

MEDIA RELEASE

NEWS FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF TASMANIA

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ATTENTION: Chiefs of Staff, News Directors



Follow your Curiosity to a free public Mars lecture

The most sophisticated vehicle ever to be sent to Mars is almost ready to start exploring.

NASA's car-sized rover Curiosity is scheduled to land on the Red Planet next Monday (6 August 2012).

UTAS' Professor Paulo de Souza, who has instrumentation aboard the rover twins Spirit and Opportunity, will deliver a free public lecture on the mission tomorrow (**Thursday 2 August 2012**).

Prof de Souza will share some insightful details and guide the audience through the history of the exploration of the Red Planet.

"The Curiosity landing is the most difficult NASA mission ever attempted in the history of robotic planetary exploration.

"Curiosity will be investigating whether Mars has ever offered an environment favourable for microbial life," Prof de Souza said.

"The rover will check for the basic chemical ingredients for life and for evidence about energy available for life."

It will use tools on a robotic arm to deliver samples from Martian rocks and soils into laboratory instruments inside the rover that can reveal in greater detail the Martian composition.

Prof de Souza will also discuss what we might expect to see in the next decade with this kind of exploration.

Who: Professor Paulo de Souza, Honorary Associate and Professor of Sensor Informatics, UTAS

What: The landing of NASA's Curiosity Rover (free public lecture)

When: Thursday 2 August 2012, 6-7.30pm

Where: Centenary Lecture Theatre, Grosvenor Crescent, UTAS Sandy Bay campus

RSVP: UTAS.Events@utas.edu.au or phone (03) 6226 2521

About Professor Paulo de Souza: He is an internationally recognised and awarded researcher and research manager in fields of geochemistry and ICT, including field robotics, sensor informatics, sensor networks, pattern recognition, and knowledge discovery, with 17 years of experience in industrial research. He has more than 200 scientific publications, two patents and two books. For more than a decade he has been a Participating Scientist in NASA's Mars Exploration Rovers Project.

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