



## Rocket Lab's Pioneer Spacecraft Successfully Deployed to Orbit, Powering Varda Space Industries' Third In-Space Manufacturing Mission

March 15, 2025

LONG BEACH, Calif.--(BUSINESS WIRE)-- Rocket Lab USA, Inc. (Nasdaq: RKLB) ("Rocket Lab" or "the Company"), a global leader in launch services and space systems, today announced its third Pioneer spacecraft for Varda Space Industries, Inc. ("Varda") is successfully operating on orbit. The W-3 mission launched March 14, from Vandenberg Space Force Base at 11:43 p.m. PDT (06:43 a.m. UTC).



Rocket Lab's Pioneer spacecraft for Varda Space Industries' W-3 mission in the cleanroom at Vandenberg Space Force Base. Credit: Varda Space Industries

The new mission is underway on orbit just 15 days after the successful re-entry and landing of Varda's W-2 mission, which was also powered by Rocket Lab's Pioneer Spacecraft.

Rocket Lab's Pioneer spacecraft supports Varda's 120kg manufacturing capsule on orbit, providing power, communications, propulsion, and attitude control for the mission. Inside the capsule Varda carries out in-space manufacturing and processing of pharmaceutical products that benefit from the microgravity environment that is impossible to recreate on Earth.

The Pioneer spacecraft leverages Rocket Lab's vertically integrated spacecraft components and subsystems, including spacecraft propulsion, flight software, avionics, reaction wheels, star trackers, separation system, solar panels, radios, composite structures and tanks, and more.

Once Varda's in-space manufacturing processes are completed on orbit, Rocket Lab conducts in-space operations, deorbiting, and reentry positioning maneuvers to set the capsule on a reentry course to Earth for landing at the Koonibba Test Range in South Australia, operated by Southern Launch. The W-3 mission is Rocket Lab's third for Varda. The first, W-1, was [successfully completed in February 2024](#) and landed in the Utah desert, while the latest mission, [W-2, was completed and landed in south Australia on Feb. 27, 2025](#).

Sir Peter Beck, Rocket Lab Founder and CEO, said, "The W-1 mission was the first in-space manufacturing mission to happen outside of the International Space Station. Now, just over a year later, we have a third mission on orbit after bringing

another one safely back home. We're immensely proud to have supported our mission partner Varda to usher in a new era of rapid, reliable, and innovative commercial in-space manufacturing and hypersonic reentry capability."

"It's remarkable that we have been able to launch our third mission in such rapid succession after the reentry of our second. High cadence launch and return will soon be commonplace, and reentry of materials from space to Earth will go from being novel to being normal," said Wendy Shimata, VP of Autonomous Systems at Varda.

The Company's fourth contracted Pioneer spacecraft for Varda is currently undergoing final assembly at Rocket Lab's Spacecraft Production Complex and Headquarters in Long Beach, California.

Learn more about Rocket Lab's spacecraft for Varda: [Varda Space Industries | Rocket Lab \(rocketlabusa.com\)](#)

## **+ About Rocket Lab**

Founded in 2006, Rocket Lab is an end-to-end space company with an established track record of mission success. We deliver reliable launch services, satellite manufacture, spacecraft components, and on-orbit management solutions that make it faster, easier, and more affordable to access space. Headquartered in Long Beach, California, Rocket Lab designs and manufactures the Electron small orbital launch vehicle, a family of spacecraft platforms, and the Company is developing the large Neutron launch vehicle for constellation deployment. Since its first orbital launch in January 2018, Rocket Lab's Electron launch vehicle has become the second most frequently launched U.S. rocket annually and has delivered over 200 satellites to orbit for private and public sector organizations, enabling operations in national security, scientific research, space debris mitigation, Earth observation, climate monitoring, and communications. Rocket Lab's spacecraft platforms have been selected to support NASA missions to the Moon and Mars, as well as the first private commercial mission to Venus. Rocket Lab has three launch pads at two launch sites, including two launch pads at a private orbital launch site located in New Zealand and a third launch pad in Virginia. To learn more, visit [www.rocketlabusa.com](http://www.rocketlabusa.com).

## **+ Forward Looking Statements**

This press release contains forward-looking statements within the meaning of the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. We intend such forward-looking statements to be covered by the safe harbor provisions for forward looking statements contained in Section 27A of the Securities Act of 1933, as amended (the "Securities Act") and Section 21E of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended (the "Exchange Act"). All statements contained in this press release other than statements of historical fact, including, without limitation, statements regarding our launch and space systems operations, launch schedule and window, safe and repeatable access to space, Neutron development, operational expansion and business strategy are forward-looking statements. The words "believe," "may," "will," "estimate," "potential," "continue," "anticipate," "intend," "expect," "strategy," "future," "could," "would," "project," "plan," "target," and similar expressions are intended to identify forward-looking statements, though not all forward-looking statements use these words or expressions. These statements are neither promises nor guarantees, but involve known and unknown risks, uncertainties and other important factors that may cause our actual results, performance or achievements to be materially different from any future results, performance or achievements expressed or implied by the forward-looking statements, including but not limited to the factors, risks and uncertainties included in our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2024, as such factors may be updated from time to time in our other filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission (the "SEC"), accessible on the SEC's website at [www.sec.gov](http://www.sec.gov) and the Investor Relations section of our website at [www.rocketlabusa.com](http://www.rocketlabusa.com), which could cause our actual results to differ materially from those indicated by the forward-looking statements made in this press release. Any such forward-looking statements represent management's estimates as of the date of this press release. While we may elect to update such forward-looking statements at some point in the future, we disclaim any obligation to do so, even if subsequent events cause our views to change.

## **+ About Varda:**

Varda Space Industries is building the infrastructure for a thriving orbital economy, from in-orbit production equipment to reliable and economical reentry capsules. The company operates out of El Segundo, California with office and industrial production space. You can follow Varda on X (@vardaspace) and LinkedIn.

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Source: Rocket Lab USA, Inc.