



PRESS RELEASE

26th November 2015

One Giant Read Website Takes off!

An exciting new reading initiative goes live on Tuesday 1st December 2015. As British European Space Agency astronaut Tim Peake's Principia Mission prepares for launch in December, a new reading initiative – One Giant Read – will become a reality here on Earth.

Created by charity Literature Works, in partnership with the RNIB and the UK Space Agency, and supported by Gollancz, The Poetry Archive and the Plymouth Literature Project at Plymouth University, the project offers easy to access reading materials and content themed to the Principia Mission and Tim Peake's stay on the International Space Station.

The site brings film, audio books and recordings of writing, poetry and scientific commentary in order to be as accessible to as many readers as possible. With only 7% of all readable materials in formats accessible for blind people, the One Giant Read project is working with the RNIB to develop materials which will be as accessible as possible to their members and the initiative aims to raise funds to enable Literature Works and RNIB to develop more reading and writing initiatives, with 40p of every £1 donated going directly to RNIB to support their work. For every month Tim circles the Earth, the One Giant Read website offers a series of themed writing and reading challenges showcasing the very best of science fiction writers and exploring the influence science fiction has had on science fact.

The first of month is called 'Arrival' and will discuss the 'Overview effect': the moment when Tim will see Earth from a distance for the first time – stirring strong feelings of the fragility of our planet. To compliment this, our first month starts with an audio clip of the novel *Blue Remembered Earth* by contemporary British science fiction author Alastair Reynolds, including audio book extracts donated by Gollancz. The Poetry Archive brings us 'Mouse's Nest' a beautiful poem the 19th century English poet John Clare, recorded by poet Paul Farley and Biological Scientist Professor Camille Parmesan of Plymouth University will be commenting on climate change with our profile focussing on the Scottish science fiction author Iain M. Banks alongside book reviews, films and more sci-fi news.

January moves on to the theme of 'Gravity' – including an excerpt from the prolific science fiction writer H. G. Wells' *First Men in the Moon* and poetry by critically acclaimed poet Simon Barraclough. During the following months we also have poetry by Sir Andrew Motion, poems from The Poetry Archive and scientific commentary designed to both enthuse and educate on topics from space to robotics, navigation to life on other planets.

Every month the site will publish the best book reviews and 'flash fiction' short stories of up to 500 words from our audience, with each entry having the chance to win a highly prized official 'Principia Mission' patch, as worn by Tim Peake, and a free copy of one of the books showcased on the website.

Tracey Guiry, CEO of Literature Works says: *“Science fiction is one of the most widely read and popular genres in the UK, and many ideas dreamt up by writers and poets in the past have now become science fact. The One Giant Read brings accessible examples of the best audio books, poems and videos from scientists to get readers excited about the arts and science, and our One Giant Write competition challenges writers to use the next seven months to complete and enter their unpublished novels.”*

Jeremy Curtis, Head of Education at the UK Space Agency, says: *“We are thrilled that Tim’s mission will inspire such a great project that will recognise and encourage the imagination and creativity needed to continue our exploration of space. This exciting project will use literature to bring the latest science and engineering to new audiences.”*

Gollancz Commissioning Editor, Marcus Gipps, said: *“We’re thrilled to be involved with One Giant Read. The best of science fiction builds on the world we live in, and Tim Peake’s forthcoming stay on the International Space Station reminds us that we can already achieve remarkable things. Audio versions of our books are hugely popular already, and both Gollancz and our authors are delighted to be supporting an initiative to increase the resources available for people with sight loss.”*

Professor Kevin Jones, Executive Dean in the Faculty of Science and Engineering at Plymouth University, said: *“Space exploration is one of the greatest scientific achievements of our time, and consistently inspires people to think beyond the boundaries of what might be possible. I hope the One Giant Read project can capture that spirit, using a combination of science fact and fiction to educate audiences about the impact science and the arts can have on their daily lives. It provides a unique opportunity for us to use our world-leading expertise to enthuse people about the STEM subjects.”*

You can support our Space Adventure by texting READ71 followed by 1 to donate £1 to 70070 or donating through the One Giant Read website www.onegiantread.org.

Please follow @OneGiantRead on Twitter to keep up-to-date with the latest project news.

ENDS

Notes to Editors

For more information about this news release, contact Literature Works CEO Tracey Guiry on 01752 585073 via info@literatureworks.org.uk or visit www.literatureworks.org.uk.

The Principia Mission’s One Giant Read is one of nine projects to be awarded funding by the UK Space Agency as part of a scheme to support educational outreach associated with Tim Peake’s mission. For more about the Principia Mission, visit <https://principia.org.uk/> and <https://www.esa.int/principia>.

Literature Works is a development agency for writers and readers and an Arts Council national portfolio organisation based in Exeter and Plymouth. They bring together all elements of the literature sector, writers, poets, libraries, booksellers, publishers, agents, schools and communities of readers in ways that strengthen and sustain the whole sector. They enable the best writing talent to develop and ensure that the very best writing and reading opportunities are made available to the widest and most diverse audiences and

communities. They provide information, news and resources via their website, Twitter and Facebook and provide resources and opportunities for writers to earn their living.

Literature Works is very grateful to Gollancz, RNIB and Plymouth University for their support of this project. One Giant Read is supported through the Plymouth Literature Project, led by Literature Works and Plymouth University. For more details of the PLP, visit <https://www.plymouth.ac.uk/campaign/literature>

UK Space Agency

The UK Space Agency is at the heart of UK efforts to explore and benefit from space. It is responsible for all strategic decisions on the UK civil space programme and provides a clear, single voice for UK space ambitions.

The Agency is responsible for ensuring that the UK retains and grows a strategic capability in the space-based systems, technologies, science and applications. It leads the UK's civil space programme in order to win sustainable economic growth, secure new scientific knowledge and provide benefits to all citizens.

The UK Space Agency:

- co-ordinates UK civil space activity
- encourages academic research
- supports the UK space industry
- raises the profile of UK space activities at home and abroad
- increases understanding of space science and its practical benefits
- inspires our next generation of UK scientists and engineers
- licences the launch and operation of UK spacecraft
- promotes co-operation and participation in the European Space programme

The European Space Agency (ESA)

The ESA provides Europe's gateway to space. ESA is an intergovernmental organisation, created in 1975, with the mission to shape the development of Europe's space capability and ensure that investment in space delivers benefits to the citizens of Europe and the world.

ESA has 21 Member States: Austria, Belgium, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom, of whom 19 are Member States of the EU.

One other Member State of the EU, Hungary, has signed the Accession Agreement to the ESA Convention and, upon ratification, will soon become the 22nd ESA Member State.

ESA has established formal cooperation with seven other Member States of the EU.

Canada takes part in some ESA programmes under a Cooperation Agreement.

ESA is also working with the EU on implementing the Galileo and Copernicus programmes.

By coordinating the financial and intellectual resources of its members, ESA can undertake programmes and activities far beyond the scope of any single European country.

ESA develops the launchers, spacecraft and ground facilities needed to keep Europe at the forefront of global space activities.

Today, it develops and launches satellites for Earth observation, navigation, telecommunications and astronomy, sends probes to the far reaches of the Solar System and cooperates in the human exploration of space.

Learn more about ESA at www.esa.int

About Plymouth University

Founded in 1862 as a school of navigation and now the 15th largest university in the UK, Plymouth is one of the leading modern universities, ranked in the top four institutions in the country and 37th internationally under the age of 50 by the Times Higher Education. Twice awarded the Queen's Anniversary Prize for Higher Education, it has won numerous accolades in respect of its teaching and its research.

The University has one of the highest number of National Teaching Fellows of any UK university (20 National Teaching Fellowships in Higher Education since 2000), is ranked 19th in the UK and in the top 100 globally for research quality (2015 CWTS Leiden Rankings), with two-thirds of its research ranked as world-leading or internationally excellent (2014 Research Excellence Framework). It was also the first university in the world to receive the Social Enterprise Mark.

Its 27,000 students, which include those at its partner colleges across the South West, are enrolled on courses from farming to fine art, business to biology, and design to dentistry. The University has invested more than £150 million in its campus and is the first modern university to have launched a medical school. The University plays a key role within the South West region's economy and through its £100 million network of support facilities and services, is growing and supporting hundreds of businesses across the region and beyond. To find out how Plymouth is making a difference, please visit www.plymouth.ac.uk

