

The great exoplanet debate

May 14 2012



Participants included (clockwise from top left): Sara Seager, Dirk Schulze-Makuch of, Vikki Meadows, and Eric Ford. Credit: AbSciCon 2012, GATech, NASA

The Great Exoplanet Debate, hosted by Astrobiology Magazine during the recent 2012 Astrobiology Science Conference, is now available for viewing online.

Astrobiology Magazine recently hosted a Great Exoplanet Debate during the 2012 Astrobiology Science Conference (AbSciCon 2012) in Atlanta, Georgia. The panelists were David Grinspoon of the Denver Museum of Nature & Science, Sara Seager of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Dirk Schulze-Makuch of Washington State University, Vikki Meadows of the University of Washington, and Eric Ford of the University of Florida. Click [here](#) to watch a video of the entire debate.

The panel of experts discussed questions such as: What should the priorities be in the search for [planets](#) in the galaxy? How accurate can we be in identifying [habitable](#), Earth-like worlds around distant stars using current technology? Rather than focusing solely on Earth-like planets, should the discussion be expanded to ask where we can find habitable planets? The Decadal Survey's recommendations for planetary missions upset many, but can the astrobiology community come to an agreement about what our priorities should be in the next decade to find and characterize habitable planets? What is the future of our search for habitable, alien worlds in light of current budget restraints and mission planning?

The Astrobiology Science [Conference](#) 2012 (AbSciCon 2012) was held April 16–20 at the Georgia Tech Hotel and Conference Center in Atlanta, Georgia, USA. The conference was sponsored by National Aeronautics and Space Administration's [Astrobiology](#) Program and hosted by the Georgia Institute of Technology's Ribo Evo, Center for Ribosomal Origins and Evolution. The co-Chairs of AbSciCon 2012 were Loren Williams and Eric Gaucher, both of the Georgia Institute of Technology.

Provided by [Astrobio.net](#)

Citation: The great exoplanet debate (2012, May 14) retrieved 27 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2012-05-great-exoplanet-debate.html>

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