

Chris Austin Hadfield

Chris Austin Hadfield (born 29 August 1959) is a retired Canadian astronaut who was the first Canadian to walk in space.

An engineer and former Royal Canadian Air Force fighter pilot, Hadfield has flown two space shuttle missions and in his third mission served as commander of the International Space Station (Expedition 34/35 in 2012-13).

Through the extensive use of the new opportunities provided by social media, he opened up new frontiers in popularising human space flight and the space programme in general. Hadfield was described as "perhaps the most social media savvy astronaut ever to leave Earth" after building a considerable audience on social media, including over 1,000,000 Twitter followers as of June 2013.

As Commander of the ISS he conducted a record-setting number of scientific experiments. He gained worldwide acclaim for his breath-taking photographs and educational videos about life in space. His music video, a zero-gravity version of David Bowie's "Space Oddity", received over 10 million views in its first three days online.

His book on his space missions and astronaut career (An Astronaut's Guide to Life on Earth) became very popular, too. Through the pioneering use of the 21st Century online communication forms he did more than anybody else for increasing space awareness.

