

## Stephen Hawking confirmed as headline speaker at Tenerife's Starmus Festival this September



**02 June 2014** – Acclaimed British physicist Stephen Hawking will join Nobel Prize winners, astronomers, astronauts and cosmonauts for the second edition of the [Starmus Festival](#), to be held in Tenerife from 22<sup>nd</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> September 2014.

The Starmus Festival is open to anybody with a passion for astronomy and science and celebrates the wonder of the cosmos and the scientific progress being made to understand physics and the stars.

Hawking, considered one of the greatest theoretical physicists since Albert Einstein, will give a keynote presentation on the festival's theme, "Beginnings: the making of the modern cosmos." His work on the origins and structure of the universe, from the Big Bang to black holes, revolutionised the field, whilst his multimillion best-selling books 'A Brief History of Time' (1988), 'The Universe in a Nutshell' (2001) and 'The Grand Design' (2010) helped popularise science and make it accessible to everyone.

Hawking, who has twelve honorary degrees, will be accompanied by prominent figures such as Nobel Prize winners Robert W. Wilson and Sir Harold W. Kroto; British ethologist, zoologist and scientist Richard Dawkins; astrophysicist and guitarist for British rock band 'Queen', Brian May; and Russian cosmonaut Alexei Leonov, who became the first human to make a 'space walk' back in 1965.

New to the line-up of speakers to join Hawking are American astronomer Jill Tarter; astrophysicists Bernard Oliver and Robert Williams; and three Apollo moonwalkers: Edgar Mitchell, Charlie Duke and Jack Schmitt.

The programme includes roundtable discussions and lectures from the aforementioned figures; "astrophotography" classes to learn how to create deep-sky wide-field images; a unique concert

with legendary keyboard player Rick Wakeman together with Brian May; and a stargazing “Teide Star Party” at the lunar-like landscaped Teide National Park (a UNESCO World Heritage Site). Attendees of the festival will have the chance to mingle and share their views on astronomy with the well-known personalities.

At the press opening of the festival last week, Mr. Carlos Alonso, President of the Council of Tenerife, said that “Tenerife and all the Canary Islands are attractive to the science world because of their natural resources, which are particularly important to the tourism sector with activities such as stargazing becoming ever more popular.”

The Starmus Festival is organised by the Government of the Canary Islands and the Council of Tenerife; managed by Garik Israelian, an astrophysicist researcher at the Canary Islands Astrophysics Institute ([IAC](#)); and has the collaboration of the [Abama Golf & Spa Resort](#), where the conferences will take place.

The six-day festival is priced at €300 (£243) per delegate and interest in attending can be registered at [www.starmus.com](http://www.starmus.com).

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**Notes for Editors:**

1. The Tenerife Tourism Corporation is a membership led independent body, supported by the public and private sectors, which markets Tenerife overseas as a tourist destination. A portfolio of five specific brands has been created: Golf, Nature, Select, Convention Bureau and Film Commission.
2. For general tourism information on Tenerife please visit: [www.webtenerife.co.uk](http://www.webtenerife.co.uk).
3. For further information on the Starmus Festival 2014 please visit: [www.starmus.com](http://www.starmus.com).
4. For media enquiries, please contact Polly Martin or Richard Hume at Hume Whitehead: [polly@humewhitehead.co.uk](mailto:polly@humewhitehead.co.uk) / 0845 498 9985; [richard@humewhitehead.co.uk](mailto:richard@humewhitehead.co.uk) / 0845 498 9981.