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Russia's Only Female Cosmonaut Inspires New Barbie

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Anna Kikina is set to become the fourth Russian woman to go into space in fall 2022. **Roscosmos**

Russia's only active female cosmonaut has inspired the latest astronaut Barbie doll from Mattel's campaign to inspire women, the country's space agency announced Tuesday.

Anna Kikina, 36, is set to become the fourth Russian woman to go into space with a fall 2022 mission to the International Space Station a decade after her admission to the cosmonaut corps.

Russia's state space agency Roscosmos said Mattel has released a not-for-sale astronaut Barbie inspired by Kikina's "talents, successes and personal qualities."

The iconic doll, who got the makeover for Mattel's "You Can Be Anything" role models campaign, is shown wearing blue training coveralls with Kikina's name tag and a white Orlan space suit with Roscosmos patches.

"I didn't dream of becoming a cosmonaut as a child. But if I had an astronaut Barbie doll, then

the idea of becoming one would have for sure been born in my head back then," Kikina said.

"Not every girl playing with this Barbie has to want to become an astronaut. The most important thing is that they all know that they have a choice," she added.

Mattel first released a Miss Astronaut Barbie in 1965, two years after cosmonaut and current Russian lawmaker Valentina Tereshkova became the first woman in space.

Astronaut barbie dolls have since been released every decade between 1985 and 2019, according to the space history website collectspace.com.

The doll inspired by Kikina will be given out in a contest dedicated to the 60th anniversary of the Soviet launch of the first crewed space flight, the outlet quoted cosmonaut Oleg Artemyev as saying.

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