

SpaceX announces new private mission on 1st human polar orbit spaceflight

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SpaceX has lined up more business for its human spaceflight program with a private launch from Florida that will take its passengers on a polar

orbit for the first time.

The mission called Fram2 that could launch from the Space Coast before the end of 2024 is headed up Chun Wang of Malta, according to a post on the SpaceX website. Wang is an entrepreneur who made a fortune in cryptocurrency and an avid adventurer.

Along for the ride will be fellow adventurers Eric Philips of Australia, Jannicke Mikkelsen of Norway and Rabea Rogge of Germany. Mikkelsen will take the role of mission commander and Philips the role of pilot.

SpaceX has flown 13 missions and 50 humans so far on its fleet of four Crew Dragon capsules, and was working on a fifth. It's unclear if Fram2 will fly on the new Crew Dragon, but it will feature a cupola attachment as opposed to the docking apparatus needed for when Crew Dragon spacecraft fly to the International Space Station.

The Crew Dragon Resilience flew with such an attachment, allowing for better views of space and Earth, when it took up billionaire Jared Isaacman for the first time on the Inspiration4 mission in 2021. That three-day flight was also an all-private [crew](#) that orbited the Earth.

He's set to fly again on Resilience as early as Aug. 26 on a launch from Kennedy Space Center on the Polaris Dawn mission, also an orbital flight, but without the cupola, and instead a hatch that will allow for the first commercial tethered spacewalk.

Fram2 is named after a ship Fram, built in Norway that was used to help explorers such as Roald Amundsen get to the Arctic and Antarctica in the late 1800s and early 1900s.

When it launches, Fram2 "will be the first human spaceflight mission to

explore Earth from a polar orbit and fly over the Earth's polar regions for the first time," according to SpaceX.

"Wang aims to use the mission to highlight the crew's explorational spirit, bring a sense of wonder and curiosity to the larger public, and highlight how technology can help push the boundaries of exploration of Earth and through the mission's research," SpaceX posted.

Most of SpaceX Crew Dragon flights go to the ISS, and most for NASA. The first Crew Dragon mission with humans came in May 2020 on the Demo-2 mission. SpaceX has since flown up eight more crew rotation missions with the Crew-8 astronauts currently on board the ISS. Crew-9 is slated to fly up as early as Sept. 24 to relieve them. SpaceX has also been contracted by Axiom Space for its three private missions so far to the ISS, and is slated to fly a fourth as early as November.

With Axiom Space's private missions and the two so far with Isaacman, Fram2 could be the seventh private astronaut mission on SpaceX's manifest.

It could launch from either KSC or Cape Canaveral Space Force Station's Space Launch Complex 40, which will use the Crew-9 mission as its first human spaceflight after SpaceX installed a crew access arm at the pad.

Fram2 will last three to five days and venture to an altitude of between 264 to 279 miles "leveraging insight from space physicists and citizen scientists to study unusual light emissions resembling auroras," SpaceX posted.

The plan is to study the green and mauve thermal emissions and conduct other research to study the effects of spaceflight on the [human body](#), including taking the first human X-ray images in space.

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