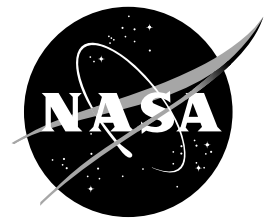


NASA Facts

National Aeronautics and
Space Administration



Marshall Space Flight Center
Huntsville, Alabama 35812

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NASA's Space Launch Initiative: **The Next Generation Launch Technology Program**



NASA is aggressively pursuing new space vehicle and flight technologies in an effort to expand America's presence in space – building a future in which people and businesses will routinely travel, work and live in Earth orbit and beyond.

NASA's Space Launch Initiative was introduced in February 2001 to develop technologies and identify options for future space transportation systems, performing the critical analysis necessary for NASA to eventually proceed with full-scale development of a new reusable launch vehicle system.

In November 2002, NASA revised the Integrated Space Transportation Plan to evolve the Space Launch Initiative to serve as a theme for two emerging programs. The first of these, the Orbital Space Plane, is intended to provide crew-escape and crew-transfer functions for the International Space Station. The second, the Next Generation Launch Technology program, is developing technologies needed for safe, routine space access for scientific exploration, commerce and national defense.

