

Sky at Night

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# Would you take a one-way trip to Mars?

Bristol artists explore the proposed Mars One project

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Submitted by kieron allen



From left to right: Gillian Finnerty, Callum Bellhouse, Ella Good, Melissa Ede, Ryan Toal, Camila Gelber, Nicki Kent and Alison Rigby.

**Credit: Ella Good/Nicki Kent**

Would you leave behind everything you've ever known to start a new life on Mars? That is the question posed by the producers of an out of this world reality TV show. **Mars One** will, if all goes to plan, see a group of people travel to the Red Planet, never to return. But who would sign up to such a challenge?

Bristol based artists Ella Good and Nicki Kent have been scouring the country to find out.



"We heard about a real TV show that could be hitting our screens by next year in which normal people from across the world are able to apply to travel to Mars," says Ella.

"It's run by a company called Mars One and the mission will mostly be funded through a TV deal and crowd-funding.

"The idea is that it will be a one-way trip and aims to establish the first human settlement on another planet in 10 years time."

Ella and Nicki's project, *A Decade With Mars*, will span the next 10 years of their lives, in parallel to the time frame set out by Mars One. During this time they will research how technology advances and how far away we really are from living on other worlds.

So far the pair have contacted and met six Mars One applicants from across the country. They include a taxi driver, a civil servant, a trainee engineer, two students and a secondary school lab technician. Their ages range between 20 to 55 and their motivations to apply are all very different.

“On the whole there is a sense that these people are optimists with an ambitious and hopeful wish to be part of a future that sees people living on other planets,” says Ella.

“Some express concerns about the sustainability of current lifestyles on Earth and believe that a colony on another planet needs to happen to create a lifeboat if humans are to survive the next century.”

In September 2014, Ella and Nicki launched their project with a homemade weather balloon. Equipped with a camera, it travelled to near space and back, returning footage of Earth obtained from a height of 100,000 feet.

“Although incomparable in scale to a Mars mission, the launch represented an attempt to get as close to space as we could,” says Ella.

“It marked the beginning of a 10 year journey exploring the ways in which we live today and the possibilities for the future.”

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If you'd like to know more about *A Decade With Mars*, you can follow [@ellaandnicki](#) on Twitter or visit their [website](#).