

# Google's Project Suncatcher prototype satellite is in orbit to test TPUs in space

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Our Project Suncatcher prototype satellite is in orbit.

Travis Beals

Senior Director, Paradigms of Intelligence

Oct 01, 2026

Today, our prototype satellite for Project Suncatcher, built in partnership with Planet, launched into orbit aboard the Transporter-18 rideshare mission with SpaceX. Our team has confirmed contact with the satellite and it is operating as expected. This is the first step in a long-term research moonshot exploring whether space could one day host scalable machine learning infrastructure. Over the coming weeks, we'll gather in-orbit data on how our TPUs handle the physical stress of spaceflight and the radiation and thermal extremes of space. Our peer-reviewed paper is now available in Joule , detailing the research behind this mission. Some things can only be tested in space. As we begin our experiments, we'll use what we learn to refine our designs, and we're excited to share more as the mission unfolds.

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