

SPACE DAY

Keynote Speaker

Ashwin Vasavada, PhD



Planetary Scientist, NASA Jet propulsion Lab

Dr. Ashwin Vasavada, is the Deputy Project Scientist working on the mission of the Mars Curiosity rover. He helps lead an international team of over 400 scientists.

With a B.S. in Geophysics and Space Physics from University of California, Los Angeles and a Ph.D. in Planetary Science, California Institute of Technology, Dr. Vasavada is now in the midst of what could potentially upend our definitions of life.

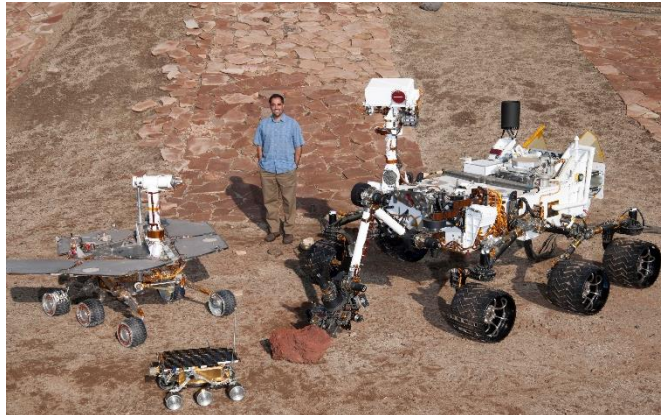
"I've been fascinated by the planets since I was a child," he says. "I would often stare at pictures of Mars and Jupiter taken by early robotic spacecraft, and be amazed that these probes took pictures of landscapes that no human had ever seen."



Dr. Vasavada is an eminent speaker and authority on the technology and robotics involved in the Curiosity rover

Research Interests

- Geologic studies of Mars with regard to surface properties, volatiles, and climate history
- Atmospheric dynamics, vertical structure, lightning, and aurora on Jupiter and Saturn
- Stability and distribution of polar volatiles on Mercury and the Moon



"Mars is not just a destination but rather our destiny in terms of human exploration and settlement off Earth."