
THE
ATLAS
ROVER

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Amanda Baschnagel

Amanda is theater artist and educator pursuing her M.F.A in Performance & Pedagogy at Texas Tech University. From 2018-2022, she acted as Makerspace Manager for Boise State University . She is passionate about creating immersive theatrical experiences that utilize new technologies.

Matthew Chilcoat

Matthew is an educator, technical director, and scenic/lighting designer focusing on immersive and inclusive design for themed environments and the stage. Matt's passion for theatre and entertainment has taken him all over the country working for some of the most recognized companies in the world. His largest projects to date have been Orlando Ballet's The Nutcracker, Disney's Mickey and Minnie's Runaway Railway, and Universal Studio's Mario Kart Ride.

Atlas

Atlas is our curious pup that inspired this experience. When he explores the world it is a full-on sensory explosion. He sniffs, listens, and much to our chagrin, tastes, the world around him. We want to take a page from his book and become more enthusiastic explorers ourselves.

Concept

The Atlas Rover is an otherworldly facility designed to reinvigorate curiosity!

Participants (known as explorers) will enter a Virtual Reality rover as a team to investigate and catalog a new planet discovering the native animals, plants & minerals.

Explorers will enter our VR rover and venture out into a new world. Each explorer has a job: driving the rover, capturing digital photos, taking virtual core samples, or recording audio.

Once their ride concludes they will take their digital samples to one of the activity stations to delve into their findings.

Each activity is correlated with a new sense. The mineral activity focuses on touch, the plant activity invokes smell, and the animal activity explores sound. After the activities are completed, explorers will receive stickers to fill out their Explorer's Journal.

This team experience combines virtual and tangible exploration to gamify real-world discovery.

Story

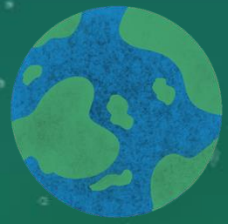
Our animal artificial intelligences, Atlas, Terra, Pacha and Suki, have spent centuries looking for a new planet that can sustain human life. And FINALLY they've found a planet worth exploring.

However, in the hundreds of years of searching, solar radiation has corrupted their data about Earth. They can't remember what it smelled like, sounded like, and felt like. Without additional research they can't guarantee it's safe for human inhabitants.

This is where you come in…

Our Animal AIs have built a habitat and rovers, so that you can assist them in investigating this new planet.

All we need are the eyes, ears, nose, and hands of people who actually live on Earth, so we can discover new homes in the stars.



Characters

Atlas

Leader of our team &

Chief Excitement Officer

Pacha

Stops to smell the roses

Suki

Listens for animal sounds

Terra

Focuses on the world underground

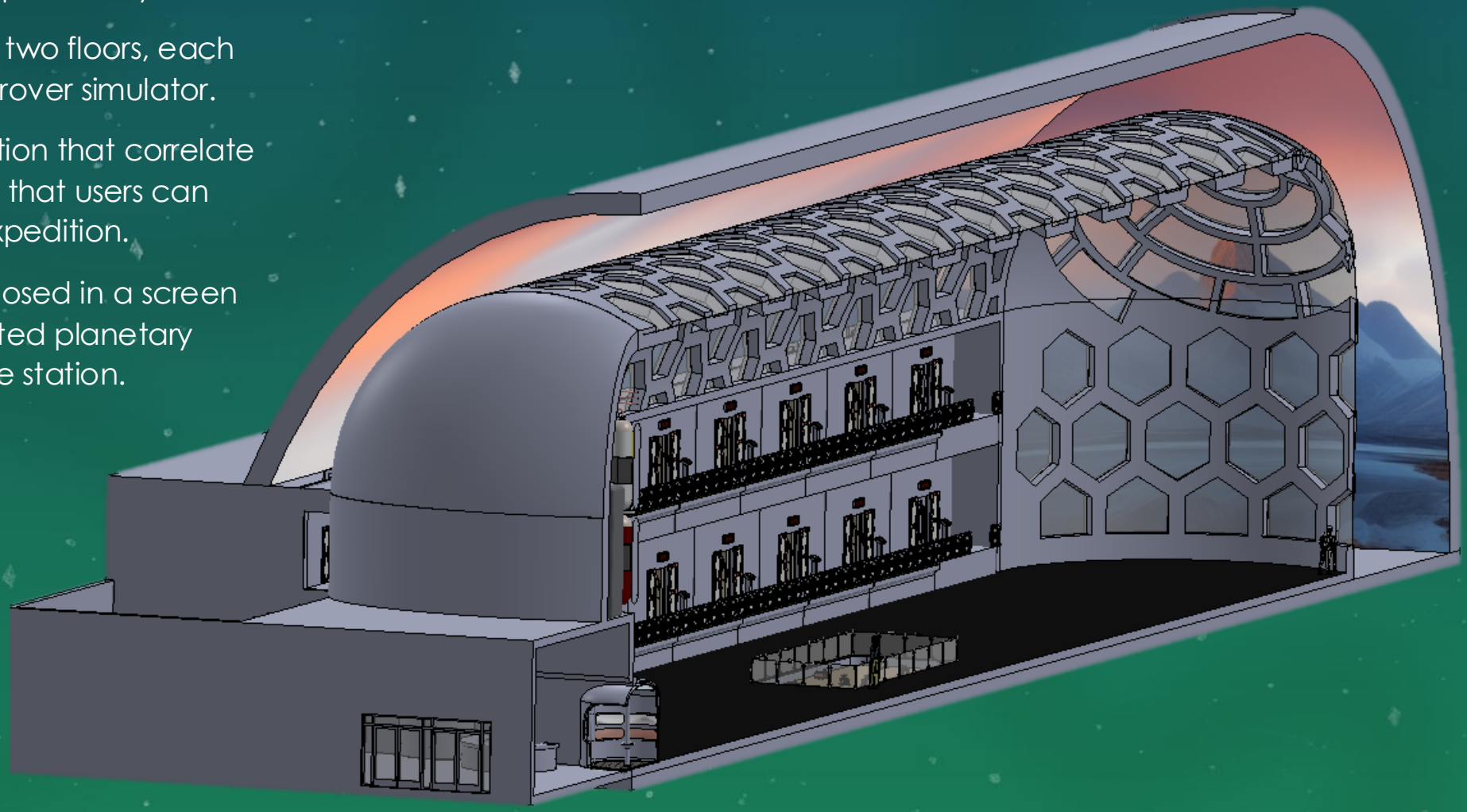
The Atrium

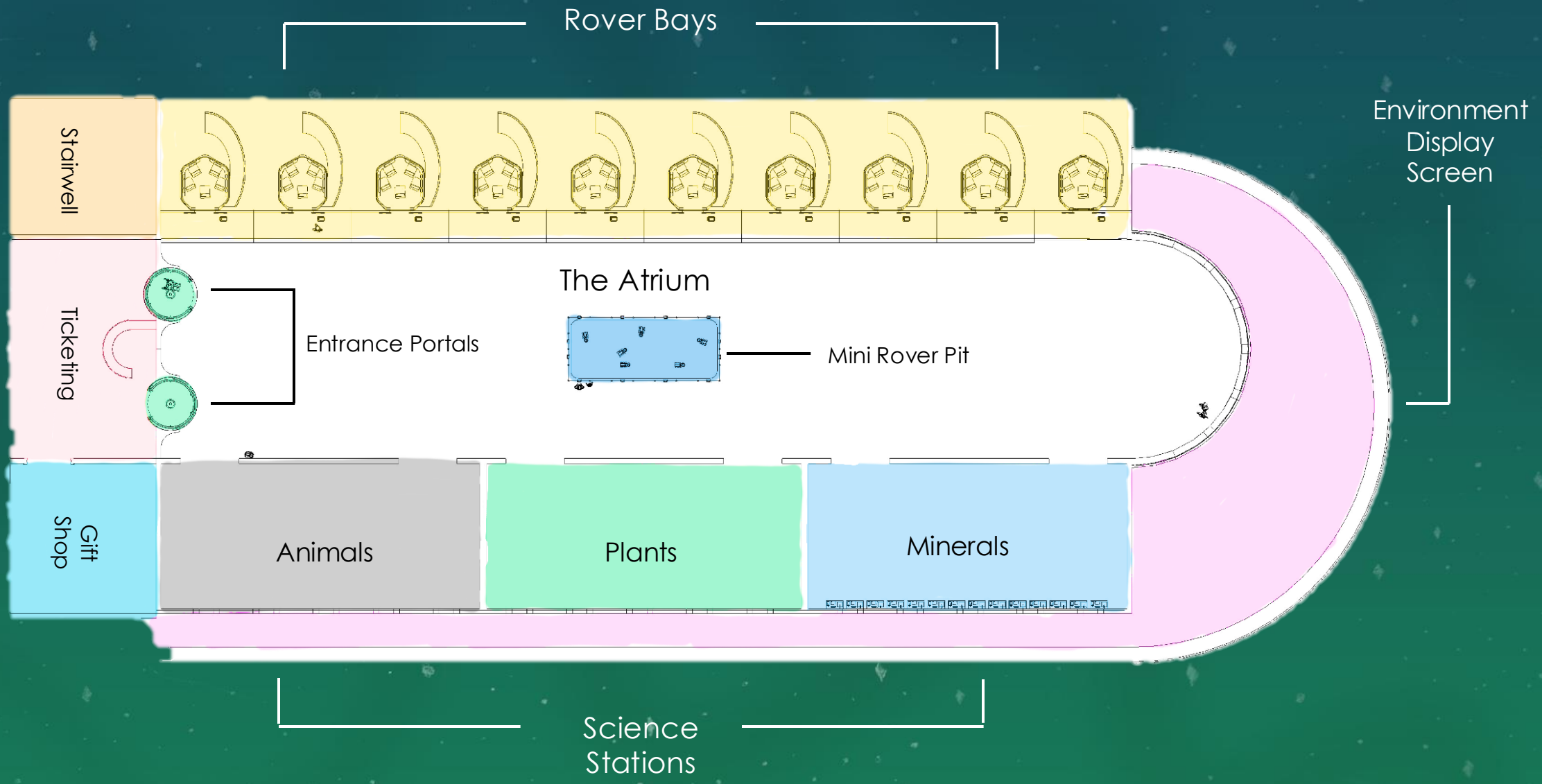
The Atrium is a 31,170 sq. ft. facility.

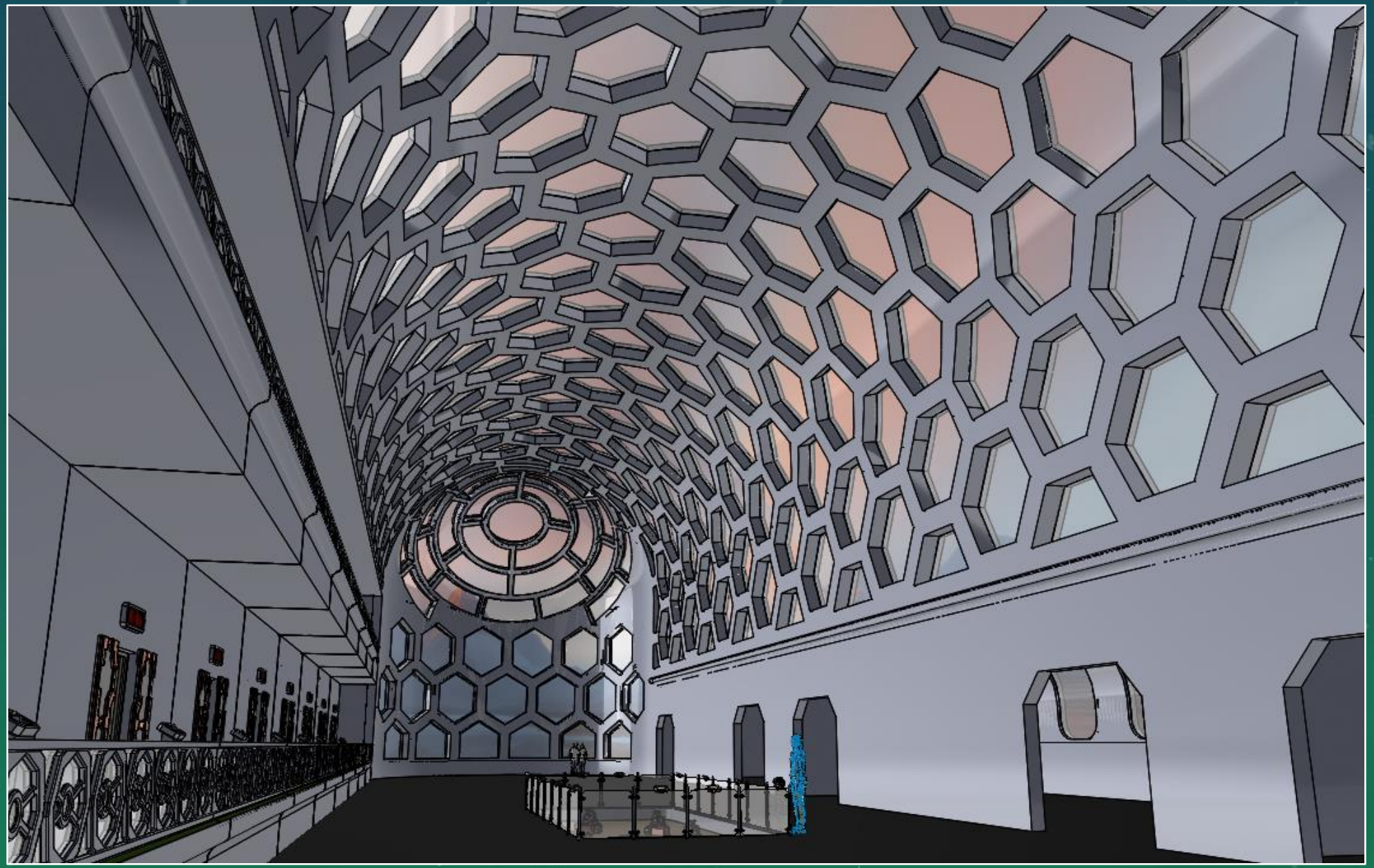
It includes 20 bays over two floors, each of which encompass a rover simulator.

There are 3 science station that correlate to different virtual items that users can collect on their rover expedition.

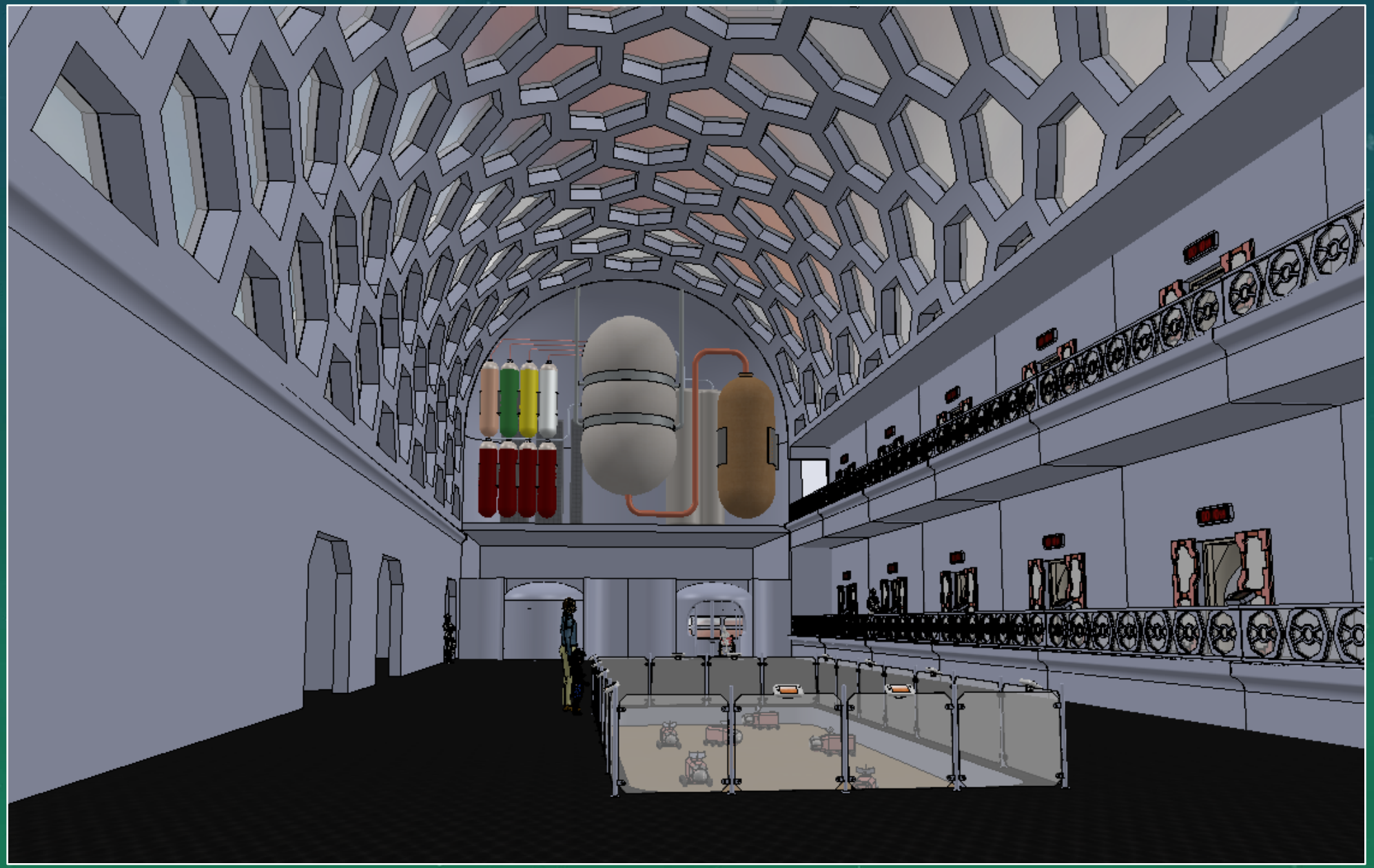
The entire Atrium is enclosed in a screen that displays the simulated planetary environment outside the station.




Rover Bays
Stairwell
Ticketing
Gift Shop
The Atrium
Entrance Portals
Mini Rover Pit
Animals
Plants
Minerals
Environment Display Screen
Science Stations



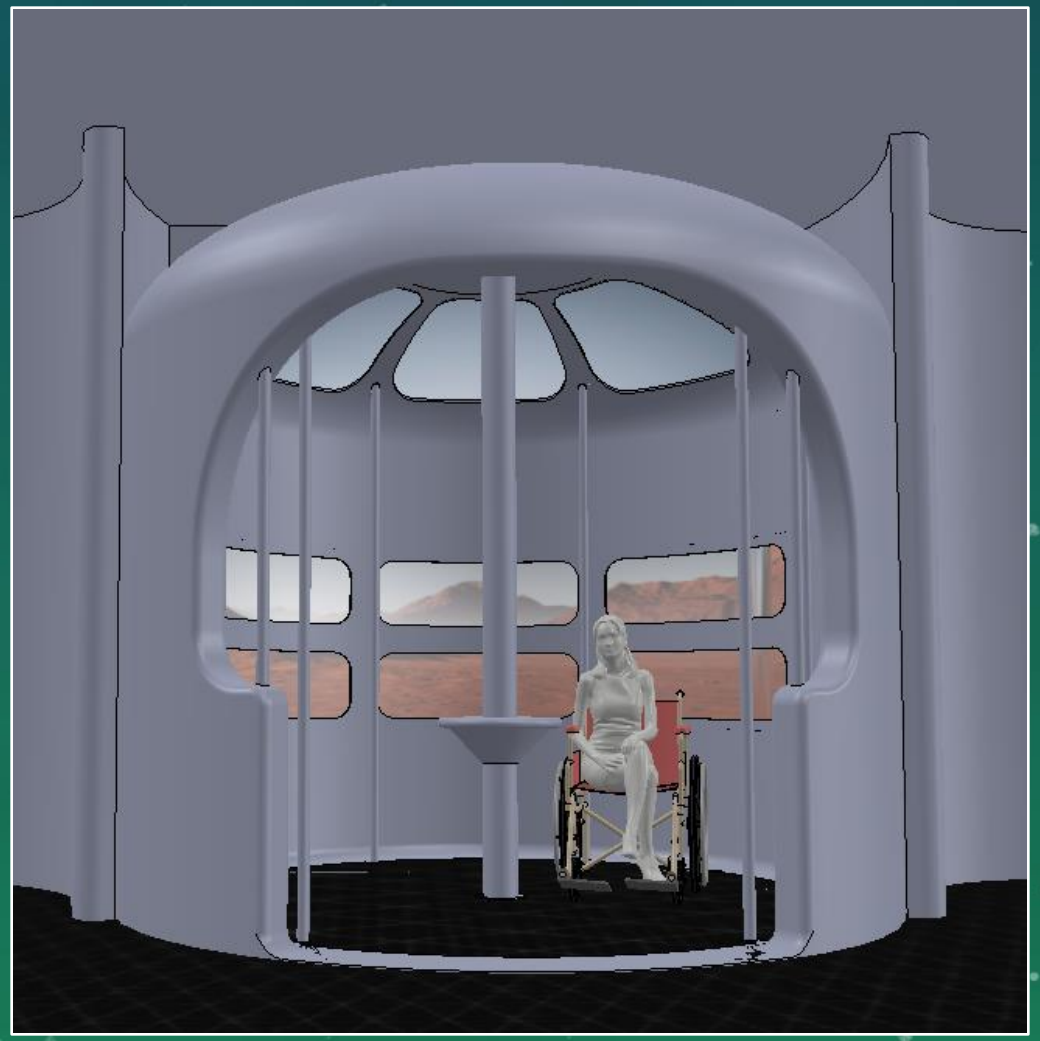
View from the inside of the atrium



View from the inside of the atrium looking towards the entrance

The Atrium section view

Entrance



Explorers are instantly transported to a new planet as they go through the entrance portal that transitions them from ticketing into The Atrium.

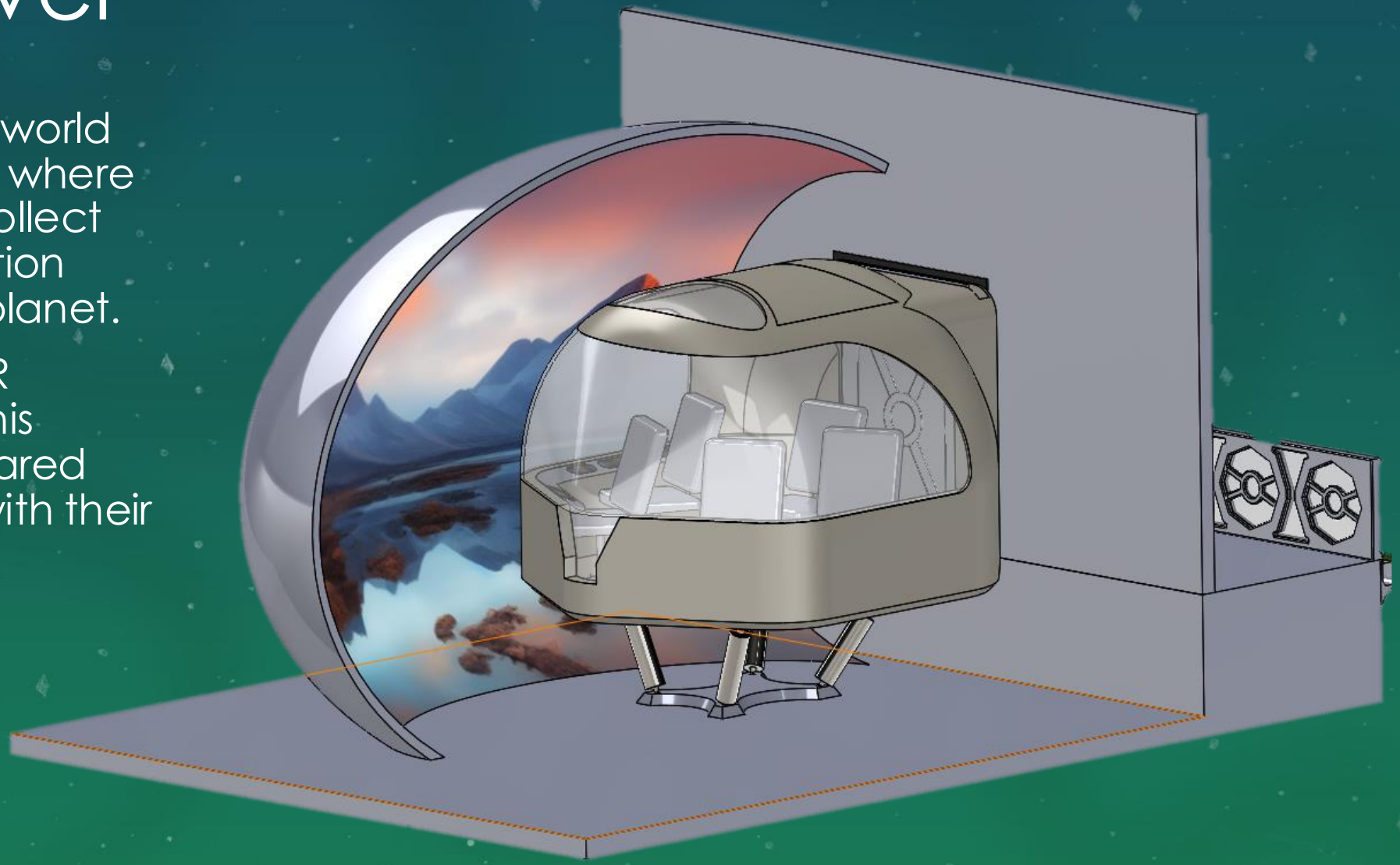
As they enter there is a screen in the back wall that shows the inside of The Atrium. The whole entrance rotates, while the screen shows the 360 view of The Atrium to outside the facility.

When explorers turn around, they are at the opening of The Atrium.

The Rover

This is an open world VR experience where explorers will collect digital information from this new planet.

Unlike many VR experiences, this simulation is shared experienced with their team.

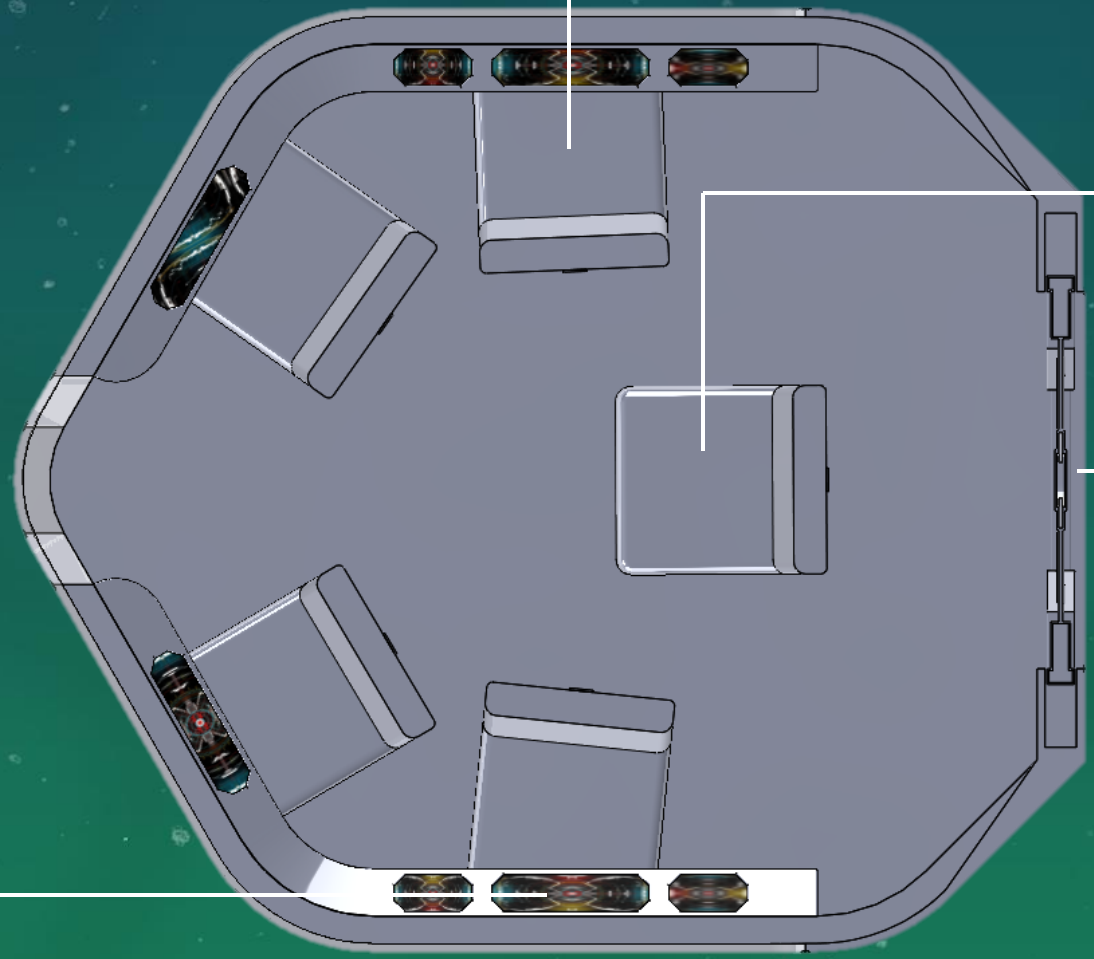


The console for explorers to capture information including:

Photo evidence of plants

Core samples of minerals

Sounds from animals

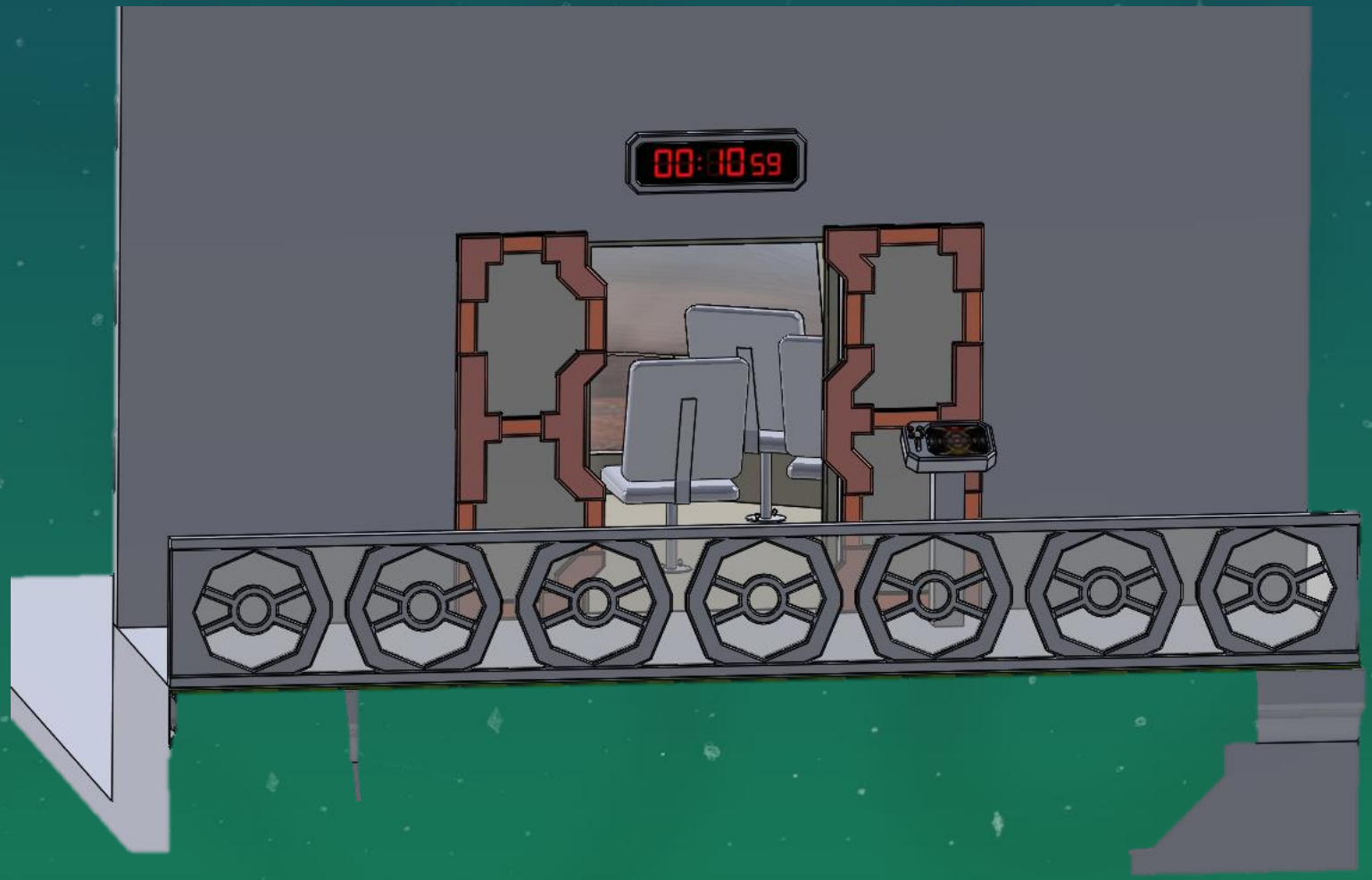


Removable seats for explorers that use wheelchairs or other assistive devices

Driver's seat:

This explorer will control the open world exploration with a handheld console

Entrance with multi sliding doors

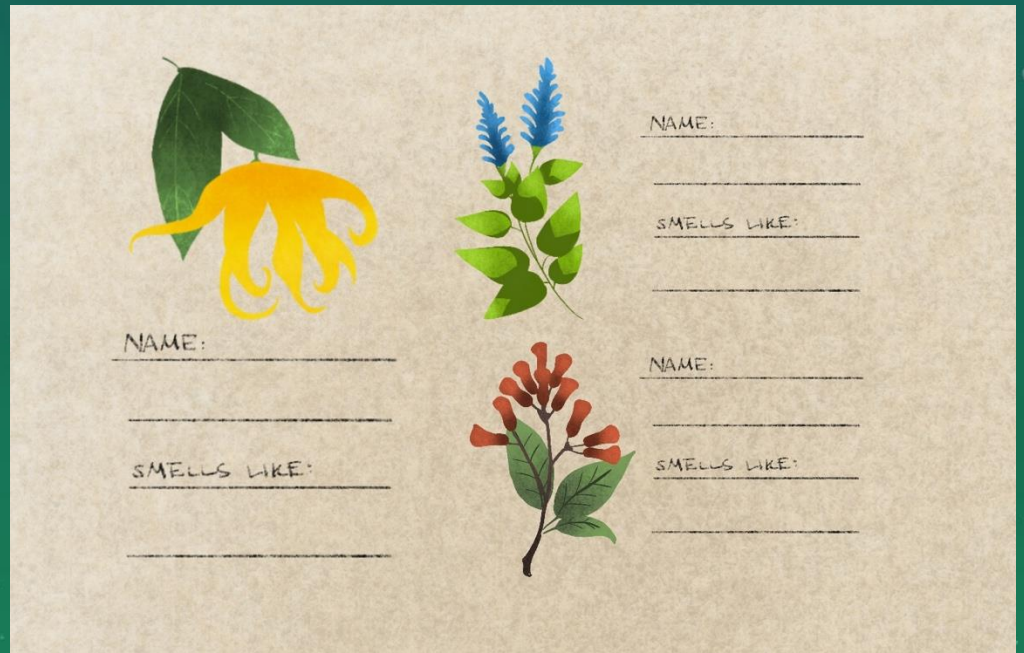


Before entering, explorers will scan their unique wristband which tells the system to upload the information they've acquired to their personal Explorer's Account.

Plants

This is our smell-based activity lead by Pacha, the Skunk AI.

The goal is for explorers to equate the alien plants with their Earth counterparts using their nose.



Once explorers have completed their rover expedition, they will bring the pictures they've collected back to the plant science station.

This station will be full of fake alien plants that explorers will visually match to their photos.

Each plant will have a fragrance so explorers can match the smell to the similar plant on Earth.

After they've identified the smell, they will get a sticker for their Explorer's Journal where they can include the information they've discovered.

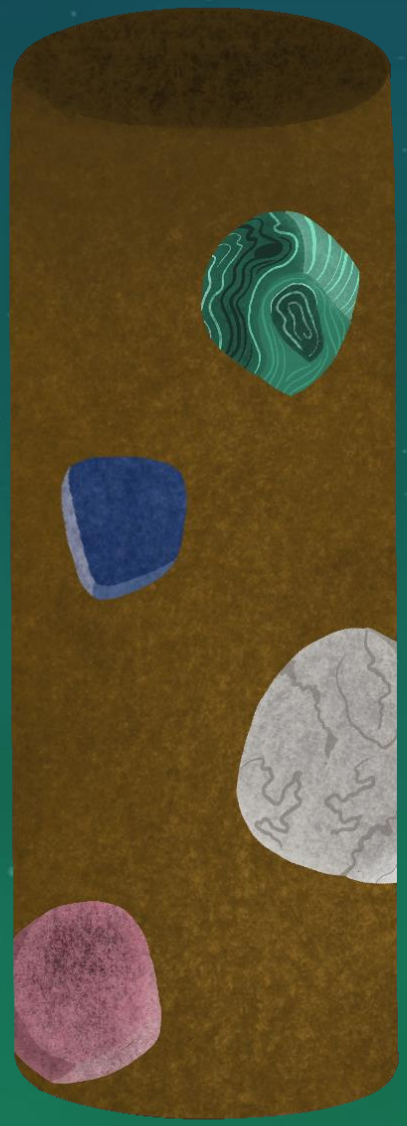
Minerals

At the Minerals station (lead by our Ostrich AI - Terra), explorers will bring the digital core samples they've extracted to this science station.

They will exchange their virtual collection for a tangible core sample to experience their findings through touch.

There will be tables set up for small groups or individuals where they can dig through the sample and retrieve individual stones.

Then they will have a reference chart of Earth based stones that describe the look and feel of the mineral. Once they are able to match the stone to its Earth counterpart they will receive a sticker for their Explorer's Journal



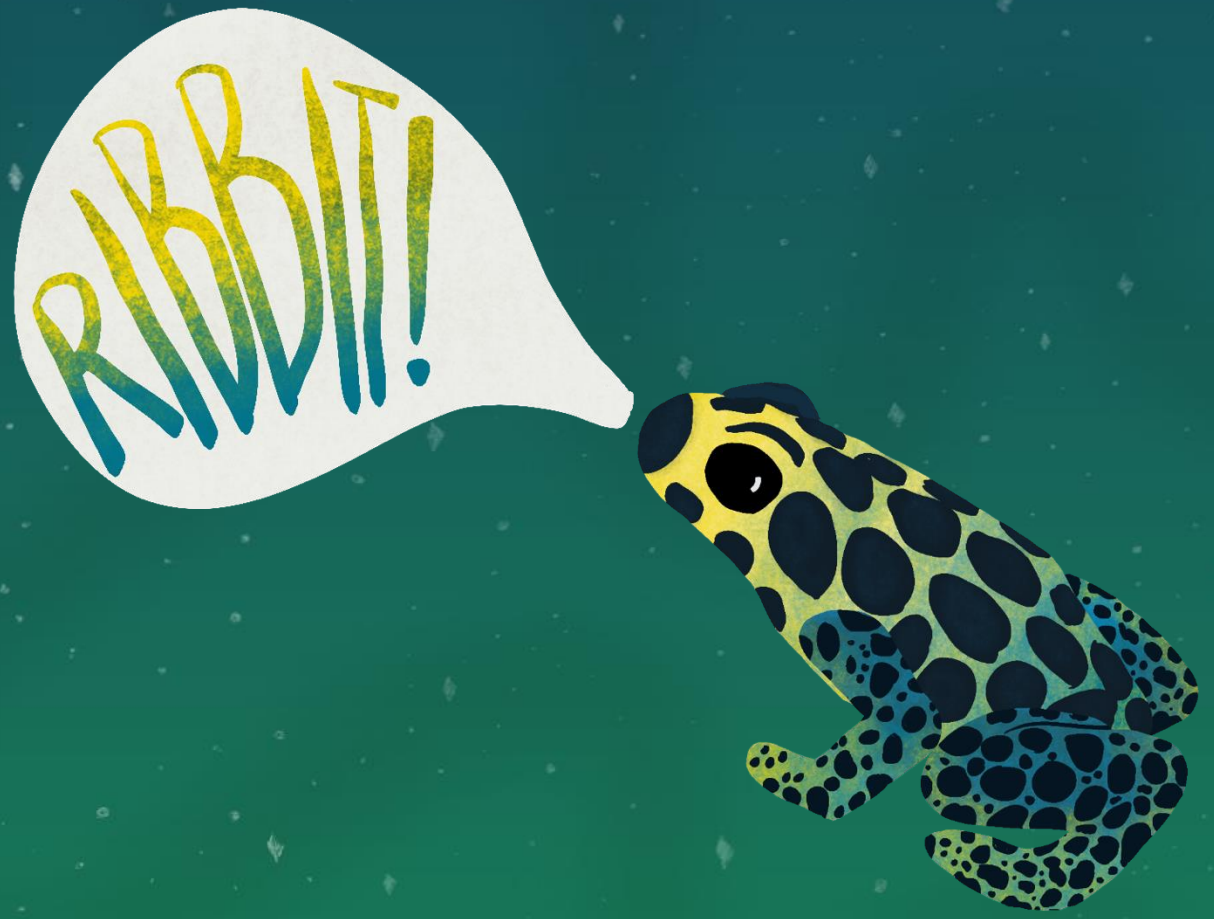
Animals

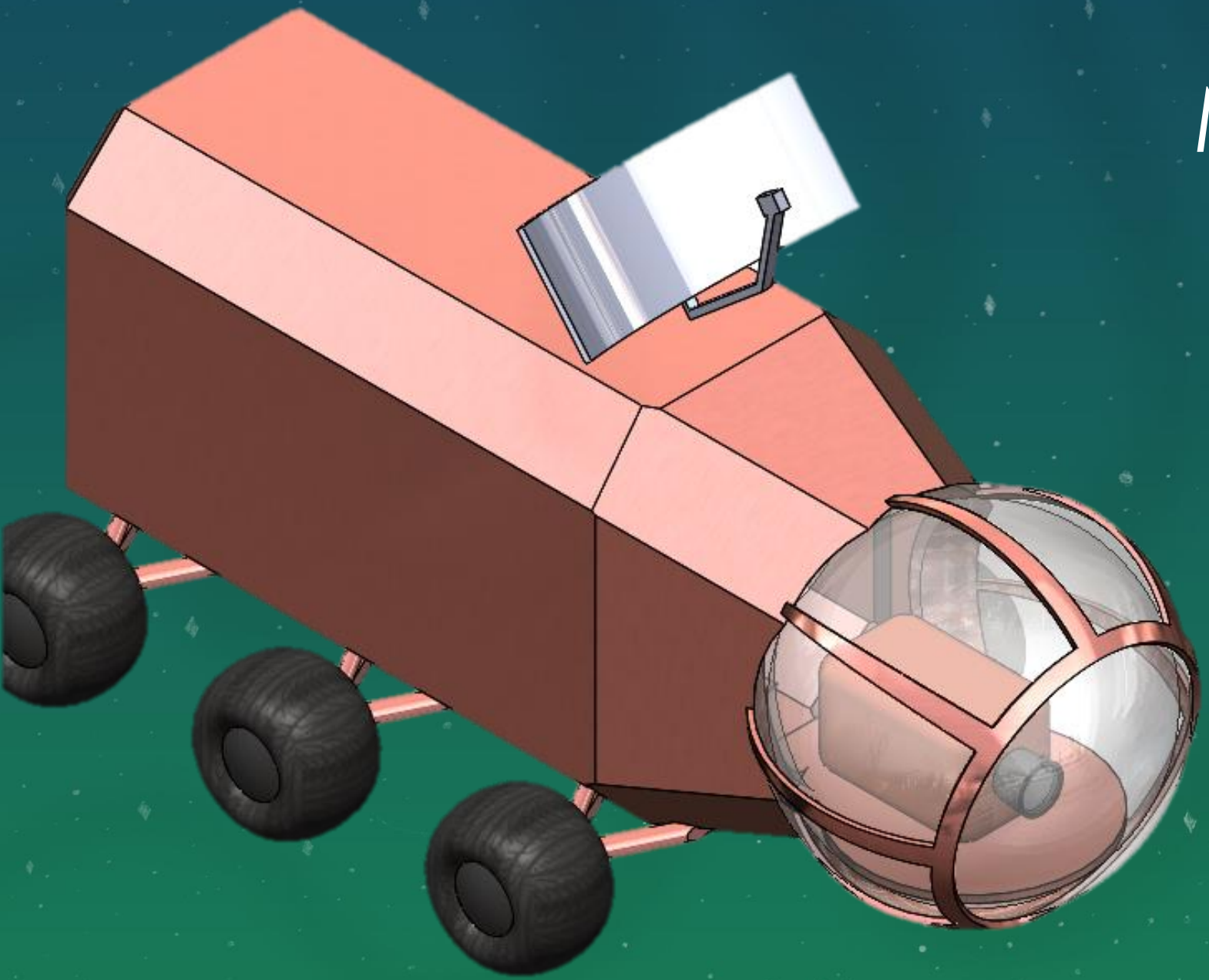
This activity station utilizes sound and is lead by our super sonic Bat AI, Suki.

While a major part of The Atlas Rover experience requires visual information, we wanted one station to be sound based so that users who are visually impaired could access it.

Explorers will collect recordings of animals on their rover expedition. Then they'll bring these sounds back here to compare them to a catalog Earth based animal noises.

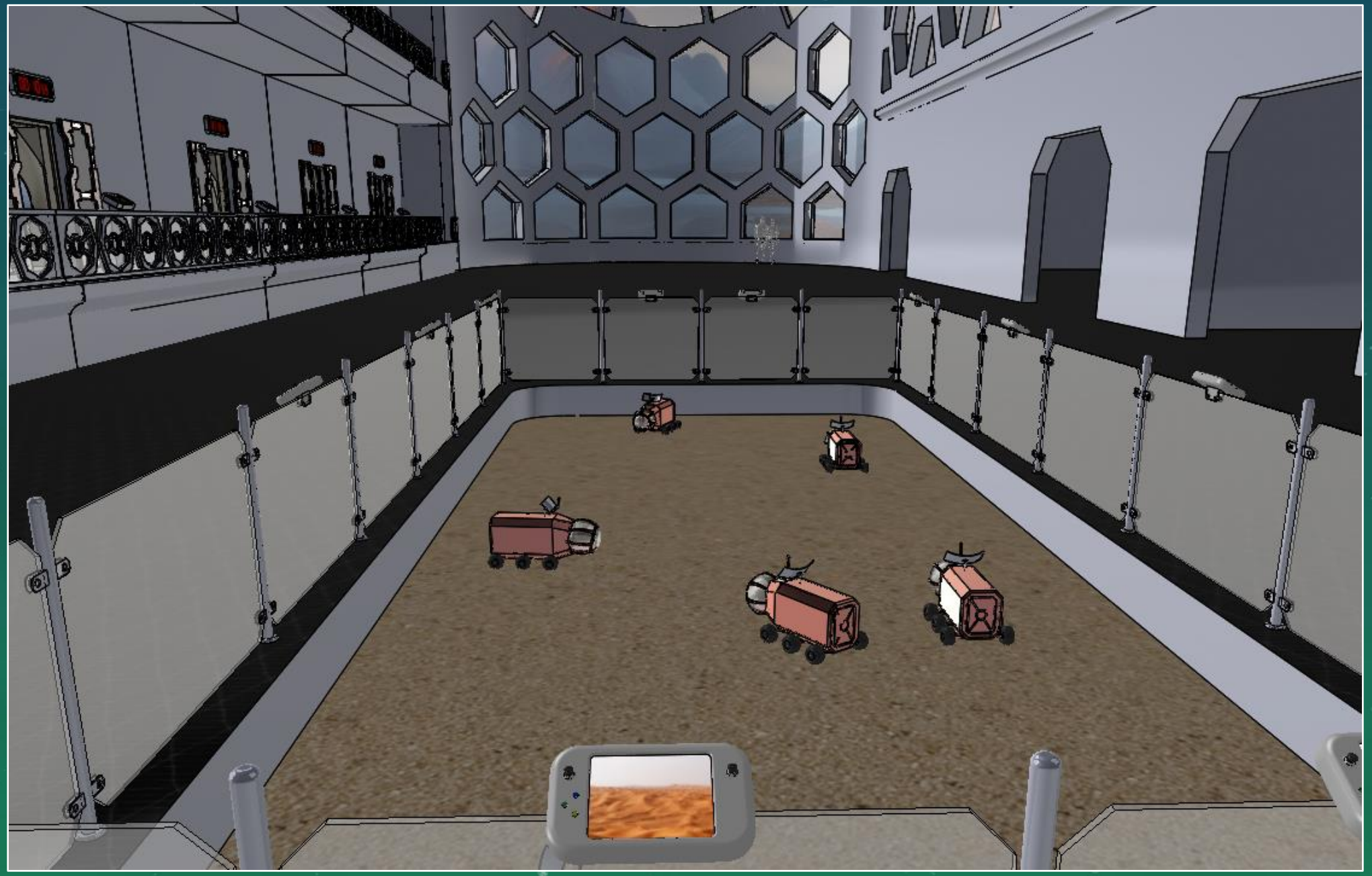
The stickers for this station (and all stations) will be textured so there is a unique feel even if you can't see it.





Mini Rover Pit

In the middle of our facility is the Mini Rover Pit, which will allow explorers to practice their rover driving skills.



View of the Mini Rover Pit from the perspective of an explorer

Scalability

As we created this project, we filtered everything through a lens of accessibility. We want as many people as possible to enjoy this experience, hence the multi-sensorial approach to this experience.

In addition, we wanted to build something that could be available at multiple pricing points in a variety of locations.

The facility we are showcasing is over 30,000 sq. ft. However, The Atlas Rover can be experienced with just one 20 ft. x 25 ft. rover bay. This could allow The Atlas Rover to be offered in science museums, malls, touring exhibits, and more.

The VR technology also offers the opportunity for changing scenarios where you could implement a new virtual planet design without altering the facilities. This will allow for a brand new experience for repeat explorers.

THE ATLAS ROVER

REACTIVATE YOUR CURIOSITY!