FACT SHEET: NASA Unveils Transformative Initiatives to Achieve America's National Space Policy

IGNITING GOLDEN AGE OF EXPLORATION, INNOVATION

- NASA is aligning agencywide initiatives to achieve President Donald J. Trump's National Space Policy and advance American leadership in space.
- Actions announced at NASA's "Ignition" event prioritize the Artemis program launch cadence, a robust U.S. presence in low Earth orbit (LEO), the creation of a Moon Base, breakthrough science, space nuclear power and propulsion, and investment in the NASA workforce to deliver on the agency's mission with urgency.

GOING BACK TO THE MOON: ARTEMIS, ARCHITECTURE UPDATES

- Artemis cadence: The announcements build on recently outlined updates to the Artemis program, including standardizing the SLS (Space Launch System) rocket configuration, adding an additional mission in 2027, and undertaking at least one surface landing every year thereafter.
- Artemis III (2027): Focused test mission in Earth orbit to dock with one or both lunar landing systems and validate integrated systems and operations in advance of the Artemis IV lunar landing.
- Artemis IV and V (2028): Completion of lunar landings
- Post–Artemis V: Increasing use of commercially procured, reusable hardware to support frequent and affordable crewed lunar surface missions, initially targeting landings every six months, with cadence rising as capabilities mature.
- NASA intends to pause Gateway in its current form and shift focus to surface infrastructure that enables sustained operations. Applicable equipment will be repurposed, and international partner commitments leveraged to meet objectives.
- Near-term acquisitions: NASA announced multiple Request for Information (RFI) and draft Request for Proposals (RFP) to increase progress toward national objectives.

BUILDING THE MOON BASE: THREE PHASES

- Phase One: Build, Test, and Learn
    - Shift from unique, infrequent missions to a repeatable, modular approach.
    - Use CLPS (Commercial Lunar Payload Services) initiative and LTV (Lunar Terrain Vehicle) to increase tempo of lunar activity.
    - Advance mobility, power generation, communications, navigation, surface operations, and a broad spectrum of scientific investigations.
- Phase Two: Establish Early Infrastructure

    - Transition to semi-habitable infrastructure and regular logistics supporting recurring astronaut operations.
    - Integrate major international contributions, including JAXA's (Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency) pressurized rover, and potential partner scientific payloads, rovers, and transportation/infrastructure capabilities.
- Phase Three: Enable Continuous Human Presence
    - As cargo-capable human landing systems (HLS) come online, deliver heavier infrastructure needed for a continuous presence on the lunar base.
    - Include ASI's (Italian Space Agency) Multipurpose Habitats (MPH), CSA's (Canadian Space Agency) Lunar Utility Vehicle, and opportunities for additional contributions in habitation, surface mobility, and logistics.

ENSURING AMERICAN PRESENCE IN LOW EARTH ORBIT

- The International Space Station has enabled more than 4,000 research investigations by more than 5,000 researchers from 26 countries for more than two decades. The International Space Station cannot operate indefinitely. The transition to commercial stations must be thoughtful, deliberate, and structured to long-term industry success.
- Additional LEO strategy (International Space Station anchored):
    - NASA will procure a government owned Core Module that attaches to the International Space Station.
    - Commercial modules would be validated using station capabilities and later detach into free flight.
    - As technical/operational readiness and market demand mature, stations would detach and NASA becomes one of many customers purchasing commercial services.
- Stimulating the orbital economy: Expand industry opportunities—private astronaut missions, commander seat sales, joint missions, multiple module competitions, and prize-based awards.
- Near-term industry engagement: An industry RFI opens March 25 to inform partnership structures, financing, and risk mitigation.

ADVANCING WORLD CHANGING DISCOVERY WITH SCIENCE MISSIONS

- Today's breakthroughs:
    - James Webb Space Telescope is transforming our understanding of the early universe.
    - Parker Solar Probe has flown through the Sun's atmosphere.
    - NASA has demonstrated planetary defense by deflecting asteroids.

    - Earth science data is heavily used by U.S. companies, agriculture, and disaster relief.
    - On the International Space Station, NASA Science is conducting groundbreaking experiments in quantum science.
- Near-term missions:
    - Nancy Grace Space Telescope, launching as soon as this fall, will advance our understanding of dark energy and set a new standard for large mission management.
    - Dragonfly, a nuclear-powered octocopter, launches in 2028, arriving at Saturn's moon Titan in 2034 to explore its rich organic environment.
    - In 2028, NASA will launch and deliver ESA's Rosalind Franklin Rover to Mars; NASA's mass spectrometer for MOMA will enable the most advanced detection/analysis of organic matter ever conducted on Mars.
    - A new Earth science mission launching next year will measure, for the first time, the evolution of convective storm dynamics to improve extreme weather prediction up to six hours before events.
- Accelerating lunar science via CLPS:
    - Targeting up to 30 robotic landings starting in 2027, with payload opportunities for rovers, hoppers, and drones with contributions welcomed from industry, academia, and international partners.
    - Near-term payloads: MoonFall hopper drones, CADRE rover, VIPER rover and LuSEE Night.
    - RFI released March 24:
        - Solicits payloads aligned to NASA science/technology goals for additional 2027 and 2028 flights
        - Enables students and researchers nationwide to put instruments on the lunar surface
        - Solicits payloads for future Mars missions, including the Mars Telecom Network and a nuclear technology demonstration.
- Strengthening "Science as a Service" & partnerships:
    - NASA intends to partner with philanthropic and privately funded research organizations with aligned objectives.
    - Additional RFIs released March 24 will strengthen Science as a Service and commercial capabilities, streamlining legacy operations and focusing investment on transformational missions only NASA can lead.

- Public reveal: NASA will unveil new images of Saturn from James Webb Space Telescope and Hubble, showing unprecedented detail in infrared and visible wavelengths.

AMERICA UNDERWAY ON NUCLEAR POWER IN SPACE

- In response to the National Space Policy, NASA announced it will launch Space Reactor1 (SR-1) Freedom, the first nuclear-powered interplanetary spacecraft, to Mars before the end of 2028, demonstrating advanced nuclear electric propulsion in deep space.
- Nuclear electric propulsion enables efficient mass transport and high-power missions beyond Jupiter, where solar arrays are ineffective.
- Upon arrival at Mars, SR-1 Freedom will deploy the Skyfall payload of Ingenuity class helicopters to continue Red Planet exploration.
- SR-1 Freedom will pave the way for nuclear hardware, set regulatory and launch precedent, and activate the industrial base for future fission power systems across propulsion, surface, and long duration missions, in partnership with the U.S. Department of Energy.

INVESTING IN NASA'S WORKFORCE

- NASA is rebuilding core competencies, converting thousands of contractor positions to civil service, and restoring the engineering, technical, and operational strengths expected of the world's premier space organization.
- Expanded opportunities for interns and early career professionals; with U.S. Office of Personnel Management and NASA Force, NASA is creating new pathways for experienced industry talent through term-based appointments.

IMPLEMENTATION, NEXT STEPS

- Changes announced March 24 will be implemented over the coming months.
- NASA will embed subject matter experts across the supply chain, at every major vendor, subcontractor, and critical path component, to challenge assumptions, solve problems, accelerate production, and ensure the right outcomes are achieved.
- Through these initiatives, NASA is strengthening its ability to deliver on the President's National Space Policy and ensure continued American superiority in space.

NASA OCOMM CONTACTS:

Bethany Stevens / George Alderman