic, research, and public institutions, including the Canadian Space Agency (CSA), Esri Canada, the Canadian Science & Technology Historical Association (CSTHA), and Canadian History Ehx.

*“We are proud to support CanHist.ca’s Out of This World 25 project, which connects Canada’s space history with the next generation of learners. By contributing Esri’s GIS technology and hands-on expertise, we’re helping create curriculum-connected K–12 learning resources that bring storytelling, geography, and science together in meaningful ways for classrooms across Canada.”*

— Susie Saliola, Program Manager, K–12, Esri Canada



*Left to Right: Dr. Sandeep Raha, Rebecca Young, Dr. Kim Dej (Vice Provost, Teaching and Learning, McMaster), Dr. Rebecca Collins-Nelsen, Neil Orford.*

*“MCYU is thrilled to partner with CanHist for OOTW25 - an initiative that connects curiosity, innovation, and international collaboration. With a mission to Question, Discover, Create, MCYU encourages young Canadians to ask big questions, using the best evidence to understand how science shapes our universe. OOTW25 will inspire young learners to create new ideas about Canada’s future in space exploration.”*

*— Dr. Sandeep Raha, McMaster Children & Youth University (MCYU)*

*“I would like to take this opportunity to wish you and the members of your organization the greatest success in commemorating Out of This World 25.”*

*— Marc Miller, Federal Minister of Canadian Identity and Culture*

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## About CanHist

Based in Dufferin County, CanHist believes history isn't just found in textbooks — it's something we experience, share, and carry forward. Through tours, learning programs, and national projects, CanHist brings Canada's stories to life in engaging, meaningful ways. *We do history differently.*

## About McMaster Children & Youth University (MCYU)

MCYU creates innovative, accessible learning experiences that connect young people with university researchers, educators, and real-world discovery. Through hybrid and experiential programming, MCYU supports science communication and serves as one of Canada's leading hubs for youth learning and engagement.

## For more information:

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