Guidelines for using Space Apps Chat during the Space Apps COVID-19 Challenge

MAY 30-31, 2020

A guide for Space Apps COVID-19 Challenge participants.

This guide is intended for virtual participants of the Space Apps COVID-19 Challenge. The instructions contained in this document require users to be signed up and registered for this specific event.

These materials are mostly pulled from the Rocket.Chat user documentation, please feel free to access their website for more information.

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For technical assistance with any of the content in this document, please email web@spaceappschallenge.org with a specific description of your problem.

The Purpose of Chat

The purpose of Space Apps Chat is to provide a place for you to connect with other Space Apps participants as well as Space Apps volunteers who are serving as guides and mentors. Find teammates! Ask your questions about the challenges and data! Enjoy learning from the Space Apps community!

Space Apps Accounts

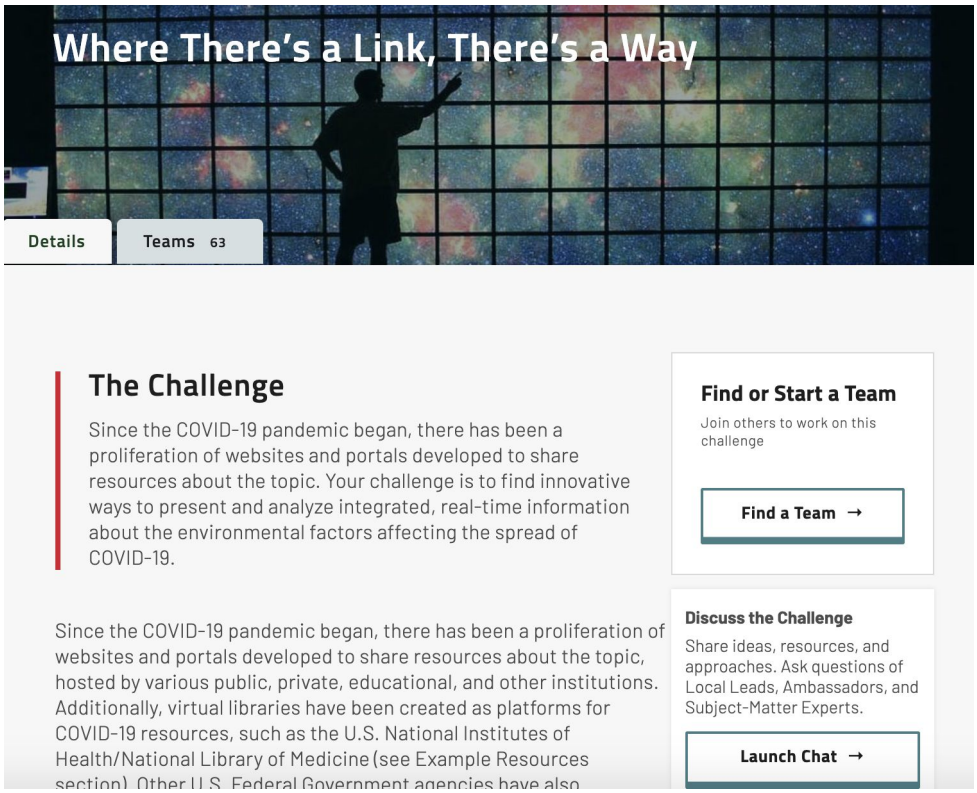
In order to login to chat, you must first have a Space Apps account. To sign up for an account, go here: https://covid19.spaceappschallenge.org/auth/signup/.

If you already have a Space Apps account, **you will use the same credentials to sign into chat.**

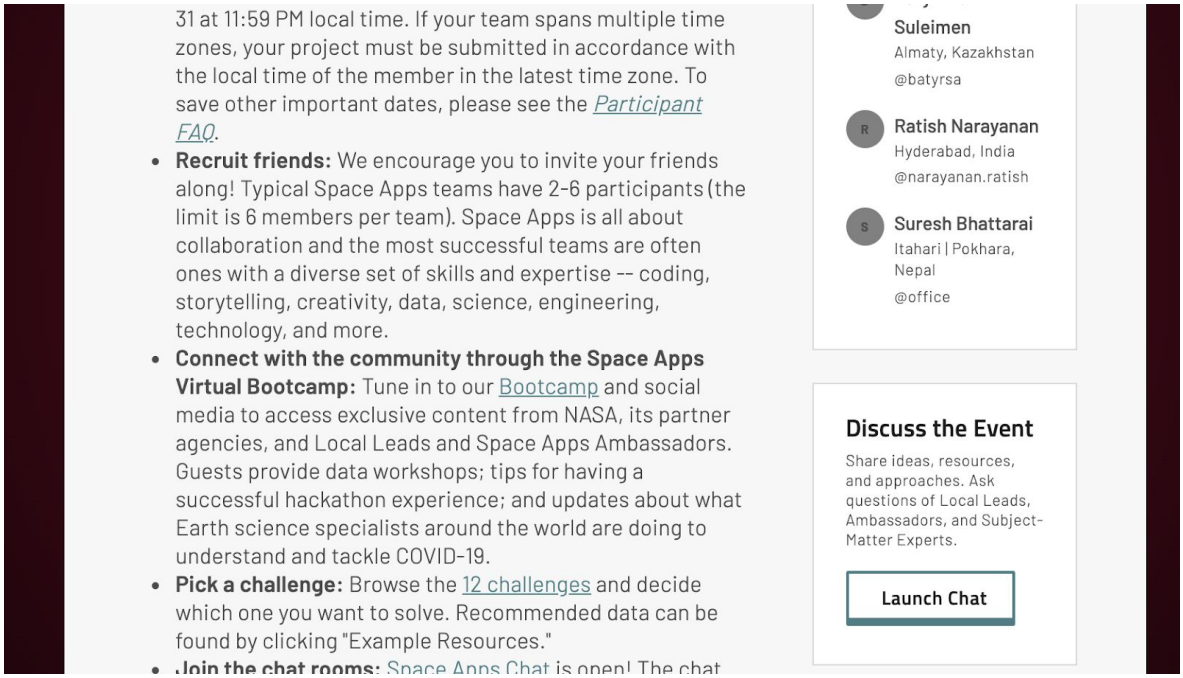
Launching Chat

There are three ways to launch chat from the Space Apps website.

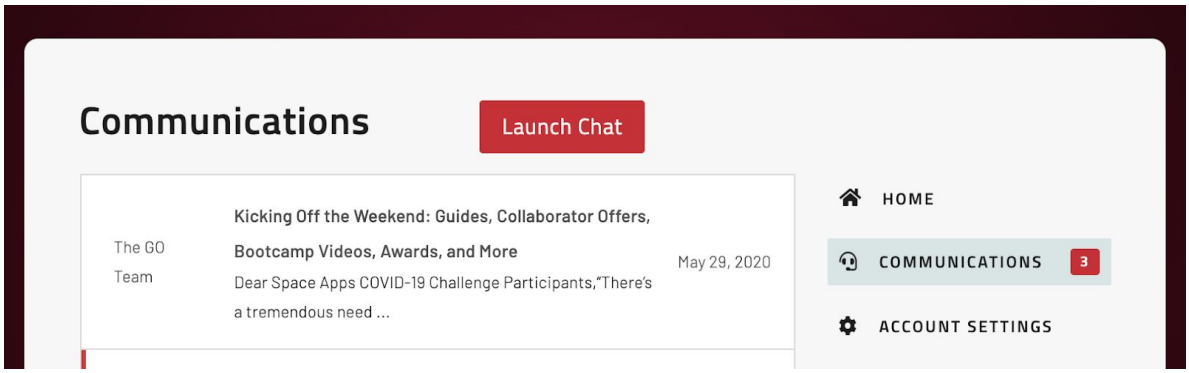
1. From a challenge page (https://covid19.spaceappschallenge.org/challenges/covid-challenges), select “Launch Chat”. This will launch the chat platform and prompt for a login.



2. From a region page (https://covid19.spaceappschallenge.org/locations/), select “Launch Chat”. This will launch the chat platform and prompt for a login.



3. From your user dashboard (the page you see when you are logged into your account and select “My Account’ from the menu bar at the top. Select “Communications” on the sidebar and then “Launch Chat”. This will launch the chat platform and prompt for a login.

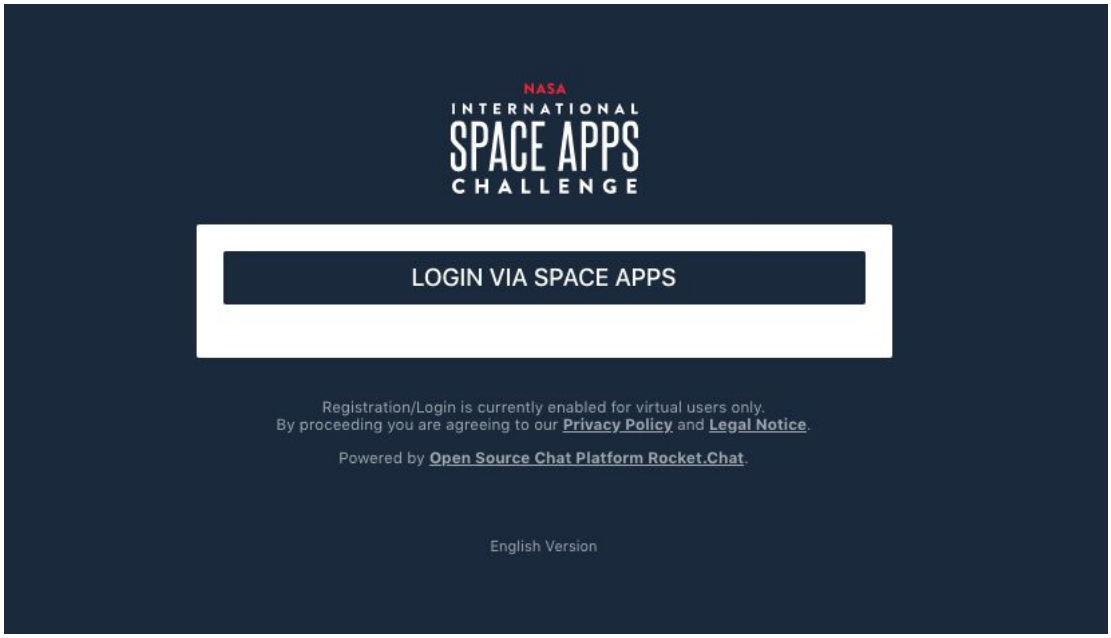


Space Apps Chat on Your Phone

The Space Apps Chat uses a platform called Rocket Chat. You can download the Rocket Chat app in your app store. Type "https://chat.spaceappschallenge.org/" in the field where it asks you to "Enter your workspace."

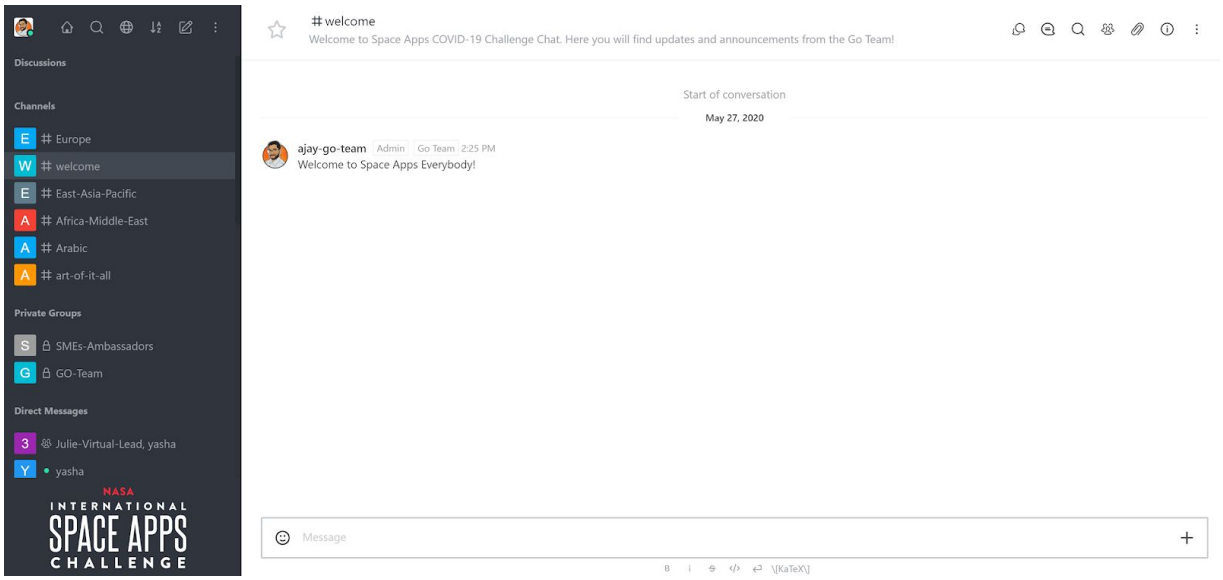
Signing In

After selecting "Launch Chat", you should see the screen below. Click "Login Via Space Apps." Login using your Space Apps account credentials. If you have any problems signing in, try to remove punctuation characters from your username under "Account Settings" in your user dashboard. If problems subsist, e-mail us at web@spaceappschallenge.org with your username and email address so we can contact you directly.



The Space Apps COVID-19 Chat Platform

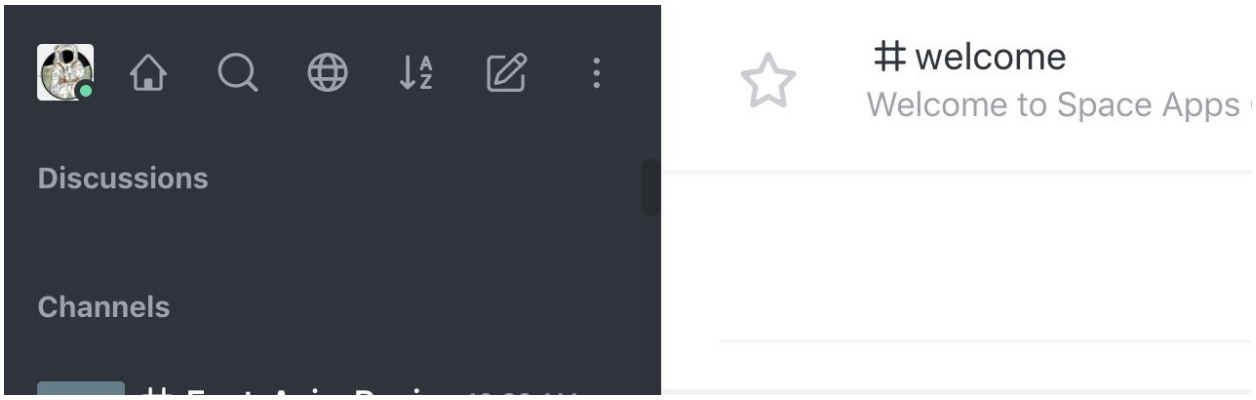
After logging in, you will be added to the Space Apps COVID-19 chat platform.



Public Channels

There will be a public channel for every challenge and each region participating in the Space Apps COVID-19 event. There will also be individual channels for each of the following languages: French; Japanese; Portuguese; Spanish; and Arabic. These public channels are where participants will be able to engage with other users and submit questions to the Space Apps Global Organizing (GO) Team and Space Apps Volunteers. We recommend that you join only the channels relevant to you and your team.

You can see all of the available channels by clicking on the “Directory (the “globe” icon located in the upper left corner of the screen, shown below).



Once you see all of the channels, click on any of them to be taken to the page. Select “Join.”

Regional Channels:

"Local Leads" (Space Apps volunteers who are aligned with particular regions) will be in the region chat channels to answer your questions and give advice or finding teammates, creating a project, etc. The region channels can be accessed from the region page on the website or via the "Directory" on the chat.

Challenge Channels:

Available in the challenge channels will be "SMEs" (subject-matter experts from NASA, ESA, JAXA, CNES, CSA, and partner organizations) and "Ambassadors" (Space Apps volunteers who have experience with various forms of data and technology). These volunteers are there to answer your questions about the nature of the challenges and data resources that are provided with the challenges. The challenge channels can be accessed from the challenges page on the website or via the "Directory."

Private Groups and Direct Messages

You will be able to communicate with other users in the public channels. However, you will also be able to create private groups and send direct messages as well. For more information on these channels, please see the Rocket.Chat user guide.

Messaging

Compose messages

To compose a message in Rocket.Chat, go to the channel or user you want to send a message to. Type in the message box and press Enter or the **Send** Button.

If you want to add new lines of text, press Shift + Enter to add a new line.

Notify other team members

To get the attention of a specific team member in a channel, type **@** followed by their username, for example, **@username**. The mentioned user sees a red badge on the channel or is notified via email or their mobile device if they're not online.

Send attachments

You can send a variety of attachments with your messages, such as files, audio, links, videos, and many more.

To access the attachment menu, click on the **plus** (+) icon on the message input.

Files

You can select files using three methods:

- By choosing the **Select Files from Computer** option from the attachment menu
- By dragging and dropping the file on the chat window
- By pasting an image from the clipboard

After selecting the file, add a name and a description of the file and press **Send**.

Remember that the server administrator can block certain file types from being uploaded.

Pin Messages

Pin a message to a channel to make that message easily accessible to all users on the channel. To pin a message, select the Pin Message option in the message actions menu. Remove already pinned messages by selecting Remove Pin.

By default, only administrators, moderators, and owners of the channel can pin messages .

Emojis

To insert an emoji, click the **smiley face icon** in the message box. Browse through emojis using the icon categories or through the search box.

You can also insert emojis by inputting an emoji code.

Search

Rocket.Chat search supports basic search commands which work like Gmail search.

Rocket.Chat also supports the use of “regular expressions.” Regular expressions provide flexibility and the ability to search chat entries in any language.