



Uwingu Launches Contest for the Public to Imagine A Name for The Nearest Known Earth-Sized Planet

First Planet Around Alpha Centauri: “Alpha Centauri Bb”

What name does the public want?

Uwingu Funding Space Research and Education via Contest

Embargoed Until 12 pm Eastern Time, 19 March 2013.

Boulder, Colorado—Space company Uwingu™ has launched a new public outreach project—a public contest to determine the worldwide public’s choice name for the nearest known planet around another star. Anyone can nominate a name; the contest ends April 15th.

The name getting the highest number of votes will be declared the public’s name for this mysterious new world. Never before has the public been asked to choose its favorite name for a planet. Anyone can nominate one or more names; anyone can vote.

Name nominations are \$4.99; votes cost \$0.99. Proceeds from naming and voting will help fuel new Uwingu grants to fund space exploration, research, and education. Uwingu was recently featured in Time Magazine, at <http://science.time.com/2013/03/07/name-your-own-exoplanet-for-4-99/>

The namer of the most popular name for alpha Centauri Bb will receive prizes from Uwingu and will be recognized in a press release about the winning name. Uwingu is also giving prizes for runner-ups, and for all names that reach thresholds of 100, 1,000, and 10,000 votes.

“Alpha Centauri Bb is a fine designation for us astronomers, but let’s face it—it’s a little boring. Let’s see what the people of planet Earth would want to name their nearest planetary cousin” says astronomer and Uwingu CEO Dr. Alan Stern. He added,

“This is a new way for the people of Earth, of every age, of every nation, of every walk of life to personally connect to space discoveries, and to help fund space research and education in the process.”

Leading planet discoverer, astronomer Dr. Geoff Marcy of the University of California at Berkeley added, "Now people all over the world can participate in these discoveries in a new way, giving identities and even personality to billions of planets in our galaxy for the first time. I'm excited, and hope you will be too. Try it and see, at www.uwingu.com“

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About Uwingu: Uwingu (which means “sky” in Swahili, and is pronounced “oo-wing-oo”) was formed by a team of leading astronomers, planetary scientists, former space program executives, and educators. The company includes space historian and author Andrew Chaikin, space educator Dr. Emily CoBabe-Ammann, citizen science leader Dr. Pamela Gay, author and former museum science director Dr. David Grinspoon, planet hunter Dr. Geoff Marcy, planetary scientist and aerospace executive Dr. Teresa Segura, planetary scientist and former NASA science boss Dr. Alan Stern, and planetary scientist and CEO of the Planetary Science Institute, Dr. Mark Sykes, former Executive Director of the Planetary Society Dr. Louis Friedman, and space artists Jon Lomberg and Dan Durda. In September, Uwingu successfully concluded one of the 25 largest Indiegogo crowd-funding campaigns ever to launch an ongoing series of public engagement projects. Visit Uwingu’s web site at www.uwingu.com to learn more.

For more information, contact Dr. Alan Stern at stern@uwingu.com, or at 970-281-SKY1. Follow Uwingu on Twitter at UwinguSky; and friend Uwingu on Facebook.