

Professor SUZIE IMBER

Space physicist, TV series winner, high-altitude mountaineer, elite athlete, global environmental leader, broadcaster and inspirational speaker

Suzie Imber achieved international recognition when she won the BBC2 TV series '*Astronauts: Do You Have What It Takes?*'. In the series, 12 candidates undertook astronaut training with astronaut Commander Chris Hadfield, facing a range of challenges including taking their own blood, speaking Russian while in a centrifuge at 5g, and carrying out emergency procedures on the NASA undersea astronaut training facility, Aquarius. Suzie received a letter of recommendation from Chris Hadfield to support her application to the European Space Agency astronaut training programme.

Her "day job" is as Professor of Planetary Science at the University of Leicester, where she specialises in studying space weather at the Earth and Mercury. She focusses on the interaction of planetary magnetic fields with the solar wind, and is a co-Investigator on *BepiColombo* spacecraft, due to arrive at Mercury in 2025. She is one of three authors of a Royal Society Futures publication looking at space exploration, in-orbit and off-planet manufacturing and resource exploitation, technology development, and scientific advancements due to be published shortly.

Her Inaugural Professorial Lecture (Leicester University:13 March 2024) was entitled "Adventures in Velocity Space".

Suzie dedicates much of her time to widening opportunities for disadvantaged young people to study science, running residential programmes and activities through the University, personally visiting hundreds of schools and tens of thousands of students and founding a scholarship programme.

Pre-covid, Suzie was selected for *Homeward Bound*, the global leadership programme to train 100 women to become the next generation of leaders in the fight against climate change. Culminating in a 3-week voyage to Antarctica in November 2023 the programme included leadership style and mentality, effective communication, building teams, personal and organisational strategy, mental health and wellbeing. *The voyage to Antarctica ignited a focus on research culture and effective leadership that Suzie is putting into practice in her professional and personal roles.*

With extensive experience of speaking at live stage events, including music and science festivals, Suzie has been invited to perform at "Space Shambles" at the Royal Albert Hall, London, alongside Professor Brian Cox, Robin Ince, astronaut Commander Chris Hadfield, and Apollo astronaut Rusty Schweickart.

Suzie has given main-stage speeches at leading science festivals, including BlueDot, Gravity Fields, Cheltenham, Farnborough Air Show, New Scientist Live, Latitude, AstroFest, SpaceRocks and the Virgin Galactic Space Festival.

Speaking topics

Suzie is most often booked as a keynote speaker for conferences and seminars in the UK, Europe, and the US,

She has chaired conference sessions and worked on event-organising committees.

One of her most-requested speeches describes her journey combining elite sport, space science, identifying and climbing unclimbed mountains, and training to be an astronaut. It is entertaining, inspirational and offers the audience the opportunity to reflect on their own sources of motivation and enthusiasm.

Enthusiastic, engaging, and with a detailed scientific CV and extensive experience, Suzie tailors each speech. Recent subjects include;

The future of the space industry and exploration of our solar system

Human spaceflight and the return to the moon

Climate change, effective leadership and research culture

Earth observation, and how we can use satellite data for humanitarian and societal good

High altitude mountaineering, writing computer code to identify mountains, and launching expeditions to achieve first ascents (risk, challenge, resilience, teamwork)

Suzie works with many organisations and schools focusing primarily on STEM accessibility, and opportunity for young people from all backgrounds. She regularly hosts school events, podcasts, and awards ceremonies.

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In Conversation with Tim Peake

Suzie was invited to host 'In Conversation With Tim Peake', for the launch of his 2020 autobiography. This 45-minute event was held in the Science Museum in London, live-streamed to an extensive audience world-wide, followed by a live Q&A. The Conversation and Q&A were short-listed for a media award.

TV and Radio experience

Completely at ease delivering material to camera, being interviewed, and interviewing others live on radio or TV, Suzie's TV and media work includes:

Astronauts: Do You Have What it Takes? BBC2 television competition series involving five weeks of filming, presented by Commander Chris Hadfield, Dr Kevin Fong, and Dr Iya Whitely.

The Sky at Night: Storms on Mercury (BBC4).

Secret Cities (Bigger Bang Productions).

BBC News and Sky news live television interviews about important international space matters.

Live radio interviews for regional, national, and international radio stations.

Many podcast appearances, as host, panellist, principal guest and interviewee.

Other things to know about Suzie Imber

England U21 lacrosse player, elite rower (sculling and sweep rowing), and high-altitude mountaineer.

As a high-altitude mountaineer, she climbed technical peaks in the Andes, Alaska, and the Himalayas. She wrote computer code to generate the first objective list of mountains in South America: in that way, she discovered hundreds of un-named mountains. She enjoys scaling these remote, unclimbed mountains, exploring new regions of our planet and she even discovered Incan ruins on the summits, proving that the Inca people were there a long time before.....

She advises organisations on their outreach and community engagement programmes, including Leicester City Football Club. She founded the Williams-Virgin Galactic scholarship programme in 2020 to support disadvantaged young people studying physics, providing mentoring and support throughout their studies.

She is currently a member of Edale Mountain Rescue, using her mountaineering skills to rescue casualties in inaccessible regions of the Peak District.

Caring passionately about environmental issues, and in particular the preservation of rare and endangered species, Suzie rescued an ancient English apple orchard, discovering and cultivating rare apple varieties.

She spent several years volunteering at a local Rescue Centre, caring for abandoned dogs.

Suzie's hobbies include running, rock climbing, rowing, road cycling, baking, and wushu Kung Fu (non-contact martial art). During covid lockdown, she learned carpentry, practised yoga, and cultivated a huge vegetable plot.

Academic Work Experience

Professor of Space Physics: University of Leicester	2017 – present
Visiting Professor, University of Michigan	2014 - present
Leverhulme Research Fellow and Lecturer: University of Leicester	2014-2017
Postdoctoral Research Scientist: University of Leicester	2011-2014
Research Scientist : NASA Goddard Space Flight Center, USA	2008-2011
PhD in Space Plasma Physics: University of Leicester:	2005-2008
MPhys, First Class Honours: Imperial College London	2001-2005

Honours and Awards

On 24 August 2021, Suzie was named as the recipient of the prestigious *Royal Society Rosalind Franklin Award and Lecture 2021*. The award is made to an individual for an outstanding contribution to any area of Science, Technology,

Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) and to support the promotion of women in STEM. Suzie was recognised for her achievements in the field of planetary science.

NASA Team Achievement Award for contributions to the Endeavour sounding rocket: 2023

NASA Science Team Achievement Award for contributions to Mercury science: 2018

Discovering Excellence President's Award for Outstanding Achievement (University of Leicester's highest honour): 2018

Sir Arthur Clarke Space Achievement Award (Media): The Arthur C. Clarke Foundation 2018. Joint award shared with the BBC's '*Astronauts: Do You Have What it Takes?*' production team.

PhD Thesis Prize: University of Leicester: 2008. This award is given for the highest quality PhD thesis within the College of Science and Engineering.

Publications

Suzie has authored 48 scientific papers in international peer-reviewed journals which have been cited over 1,000 times. Topics include planetary magnetospheres, the solar wind, the environment of Mercury, and mission/operations planning for the BepiColombo mission to Mercury, currently in the cruise phase, arriving in 2025.

Books Suzie has co-authored two books:

"A Dungey Cycle in the Life of Mercury's Magnetosphere" (2021)

"Mercury's Dynamic magnetosphere" (2018)

What clients say about Suzie Imber as a speaker and host:

"Best speaker ever. Better feedback about Suzie than when we had Hillary Clinton as our principal speaker!" **Global consulting firm : name and address supplied London**

"Feedback from both your sessions has been phenomenal – really appreciate it. An absolute pleasure to meet you and hear your story!" **Microsoft USA**

*"I'm looking at the feedback from our NEUPC Procurement Conference. Your feedback is exceptionally good – better than Brian Cox and *the best of all the presenters**".* **North Eastern Universities Purchasing Consortium** (*the other speakers and presenters included Professor Brian Cox, Dr Maggie Aderin-Pocock and Kevin Fong).

"Hearing the delegates chatting after Suzie's presentation was great – it was something completely different from what they have experienced before. Thank you to DBA for working with us to bring Suzie to speak". **Independent Association of Prep Schools Conference**

"Thank you very much for joining us as the speaker at our flagship Annual Conference. Your talk was greatly inspiring, given the amount you have achieved. It was equally educational on space exploration and on the mindset needed to overcome challenges. We received overwhelmingly positive feedback from the audience, who were engaged till the end and appreciated the opportunity to ask questions". **CEO, Pensions & Life Savings Association**

"How brilliant you were! You were an inspiration. Great to see and hear from you, and to keep on exploring things which some of us couldn't even imagine! Keep being awesome!" **Pensions & Life Savings Association**

"Thanks Suzie – it was a great session and certainly very inspiring!" **UCISA, Cardiff.**

*"Suzie was *absolutely brilliant*. We cannot recommend her highly enough. She was so engaging, funny, interesting, and our guests loved her. We'll definitely book her again. Thanks, Diana for recommending Suzie. *Such* a successful event".* **Ayrshire Hospice.**

“Thank you so very much for your absolutely inspirational speech at our Dinner, which was incredibly well received by delegates.” **Conference Director, IAPS (Independent Association of Prep Schools)**

“Everyone is singing your praises after the excellent session you delivered: they highly recommend you!” **IAPS (Independent Association of Prep Schools)**

“I’ve had the pleasure of working with Suzie on multiple projects, both for our own AstroAgency events and also in collaboration with partners such as the Knowledge Transfer Network (KTN), UK Space Agency and Space Scotland (together with Scottish Government). Suzie’s presentation and speaking skills are exceptional, but what further distinguishes Suzie is her level of understanding on such a wide range of topics, particularly in the realm of space and science. Her engaging style, bringing together enthusiasm and in-depth knowledge, is a rare combination and a hugely effective way to entertain and inform groups of any age. Our team love working with her and our event participants are always left impressed! *There is simply nobody we’d rather work with.*” **Daniel Smith, Founder of AstroAgency, Director of Space Scotland**

“Suzie was a fantastic addition to our Space & Geospatial Virtual Pavilion for COP26. Suzie chaired three plenary sessions with energy and thoughtful interaction, and the result was quality. We could have run the plenary session as we always do, with a chair introducing a series of presentations and panel discussions but with Suzie onboard we transformed the event into something dynamic, insightful and yet colloquial. Our audience agreed it was a great way to make a difficult subject more personal and digestible. We were so happy to have her [and Dallas] on board that we are now employing her services for a follow-up podcast series” **Luca Budello, Geospatial Lead @ KTN.**

“Thank you so much for attending our offsite at the National Space Centre. Your keynote speech was inspirational and we’ve had such wonderful feedback from all who listened and met you afterwards. Hope our paths cross in future. You’ll be a popular lady to come and talk for us!”

Communications Director, BGL Group

Comments from guests attending a Women In Tech event for a major global bank, London:

“Suzie is an impressive individual and extremely engaging speaker.”

“I really enjoyed listening to Suzie. She is truly remarkable and I fully intend on keeping an eye on the spacecraft that will travel to Mercury in 2025.”

“Suzie was incredible, so inspiring and a great speaker. More of the same please!!”

“Suzie was a very good and engaging speaker and has an amazing story to tell. I hope she gets to be a full astronaut in space and to inspire my daughter and a generation of other young scientists”.

“This event was brilliant, Suzie was fascinating. In particular, how she found ways of translating her passion of climbing mountains into her day job”

“I could have happily listened to her for hours”

“Suzie, you were a huge hit. Everyone I have spoken to has told me how much they loved your talk.”

“Thank you so much for the time together. After our chat, people were blasting my inbox with rave reviews about how inspired they felt. You are incredible and we are lucky to have the chance to host you.”

Virtual event with SUSE (US-based organisation for women in tech)

Suzie Imber is available exclusively through DBA Speakers.

**To check Suzie’s diary, call Diana Boulter on
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