

NASA's Psyche spacecraft starts processing at Kennedy Space Center

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The Psyche spacecraft sits in the Payload Hazardous Servicing Facility at NASA's Kennedy Space Center in Florida after traveling across the country from a clean room at the agency's Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Southern California. Credit: NASA/Isaac Watson

Bound for an asteroid of the same name, the orbiter is undergoing final

preparations for its August launch.

Since its arrival on April 29, the Psyche spacecraft has moved into the Payload Hazardous Servicing Facility at NASA's Kennedy Space Center in Florida, where technicians removed it from its protective shipping container, rotated it to vertical, and have begun the final steps to prepare the spacecraft for launch. In the coming months, crews will perform a range of work including reinstalling [solar arrays](#), reintegrating a radio, testing the telecommunications system, loading propellants, and encapsulating the spacecraft inside payload fairings before it leaves the facility and moves to the launch pad.

The Psyche spacecraft will explore a metal-rich [asteroid](#) between Mars and Jupiter, made largely of nickel-iron metal. The mission is targeting an Aug. 1 launch atop a SpaceX Falcon Heavy rocket from Launch Complex 39A at Kennedy. After arriving in 2026, the spacecraft will spend 21 months orbiting its namesake asteroid, mapping and gathering data, potentially providing insights on how planets with a metal core, including Earth, formed.

More information: For more details about NASA's Psyche mission, go to www.nasa.gov/psyche and psyche.asu.edu/

Provided by Jet Propulsion Laboratory

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