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Help Defend Earth Against Asteroid Threats

A Global Initiative to Protect Earth From Asteroid Impacts Aims to Build the World's First Anti-Asteroid Spacecraft

+ + + EMBARGO: TUE. MAY 12, 1:00 PM ET + + +

The Emergency Asteroid Defence Project (EADP) is a global initiative to develop an efficient and secure method of protecting the planet from disastrous asteroid impacts.

With its launch on Indiegogo on May 12, 2015 at 1:00pm ET / 10:00am PT, the campaign is asking for support to tackle a global threat that requires global cooperation.

The non-profit initiative is based in Copenhagen, Denmark and is made up of dedicated scientists, engineers, and experts working to design, construct, test, and ultimately implement the use of HAIVs (pronounced hai-vee, or Hypervelocity Asteroid Intercept Vehicle): small spacecraft that can deflect or disperse asteroids and comets with only a few days' warning.

Developed at Iowa State University's Asteroid Deflection Research Center, HAIVs are currently the best known method for protecting Earth from asteroid impact on relatively short notice.

As recently as 2013, a small asteroid came down without warning over the Russian city of Chelyabinsk, exploding with 30 times more energy than the atomic bomb that hit Hiroshima. The asteroid was about 66 feet (20 meters) in diameter and weighed about 13,000 metric tons — heavier than the Eiffel Tower. The shockwave rocked the city, shattering windows, damaging buildings, and injuring more than 1,000 people.

Astronomers and government agencies only recently began surveying and tracking potentially hazardous asteroids. Due to a lack of funding and resources, scientists and government agencies including NASA have not yet found a definitive solution.

This global crowdfunding campaign, the first ever for active asteroid defense, will fund a design feasibility study for the development, construction and in-space testing of HAIV asteroid defense spacecrafts, to be followed by the production of several HAIVs that will be ready for use in case of emergency.

The Indiegogo campaign features cool rewards for backers, such as a 3D printed key chain model of the HAIV spacecraft for \$20, the chance to send a message to space on aluminum foil for \$79, a piece of a real asteroid for \$139, or naming the first spacecraft for \$200,000.

The fundraising campaign ends on July 12, 2015. Stay tuned for Asteroid Day on June 30, when the EADP team will come up with something really cool.

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