



Rocket Lab Delivers Third In-Orbit Manufacturing Spacecraft for Varda Space Industries

February 12, 2025

The Pioneer spacecraft designed, built, and tested by Rocket Lab is the second spacecraft delivered to Varda for launch within a month.

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 it has delivered another Pioneer spacecraft for Varda Space Industries, Inc. ("Varda") to Vandenberg Space Force Base (VSFB) in preparation for launch. It's Rocket Lab's third Pioneer spacecraft produced for Varda, and the second the Company has delivered for launch within a month.



Rocket Lab's third Pioneer spacecraft for Varda Space Industries W-3 mission in the cleanroom of the Company's Spacecraft Production Complex in Long Beach, Calif., preparing for shipment to Vandenberg Space Force Base. Credit: Rocket Lab

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

The spacecraft will support Varda's next orbital processing and hypersonic reentry mission, W-3. Earlier this month, the [Company's second spacecraft for Varda](#), W-2, successfully launched and is currently operating on orbit. Carrying payloads from the Air Force Research Laboratory and NASA's Ames Research Center, W-2 will also conduct research to expand the capability and capacity of Varda's pharmaceutical processing hardware in orbit before it's hypersonic re-entry and recovery in South Australia.

Like its predecessors, W-3 is based on Rocket Lab's Pioneer spacecraft, leveraging 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. The spacecraft will provide power, communications, propulsion, and attitude control for Varda's 120kg manufacturing capsule, which uses microgravity conditions to develop products that are difficult or impossible to create on Earth.

Once on-orbit production is complete, Rocket Lab and Varda will conduct in-space operations, reentry positioning maneuvers to deorbit, land, and recover Varda's capsule in Australia at the Koonibba Test Range, operated by Southern Launch.

Sir Peter Beck, Rocket Lab founder and CEO, stated, "Delivering W-3 while W-2 is actively operating in orbit demonstrates our team's exceptional ability to manage multiple complex missions in parallel. It really highlights the skill of our team and the strength of our integrated spacecraft technologies."

"By increasing the cadence of manufacture, launch, and reentry, we are building the foundation for a thriving orbital economy," said Wendy Shimata, Varda Space Industries Vice President of Autonomous Systems. "Our goal is to decrease the time between missions until it's commonplace for capsules to bring products made in space back to people on Earth."

W-3 is scheduled for launch no earlier than March from VSFB. The fourth and final spacecraft for Varda is currently undergoing final assembly at Rocket Lab's Spacecraft Production Complex and

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 more than 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.

+ 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, 2023, 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 and the Investor Relations section of our website at 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 making reentry as common as launch. We are building the infrastructure for a thriving low Earth orbit economy, from in-orbit pharmaceutical processing to reliable and economical reentry capsules. The company operates out of El Segundo, California with office and industrial production space. Follow Varda on X (@vardaspace), Instagram (@vardaspaceindustries), and LinkedIn.

+ Rocket Lab Media Contact

Lindsay McLaurin
media@rocketlabusa.com

+ Varda media contact

Media@varda.com

Source: Rocket Lab USA, Inc.