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Two Gaganyaan astronauts shortlisted, one to travel to International Space Station on NASA mission this year

The mission will take place “no earlier than October 2024,” according to the information available on NASA website.

Written by **Anonna Dutt**

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Soyuz spacecraft docked to the International Space Station (Image credit: NASA)

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has shortlisted two of its four trained Gaganyaan astronauts for a mission to the International Space Station (ISS) in collaboration with United States' NASA later this year, according to officials in the know of the matter. Only one of the shortlisted astronauts will go on the mission which is supposed to take place "no earlier than October 2024," according to the information available on NASA website.

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The astronauts will have to go to the United States ahead of the mission to train on the specifics of the ISS, said one of the officials quoted above.

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“While they have general training for space-fairing, much of their training in India focussed on Gaganyaan modules. They will have to be familiarised with ISS modules and protocols,” the official said.

The Axiom-4 mission, which will take the Indian astronauts to the ISS, is the fourth private astronaut mission of NASA and a private US company Axiom Space. The mission is expected to dock with the ISS for fourteen days. At the time when the Axiom-4 mission was announced last year, NASA in a release had said: “The Ax-4 crew members will train with NASA, international partners, and SpaceX for their flight. Axiom Space has contracted SpaceX as launch provider for transportation to and from the space station, and to familiarize the private astronauts with systems, procedures, and emergency preparedness for the Dragon spacecraft.”



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This has been in the works for a while. Last year, a joint statement by India and US during Prime Minister [Narendra Modi](#)'s visit to the US had said that NASA would provide advance training to Indian astronauts. Later the same year, NASA administrator Bill Nelson during his Delhi visit had said that the space agency will train an Indian astronaut for a mission to the International Space Station by 2024 end.



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India's own human spaceflight is unlikely to take place before 2025, with the first unmanned flight still to take off. The first flight carrying humans will be launched only after two successful unmanned flights.

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Anonna Dutt

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Anonna Dutt is a Principal Correspondent who writes primarily on health at the Indian Express. She reports on myriad topics ranging from the growing burden of non-cc [... Read More](#)

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