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The Characterising Exoplanet Satellite (CHEOPS)

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The Characterising Exoplanet Satellite (CHEOPS) will be the first mission dedicated to the high-precision photometric follow-up of known exoplanets almost everywhere on the sky. CHEOPS will be systematically searching for transits of planets with known masses to determine their sizes and bulk densities. Thanks to its high photometric precision, CHEOPS will also provide accurate radii and densities for super-Earths and Neptunes discovered by the upcoming ground-based and space-borne transit surveys. By unveiling transits of known planets, measuring accurate light curves for newly-identified transiting planets, and providing on-the-fly characterisation for all of them, CHEOPS will reveal the “golden targets” for future spectrographs able to probe the planetary atmospheres. CHEOPS has been selected as the European Space Agency's first "small"-class mission as well as the next European exoplanet mission. It is scheduled for a launch in 2017. I will present the science objectives and top-level requirements of the mission, and provide an update on its current status.