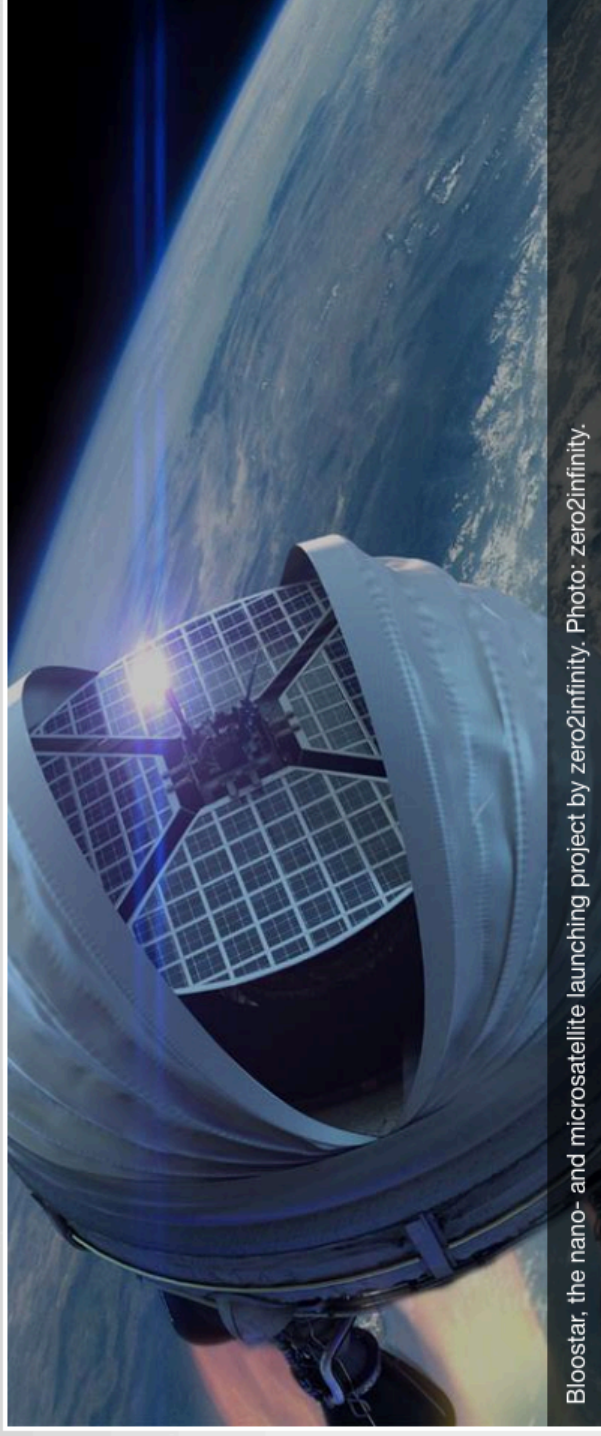


From Spain to Space

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Bloostar, the nano- and microsatellite launching project by zero2infinity. Photo: zero2infinity.



In today's world, we want to look down from the dark space surrounding our blue planet. And now we do not need to be astronauts to do so. It is just a matter of going up, taking a look and coming down. It is **space tourism**, which has become available to a wider range of consumers – not just a chosen few –, away from such leading international agencies as the European Space Agency ([ESA](#)), America's space agency [NASA](#) or the Russian Federal Space Agency, [Roscosmos](#).

The space tourism race is present in Spain too through [zero2infinity](#), a company established in Barcelona in 2009 by aerospace engineer [José Mariano López-Urdiales](#), who had worked at the renowned [Massachusetts Institute of Technology](#) (MIT), ESA and aerospace giant [Boeing](#).

The aerospace tourism project by zero2infinity, [bloon](#), consists of **near-space ships** holding **four tourists** and **two astronauts**, pulled by a **helium-filled balloon**. The technology is similar to the one used by Austrian skydiver [Felix Baumgartner](#) in his world-record jump in 2012. The **near-space** ship flies calmly up to reach **36km**. It remains there for **two or three hours**, regaling travellers with breathtaking views of the **curvature of the Earth**, surrounded by boundless **dark space** and wrapped in the **thin cloak of the atmosphere**. Of course, passengers never leave their cabin. The whole thing takes five hours, from lift-off to landing. The **landing** subsystem, designed to get back to Earth safe and sound, features **textile-based decelerators** and **inflatable absorbing systems**.

Artificial miniaturised satellites

Currently, the people at zero2infinity are working on a different project too: They are planning to **place in orbit nanosatellites** (artificial satellites with a wet mass between 1 and 10 kg) and **microsatellites** (wet mass between 10 and 100 kg) using an **innovative, cost-effective, less polluting system**. The project is known as [Bloostar](#).