



**FULL COMMITTEE**

**HEARING CHARTER**

*“A Review of the President’s Budget Request for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration for Fiscal Year 2027”*

**Wednesday, April 22, 2026**

**10:00 a.m.**

**2318 Rayburn House Office Building**

**Purpose**

The purpose of the hearing is to review the Administration’s Fiscal Year 2027 (FY27) budget request for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA).

**Witnesses**

- **The Honorable Jared Isaacman**, Administrator, NASA.

**Overarching Questions**

- What new initiatives and terminations are proposed in the FY27 budget request for NASA?
- How does the proposed budget allocate funding among NASA’s human exploration, science, space technology, and aeronautics objectives?
- Does the President’s Budget Request reflect and fund the initiatives that were announced during the NASA Ignition event?

## **Background**

The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) is the world's leading civil space agency. Through its space exploration and scientific research activities, NASA strengthens our understanding of our home planet, Earth, and the universe around it. NASA maintains a workforce of approximately 18,000 civil servants based in centers and facilities across the country.<sup>1</sup> The agency carries out missions in science, human spaceflight, space technology, aeronautics, and STEM education. In addition to its headquarters in Washington, DC, the agency operates nine Federal research facilities: Goddard Space Flight Center (GSFC) in Greenbelt, MD; Kennedy Space Center (KSC) in Merritt Island, FL; Langley Research Center (LARC) in Hampton, VA; Glenn Research Center (GRC) in Cleveland, OH; Johnson Space Center (JSC) in Houston, TX; Ames Research Center (ARC) in Mountain View, CA; Armstrong Flight Research Center (AFRC) at Edwards Air Force Base in CA; Marshall Space Flight Center (MSFC) in Huntsville, AL; and Stennis Space Center (SSC) in Bay St. Louis, MS. The Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL) in Pasadena, CA, serves as a NASA-sponsored Federally Funded Research and Development Center (FFRDC) operated by the California Institute of Technology. NASA also operates the Wallops Flight Facility (WFF) in Wallops Island, VA, the White Sands Test Facility (WSTF) near Las Cruces, NM, the Neil Armstrong Test Facility in Sandusky, OH, the Katherine Johnson Independent Verification and Validation (IV&V) Facility in Fairmont, WV, and the Michoud Assembly Facility (MAF) east of New Orleans, Louisiana.<sup>2</sup>

## **Budget Request**

The President's FY27 budget request was released on April 3, 2026. The Administration requested \$18.829 billion for NASA in FY27. This represents a decrease of \$5.61 billion (23%) from FY26 enacted appropriations. On March 18, 2026, NASA released its FY25 Spending Plan, which outlines how the agency plans to spend appropriated funding.<sup>3</sup> As of April 20, 2026, NASA has not released its FY26 Spending Plan. Comparisons of the FY27 budget request to previous year funding are unknown at the subaccount level.

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<sup>1</sup> NASA, *NASA Organization*, <https://www.nasa.gov/organization/>

<sup>2</sup> NASA, *Centers and Facilities*, <https://www.nasa.gov/centers-and-facilities/>

<sup>3</sup> NASA FY25 Spending Plan, <https://www.nasa.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/fy-2025-spend-plan-march-2026.pdf?emrc=69e60e461f8c4>

Budget Authority (\$ in millions)	Fiscal Year						
	Enacted 2025	Enacted 2026	Request 2027	2028	2029	2030	2031
<b>NASA Total</b>	<b>24,838.3</b>	<b>24,438.3</b>	<b>18,829.1</b>	<b>18,829.1</b>	<b>18,829.1</b>	<b>18,829.1</b>	<b>18,829.1</b>
<b>Exploration</b>	<b>7,666.2</b>	<b>7,783.0</b>	<b>8,513.9</b>	<b>8,493.9</b>	<b>8,173.9</b>	<b>8,153.9</b>	<b>8,133.9</b>
Moon and Mars Transportation System	--	--	4,219.1	3,888.1	3,172.2	3,659.4	3,659.4
Moon and Mars Systems Development	--	--	3,810.1	3,506.5	3,237.7	3,290.5	3,214.5
Human Exploration Requirements & Architecture	--	--	484.7	1,099.4	1,764.0	1,204.0	1,260.0
<b>Space Operations</b>	<b>4,220.0</b>	<b>4,175.0</b>	<b>3,047.2</b>	<b>3,047.2</b>	<b>3,347.2</b>	<b>3,347.2</b>	<b>3,347.2</b>
Commercial LEO Development	--	--	299.7	299.8	599.8	599.8	1,577.2
International Space Station	--	--	921.2	921.2	921.3	921.3	921.3
Space Transportation	--	--	1,152.5	1,152.4	1,152.3	1,152.3	174.7
Space and Flight Support (SFS)	--	--	673.8	673.8	673.8	673.8	674.0
<b>Space Technology</b>	<b>1,100.0</b>	<b>920.5</b>	<b>624.3</b>	<b>644.3</b>	<b>664.3</b>	<b>684.3</b>	<b>704.3</b>
<b>Science</b>	<b>7,334.2</b>	<b>7,250.0</b>	<b>3,893.9</b>	<b>3,893.9</b>	<b>3,893.9</b>	<b>3,893.9</b>	<b>3,893.9</b>
Earth Science	--	--	1,021.2	1,102.7	1,080.7	1,022.3	1,019.9
Planetary Science	--	--	1,875.7	1,847.2	1,819.2	1,884.6	1,885.7
Astrophysics	--	--	552.4	510.4	530.4	523.4	524.7
Heliophysics	--	--	419.6	408.6	438.6	438.6	438.6
Biological and Physical Sciences	--	--	25.0	25.0	25.0	25.0	25.0
<b>Aeronautics</b>	<b>935.0</b>	<b>935.0</b>	<b>609.5</b>	<b>609.5</b>	<b>609.5</b>	<b>609.5</b>	<b>609.5</b>
<b>STEM Engagement</b>	<b>143.0</b>	<b>143.0</b>	<b>--</b>	<b>--</b>	<b>--</b>	<b>--</b>	<b>--</b>
<b>Safety, Security, and Mission Services</b>	<b>3,092.3</b>	<b>3,000.0</b>	<b>1,998.6</b>	<b>1,998.6</b>	<b>1,998.6</b>	<b>1,998.6</b>	<b>1,998.6</b>
Mission Services & Capabilities	--	--	1,536.7	1,536.7	1,536.7	1,536.7	1,536.7
Engineering, Safety, & Operations	--	--	462.0	462.0	462.0	462.0	462.0
<b>Construction and Environmental Compliance and Restoration</b>	<b>300.0</b>	<b>185.3</b>	<b>100.6</b>	<b>100.6</b>	<b>100.6</b>	<b>100.6</b>	<b>100.6</b>
Construction of Facilities	--	--	65.5	65.5	65.5	65.5	65.5
Environmental Compliance and Restoration	--	--	35.1	35.1	35.1	35.1	35.1
<b>Inspector General</b>	<b>47.6</b>	<b>46.5</b>	<b>41.1</b>	<b>41.1</b>	<b>41.1</b>	<b>41.1</b>	<b>41.1</b>
<b>NASA Total</b>	<b>24,838.3</b>	<b>24,438.3</b>	<b>18,829.1</b>	<b>18,829.1</b>	<b>18,829.1</b>	<b>18,829.1</b>	<b>18,829.1</b>

The programs in the Administration’s FY27 NASA budget proposal are summarized below by major organization (directorate or office). The budget numbers provided are based on the information in the NASA FY27 Full Budget Request document,<sup>4</sup> and the legislative text and explanatory statement of the Commerce, Justice, Science; Energy and Water Development; and Interior and Environment Appropriations Act, 2026.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>4</sup> NASA, *FY 2027 Budget Estimates*, (April 3, 2026), <https://www.nasa.gov/fiscal-year-2027-budget-request/>

<sup>5</sup> See Title III of the Commerce, Justice, Science; Energy and Water Development; and Interior and Environment Appropriations Act, 2026, Pub. L. No. 119-74 (2026), <https://www.congress.gov/bill/119th-congress/house-bill/6938/text>

## Exploration Systems Development Mission Directorate

Budget Authority (in \$ millions)	Enacted FY 2025	Enacted FY 2026	Request FY 2027	FY 2028	FY 2029	FY 2030	FY 2031
Moon and Mars Transportation System	--	--	4,219.1	3,888.1	3,172.2	3,659.4	3,659.4
Moon and Mars Systems Development	--	--	3,810.1	3,506.5	3,237.7	3,290.5	3,214.5
Human Exploration Requirements & Architecture	--	--	484.7	1,099.4	1,764.0	1,204.0	1,260.0
<b>Total Budget</b>	<b>7,666.2</b>	<b>7,783.0</b>	<b>8,513.9</b>	<b>8,493.9</b>	<b>8,173.9</b>	<b>8,153.9</b>	<b>8,133.9</b>

The Administration’s FY27 request for the Exploration Systems Development Mission Directorate (ESDMD) is \$8.51 billion, an increase of \$730.9 million (9.39%) compared to FY26 enacted. The funding for ESDMD is represented through the “Exploration” budget line.

ESDMD manages the Moon and Mars (M&M) program and supports the development of systems and capabilities required for human space exploration beyond low Earth orbit (LEO). Missions in this directorate are sorted into three themes: M&M Transportation System, M&M Systems Development, and Human Exploration Requirements & Architecture. The most prominent ESDMD project is the Artemis campaign, which seeks to return astronauts to the lunar surface and to establish a human presence at the lunar South Pole. In FY25, a total of \$7.420 billion in mandatory funding was appropriated to the ESDMD through enactment of the Working Families Tax Cut (WFTC) Act, Public Law 119-21, with \$1.775 billion of such funds available for obligation in FY27. Of those funds, \$750 million is requested for Gateway, and \$1.025 billion is requested for the Space Launch System (SLS). Other key changes in the budget request include the proposed transition of the Lunar Gateway program into a foundation for a future Moon base, and additional investments in future human missions to Mars.

*M&M Transportation System:* The FY27 request for the Moon and Mars Transportation System is \$4.22 billion, a \$567.1 million increase (15.5%) from FY26 enacted. The M&M Transportation System theme is charged with developing three systems (the Orion crew vehicle, the SLS, and Exploration Ground Systems (EGS)) that will support NASA's Artemis Campaign and other human deep space exploration efforts. The FY27 request includes \$1.22 billion for Orion, a decrease of \$199.2 million (14%) compared to FY26 enacted. It includes \$1.495 billion for SLS, an increase of \$187.3 million (14.3%) compared to FY26 enacted. Additionally, it includes \$757.9 million for EGS, a decrease of \$165.1 million (17.9%) from FY26 enacted.

*M&M Systems Development.* The FY27 request for the Moon and Mars Systems Development is \$3.81 billion, an \$899.1 million increase (30.9%) from FY26 enacted. The theme manages five programs: Extravehicular Activity (xEVA) and Human Surface Mobility Program (EHP), the Human Landing System (HLS), Advanced Exploration Systems (AES), Mars Technology, and the Human Research Program (HRP). The Gateway program was removed from the FY27

budget request, despite the President’s Budget Request (PBR) for FY26 previously requesting \$854.5 million for the program.<sup>6</sup>

*Human Exploration Requirements & Architecture:* The FY27 request for Human Exploration Requirements & Architecture (HERA) is \$484.7 million. The HERA theme funds the Strategy and Architecture Office, which designs the roadmap for long-term exploration of the Moon and Mars program. Additionally, HERA funds the Future Systems program, which conducts pre-project formulation activities that will lead to future capabilities in the Moon and Mars Architecture.

### Space Operations Mission Directorate

Budget Authority (in \$ millions)	Enacted FY 2025	Enacted FY 2026	Request FY 2027	FY 2028	FY 2029	FY 2030	FY 2031
Commercial LEO Development	--	--	299.7	299.8	599.8	599.8	1,577.2
International Space Station	--	--	921.2	921.2	921.3	921.3	921.3
Space Transportation	--	--	1,152.5	1,152.4	1,152.3	1,152.3	174.7
Space and Flight Support (SFS)	--	--	673.8	673.8	673.8	673.8	674.0
<b>Total Budget</b>	<b>4,220.0</b>	<b>4,175.0</b>	<b>3,047.2</b>	<b>3,047.2</b>	<b>3,347.2</b>	<b>3,347.2</b>	<b>3,347.2</b>

The Administration’s FY27 request for the Space Operations Mission Directorate (SOMD) is \$3.047 billion, a decrease of \$1.128 billion (27%) compared to FY26 enacted. The SOMD account is comprised of four themes: Commercial LEO Development, the International Space Station (ISS), Space Transportation, and Space and Flight Support (SFS).

*Commercial LEO Development:* The FY27 budget request for Commercial LEO Development (CLD) is \$299.7 million, an increase of \$26.7 million (9.8%) compared to FY26 enacted. Following the planned retirement and deorbit of ISS, NASA intends to buy services from CLD providers to continue its microgravity research and maintain a U.S. human presence in LEO.

*International Space Station:* The FY27 request for the International Space Station (ISS) is \$912.2 million, a \$318.8 million decrease (25.7%) from FY26 enacted. The ISS is the largest and most complex space-based facility ever created, and it requires maintenance and a continuous crew on-orbit until its planned deorbit. The FY27 budget request focuses on maintaining safe operations on station, while supporting U.S. and Russian crew and cargo flights, as well as Private Astronaut Missions (PAMs).

*Space Transportation:* The FY27 request for Space Transportation is \$1.152 billion. Of the total request, \$1.071 billion is dedicated to the Crew and Cargo Program (C&CP), which facilitates the delivery of crew members and supplies to the ISS by civil, commercial, and international partners. The FY27 request for the U.S. Deorbit Vehicle (USDV) is \$238.6 million. The USDV will allow NASA to safely deorbit the space station into an uninhabited region of the ocean.

<sup>6</sup> NASA, *FY 2026 Budget Technical Supplement*, (2025), <https://www.nasa.gov/fy-2026-budget-request/>

NASA awarded a firm fixed price contract to SpaceX in June 2024 for USDV services. Additionally, FY27 requests \$81.6 million for the Commercial Crew Program (CCP).

*Space and Flight Support:* The FY27 request for Space and Flight Support (SFS) is \$673.8 million. SFS provides mission-critical space communications, launch and test services, and astronaut training for NASA and other government and non-government customer missions using NASA infrastructure. Key programs include the Space Communications and Navigation program, the Communications Services Program, the Human Space Flight Operations Program, and the Launch Services Program.

### Space Technology Mission Directorate

Budget Authority (in \$ millions)	Enacted FY 2025	Enacted FY 2026	Request FY 2027	FY 2028	FY 2029	FY 2030	FY 2031
SBIR and STTR	--	--	169.0	169.0	169.0	169.0	169.0
Space Transportation (GO)	--	--	86.1	105.3	117.2	135.2	151.3
Space to Surface Access (LAND)	--	--	46.5	47.4	50.6	50.9	53.2
Surface Infrastructure & Exploration (LIVE)	--	--	100.9	100.8	103.9	105.5	105.6
In-Space Infrastructure & Discovery (EXPAND)	--	--	66.8	66.8	67.2	67.2	68.0
Foundational Capabilities (ENABLE)	--	--	24.4	24.5	25.8	25.9	26.6
Catalysts & Innovative Mechanisms	--	--	130.7	130.5	130.7	130.7	130.7
<b>Total Budget</b>	<b>1,100.0</b>	<b>920.5</b>	<b>624.3</b>	<b>644.3</b>	<b>664.3</b>	<b>684.3</b>	<b>704.3</b>

The FY27 request for the Space Technology Mission Directorate (STMD) is \$624.3 million, a decrease of \$296.2 million (32.2%) from FY26 enacted. STMD advances U.S. space technology leadership through rapid development and demonstration of transformative capabilities. STMD includes seven programs: SBIR and STTR, Space Transportation (GO), Space to Surface Access (LAND), Surface Infrastructure & Exploration (LIVE), In-Space Infrastructure & Discovery (EXPAND), Foundational Capabilities (ENABLE), and Catalysts & Innovative Mechanisms. The request for STMD reflects NASA’s restructuring of the Directorate, transitioning from the legacy structure that grouped activities based on technology readiness level to a new structure that groups activities by the capability they provide.

*SBIR and STTR:* The FY27 request for the Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) and Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) program is \$169 million. The SBIR and STTR programs leverage U.S. small businesses to fund research and development in support of NASA’s missions. SBIR and STTR support the ongoing Artemis program by identifying and accelerating space technologies throughout the phases (Phase I, II, and Post Phase II). The SBIR and STTR programs are increasing award values for Phase I and II awards beginning in FY26, leading to the budget reflecting that NASA will fund approximately 250 selections in FY27.

*Space Transportation:* The FY27 request for the Space Transportation program is \$86.1 million. The Space Transportation program manages all STMD activities related to launch and reentry, propulsion, and cryogenic fluid management activities. The budget request shows the addition of

lunar surface propellant development activities, focused on enabling private-sector capabilities to produce, store, transfer, test, and transport rocket propellant on the lunar surface.

*Space to Surface Access:* The FY27 request for the Space to Surface Access (LAND) program is \$46.5 million. The Space to Surface Access program is developing technologies for Entry, Descent, and Landing, including sensors, materials, and models that allow higher-mass payloads to land. Additionally, LAND supports activities to improve capabilities to return spacecraft from LEO and deep space, specifically methods in precision landing and hazard avoidance to ensure safe re-entry and touchdown.

*Surface Infrastructure & Exploration:* The Administration's FY27 request for the Surface Infrastructure & Exploration (LIVE) program is \$100.9 million. The LIVE program develops technologies required to establish surface infrastructure capabilities used to explore and operate on both the Lunar and Martian surfaces. In the request, the Advanced Power & Thermal and Autonomous Systems & Robotics projects are transferred from the ENABLE program to the LIVE program to improve efficiency and collaboration. Additionally, the request supports the development and demonstration of commercial radioisotope power systems.

*In-Space Infrastructure & Discovery:* The FY27 request for the In-Space Infrastructure & Discovery (EXPAND) program is \$66.8 million. EXPAND supports and facilitates U.S. space commerce, the pace of exploration and discovery, and the development and demonstration of capabilities that support in-space manufacturing. Major changes from the request include the realignment of Flight Opportunities activities from the Catalysts program to EXPAND due to its better alignment with the goals and structure.

*Foundational Capabilities:* The FY27 request for the Foundational Capabilities (ENABLE) program is \$24.4 million. The ENABLE program aims to advance capabilities and technologies to allow human and scientific exploration of cis-lunar space and beyond. Key advancements include in-space manufacturing, thermoplastics for exploration, innovative processors, and software needed for missions for both industry and civil space.

*Catalysts & Innovative Mechanisms:* The FY27 request for the Catalysts and Innovative Mechanisms (Catalysts) program is \$130.7 million. The Catalysts program has a wide range of procurement and partnership mechanisms to help develop a pipeline of talent for NASA through partnering with industry, academia, other government agencies, and individual participants. The FY27 request proposes the Catalysts program to make awards in New Innovative Advanced Concepts, Early Career Initiative, and Space Technology Research Grants to nurture the pipeline of space technology talent.

## Science Mission Directorate

Budget Authority (in \$ millions)	Enacted FY 2025	Enacted FY 2026	Request FY 2027	FY 2028	FY 2029	FY 2030	FY 2031
Earth Science	--	--	1,021.2	1,102.7	1,080.7	1,022.3	1,019.9
Planetary Science	--	--	1,875.7	1,847.2	1,819.2	1,884.6	1,885.7
Astrophysics	--	--	552.4	510.4	530.4	523.4	524.7
Heliophysics	--	--	419.6	408.6	438.6	438.6	438.6
Biological and Physical Sciences	--	--	25.0	25.0	25.0	25.0	25.0
<b>Total Budget</b>	<b>7,334.2</b>	<b>7,250.0</b>	<b>3,893.9</b>	<b>3,893.9</b>	<b>3,893.9</b>	<b>3,893.9</b>	<b>3,893.9</b>

The Administration's FY27 request for the Science Mission Directorate (SMD) is \$3.89 billion, a \$3.36 billion decrease (46.3%) from FY26 enacted. SMD missions enable scientific research and advancement through space-based operations, visiting bodies in the solar system, galaxy, and beyond. NASA's activities are guided by the current science plan<sup>7</sup> and the priorities and recommendations of the National Academies decadal surveys. NASA SMD is comprised of five discipline divisions: Earth Science, Planetary Science, Astrophysics, Heliophysics, and Biological and Physical Sciences. Each Division funds research, development, and operation of 134 missions from formulation through extended operations.<sup>8</sup>

*Earth Science:* The FY27 request for the Earth Science Division is \$1.02 billion, a decrease of \$1.13 billion (52.6%) from FY26 enacted. The Earth Science Division focuses on deepening our understanding of our home planet and its interconnected systems. The FY27 request supports one final government satellite for the Landsat program, while supporting advancements to Sustained Land Imaging to enable a commercial solution for Landsat. The request reduces funding for Earth System Explorers' Future missions, with planned adjustments to the implementation schedule for the mission selected for FY26. Additionally, the request reduces funding for Earth Science Technology, terminating or delaying activities within the Instrument Incubator project and Advanced Technology Initiatives.

*Planetary Science:* The FY27 request for the Planetary Science Division is \$1.875 billion, a decrease of \$665.3 million (26.2%) from FY26 enacted. NASA's Planetary Science Division has advanced the scientific understanding of the solar system. Missions have sent NASA spacecraft to every planet and a variety of small bodies, gathering data and making observations to better understand how planets were formed, the different types of evolutionary paths between planets, and evidence of life beyond Earth. The Division also funds missions and research related to planetary defense, which involves the identification, characterization, and possible mitigation of asteroids and comets that are potentially hazardous to Earth. The FY27 budget request supports scientific instruments onboard future Artemis missions, specifically the handheld instruments

<sup>7</sup> NASA, "Science 2020-2024: A Vision for Scientific Excellence (2025-2026 update)," (March 10, 2025), <https://assets.science.nasa.gov/content/dam/science/cds/about-us/2025/2025-2026-NASA-Science-Plan.pdf>

<sup>8</sup> NASA, *About NASA Science*, <https://science.nasa.gov/about-us/>

used to take measurements on the lunar surface for sample return. Additionally, the request supports the completion of the Multi-Mission Radioisotope Thermoelectric Generator (MMRTG) and nuclear launch authorization for the Dragonfly mission. The Mars 2020 Perseverance Rover, currently exploring the Martian surface, and other Planetary Science Research and Analysis projects are requested to be decreased to fund other priorities.

*Astrophysics:* The FY27 budget request for the Astrophysics Division is \$552.4 million, a \$1.04 billion decrease (65.4%) from FY26 enacted. NASA's Astrophysics Division studies how the universe began, evolved, how it currently works, and where life may exist beyond Earth. The budget supports operation of the Hubble and Webb telescopes, development of the Roman Space Telescope, and operations of Spectro-Photometer for the History of the Universe, Epoch of Reionization, and Ices Explorer (SPHEREx), Transiting Exoplanet Survey Satellite (TESS), Imaging X-ray Polarimetry Explorer (IXPE), Nuclear Spectroscopic Telescope Array (NuSTAR), and X-ray Multi-Mirror Mission; all with requested reduction in their funding. The FY27 request reduces funding for the Habitable Worlds Observatory Technology Maturation Project, a mission dedicated to searching and characterizing habitable planets beyond the solar system.

*Heliophysics:* The FY27 request for the Heliophysics Division is \$419.6 million, a \$455.4 million decrease (52%) from FY26 enacted. The Heliophysics Division is dedicated to understanding the Sun, its atmosphere, and planetary space environments to further understand the relationship between the Sun and other planetary bodies, particularly Earth. The FY27 request consolidates and reduces data centers, data archives, and community modeling into program elements within Data and Modeling Services. Additionally, it reduces funding in Heliophysics Directed Research and Technology to account for lower than planned future workforce needs.

*Biological and Physical Sciences:* The FY27 budget request for the Biological and Physical Sciences (BPS) Division is \$25 million, a \$61 million decrease (70.9%) from FY26 enacted. The Division supports research in space to obtain insights into how biological and physical systems function under altered gravity and deep-space radiation. BPS has five goals, which align with the 2023-2032 Decadal Survey, in Quantum Leaps, Precision Health, Space Crops, Foundations, and Space Labs. Under reduced funding, the budget request focuses support on two new projects: Exploration Science and Quantum Science. The Exploration Science project supports research efforts on high-priority activities to support future Moon and Mars missions. Building on organ-chip research from Artemis II, scientists will use microphysiological systems (tiny models of human tissue) to study how space conditions affect health. The Quantum Science project funds the Cold Atom Laboratory, currently conducting experiments on the ISS, along with other experiments used to further NASA's understanding of physics and scientific theories.

## Aeronautics

Budget Authority (in \$ millions)	Enacted FY 2025	Enacted FY 2026	Request FY 2027	FY 2028	FY 2029	FY 2030	FY 2031
Airspace Operations and Safety Program	--	--	96.8	112.8	115.5	117.5	117.5
Advanced Air Vehicles Program	--	--	191.1	192.8	186.4	175.6	175.6
Integrated Aviation Systems Program	--	--	152.2	95.6	90.2	90.2	90.1
Transformative Aero Concepts Program	--	--	79.3	113.2	117.3	121.1	121.1
Aerosciences Evaluation and Test Capabilities	--	--	90.1	95.1	100.1	105.1	105.2
<b>Total Budget</b>	<b>935.0</b>	<b>935.0</b>	<b>609.5</b>	<b>609.5</b>	<b>609.5</b>	<b>609.5</b>	<b>609.5</b>

The Administration's FY27 request for the Aeronautics Research Mission Directorate (ARMD) is \$609.5 million, a \$325.5 million decrease (34.8%) from FY26 enacted. ARMD focuses on the development of transformative air travel technologies, helping to improve efficiency, capacity, and safety while reducing noise and emissions. NASA's Aeronautics Strategic Implementation Plan guides ARMD's activities.<sup>9</sup> The plan includes six strategic thrusts: Safe, Efficient Growth in Global Operations; Innovation in Commercial Supersonic Aircraft; Ultra-Efficient Subsonic Transports; Safe, Quiet, and Affordable Vertical Lift Air Vehicles; In-Time System-Wide Safety Assurance; and Assured Autonomy for Aviation Transformation.

ARMD manages and funds five programs: Airspace Operations and Safety Program (AOSP), Advanced Air Vehicles Program (AAVP), Integrated Aviation Systems Program (IASP), Transformative Aeronautics Concepts Program (TACP), and Aerosciences Evaluation and Test Capabilities Portfolio (AETC).

*Airspace Operations and Safety Program:* The FY27 budget request for the Airspace Operations and Safety Program (AOSP) is \$96.8 million. The request focuses on the Federal Aviation Administration-led Brand New Air Traffic Control System to enhance safety, reduce air transport costs, reduce delays, and support new aviation users in the national airspace. Additionally, AOSP has a planned funding increase to develop airspace management capability for Advanced Air Mobility vehicles.

*Advanced Air Vehicles Program:* The FY27 budget request for the Advanced Air Vehicles Program (AAVP) is \$191.1 million. The AAVP researches, evaluates, and develops technologies and capabilities needed for next-generation aircraft systems. The budget request includes an increase for additional analysis of X-59 performance data, along with planned increases for advanced engine core demonstration.

*Integrated Aviation Systems Program:* The FY27 budget request for the Integrated Aviation Systems Program (IASP) is \$152.2 million. The IASP conducts research and demonstrations of advanced technologies in flight environments to transition them into future air vehicles and

<sup>9</sup> NASA, "NASA Aeronautics Strategic Implementation Plan 2023" (2025), <https://www.nasa.gov/eap-resources/eap-elements-of-the-nasa-aeronautics-strategic-implementation-plan/>

systems. The program has two major demonstration projects: the Subsonic Flight Demonstrator (SFD) and the Low Boom Flight Demonstrator (LBFD). The FY27 budget request includes a planned decrease for LBFD as the project moves into flight tests.

*Transformative Aeronautics Concepts Program:* The FY27 budget request for the Transformative Aeronautics Concepts Program (TACP) is \$79.3 million. TACP creates advanced and improved computational tools, technologies, and experimental capabilities for use by aeronautic partners, agency mission directorates, industry, and government partners. The budget highlights a focus on Common Research Model-High Lift performance testing, flight research for the Subscale Wind Tunnel & Flight Test, and advancements to NASA’s open-source software tools.

*Aerosciences Evaluation and Test Capabilities:* The FY27 budget request for the Aerosciences Evaluation and Test Capabilities (AETC) is \$90.1 million. The AETC portfolio executes strategic efforts to preserve and enhance research and test capabilities for NASA’s National Wind Tunnel facilities. The budget request intends to return three facilities: the Glenn Research Center 10-by-10-foot Supersonic Wind Tunnel, the Langley Research Center National Transonic Facility, and the Langley Research Center 4-foot Unitary Plan Wind Tunnel, from operational standby to operational mode, along with the other 9 AETC facilities.

### Office of STEM Engagement

Budget Authority (in \$ millions)	Enacted FY 2025	Enacted FY 2026	Request FY 2027	FY 2028	FY 2029	FY 2030	FY 2031
<b>Total Budget</b>	143.0	143.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

The Administration’s FY27 budget requests no funding for NASA’s Office of STEM Engagement (OSTEM). OSTEM manages four projects: National Space Grant College and Fellowship Project (Space Grant), Established Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (EPSCoR), Minority University Research and Education Project (MUREP), and Next Generation STEM project (Next Gen STEM), all proposed to be cut by the request. The request proposes to use the remaining balances under OSTEM to support the closeout of OSTEM activities.

### Safety, Security, and Mission Services

Budget Authority (in \$ millions)	Enacted FY 2025	Enacted FY 2026	Request FY 2027	FY 2028	FY 2029	FY 2030	FY 2031
Mission Services & Capabilities	--	--	1,536.7	1,536.7	1,536.7	1,536.7	1,536.7
Engineering, Safety, & Operations	--	--	462.0	462.0	462.0	462.0	462.0
<b>Total Budget</b>	3,092.3	3,000.0	1,998.6	1,998.6	1,998.6	1,998.6	1,998.6

The Administration’s FY27 budget request for the Safety, Security, and Mission Services (SSMS) account is \$1.99 billion, a \$1.001 billion decrease (33.4%) from FY26 enacted. SSMS is comprised of two themes: the Mission Services & Capabilities (MSaC) and Engineering, Safety,

& Operations (ESO). These programs provide services and capabilities to ensure NASA has the technical skills, financial resources, assets, and workforce to be optimally successful.

*Mission Services & Capabilities:* The FY27 budget request for Mission Services and Capabilities (MSaC) is \$1.54 billion. MSaC provides foundational business service and enterprise solutions agency-wide, through human capital, financial management, physical asset management, software and hardware services, communications, equal opportunity programs, legal services, small business program, procurement services, and safety services.

*Engineering, Safety, and Operations:* The FY27 budget request for Engineering, Safety, and Operations (ESO) is \$462 million. ESO supports NASA’s high standard of safety and mission assurance, promoting mission success. ESO is split between two programs: Agency Technical Authority (ATA) and Center Engineering, Safety, and Operations (CESO).

**Construction and Environmental Compliance and Restoration**

Budget Authority (in \$ millions)	Enacted FY 2025	Enacted FY 2026	Request FY 2027	FY 2028	FY 2029	FY 2030	FY 2031
Construction of Facilities	--	--	65.5	65.5	65.5	65.5	65.5
Environmental Compliance and Restoration	--	--	35.1	35.1	35.1	35.1	35.1
<b>Total Budget</b>	<b>300.0</b>	<b>185.3</b>	<b>100.6</b>	<b>100.6</b>	<b>100.6</b>	<b>100.6</b>	<b>100.6</b>

The Administration’s FY27 budget request for the Construction and Environmental Compliance and Restoration (CECR) account is \$100.6 million, an \$84.7 million decrease (45.7%) from FY26 enacted. CECR manages two themes: Construction of Facilities (CoF) and Environmental Compliance and Restoration (ECR). Under CoF, the request prioritizes NASA to perform critical, major repairs on existing projects that support deep space exploration. In the budget request, NASA states that the agency currently faces a deferred maintenance backlog of approximately \$4.8 billion. In the FY27 request, ECR projects are prioritized based on the protection of human health and their potential for penalties to meet regulatory compliance dates, with all new investigations being temporarily paused.

**Inspector General**

Budget Authority (in \$ millions)	Enacted FY 2025	Enacted FY 2026	Request FY 2027	FY 2028	FY 2029	FY 2030	FY 2031
<b>Total Budget</b>	<b>47.6</b>	<b>46.5</b>	<b>41.1</b>	<b>41.1</b>	<b>41.1</b>	<b>41.1</b>	<b>41.1</b>

The Administration’s FY27 budget request for the Office of Inspector General (OIG) is \$41.1 million, a \$5.4 million decrease (11.6%) from FY26 enacted. The OIG conducts audits, investigations, and reviews NASA programs and workforce to prevent and detect waste, fraud, abuse, and mismanagement. The request supports improving management of major programs and projects, partnering with the commercial industry, and enabling mission-critical capabilities and support services.

## **NASA Ignition Event**

On March 24, 2026, NASA held an event titled ‘Ignition’, during which agency leadership introduced and outlined a series of agency-wide initiatives “designed to achieve President Donald J. Trump’s National Space Policy and advance American leadership in space.”<sup>10</sup> The initiatives focus on five main areas: going back to the Moon, building the Moon base, ensuring an American presence in LEO, advancing world-changing discovery with current and future science missions, and developing space nuclear power and propulsion capabilities. The event also highlighted planned workforce reforms, including expanding and deepening the core competencies of NASA’s civil servant workforce. In tandem with the Ignition event, NASA has released several Requests for Information (RFIs) and Requests for Proposals (RFPs) to support the implementation of the initiatives.

### *Going Back to the Moon*

During Ignition, NASA’s central focus was the Artemis program and its goal of returning American astronauts to the lunar surface. NASA highlighted the issue it had found with the existing Artemis architecture, including the campaign’s low mission cadence, the significant technological gap between a lunar flyby Artemis II mission and a crewed Artemis III Moon landing, and its concerns over cost growth and long-term program feasibility that have been raised by multiple oversight reports.<sup>11</sup>

In part, the Ignition updates were an extension of changes NASA announced to the Artemis program on February 27, 2026.<sup>12</sup> NASA stated that it sought to increase the cadence of Artemis missions, in part by standardizing the configuration of SLS, and changing the objectives of the Artemis III mission from a crewed lunar landing to a demonstration mission in LEO in which Orion would dock with one or both HLS provider landers. This SLS standardization would forgo the planned capability upgrades to SLS Block 1B and Block 2 and instead transition to using “an upper stage and pad systems in as close to the ‘Block 1’ configuration as possible.”<sup>13</sup>

NASA also announced that the first crewed lunar landing would occur on the Artemis IV mission, scheduled for early 2028, which could be followed by a second lunar landing on the Artemis V mission, conducted during the same year.<sup>14</sup> After the Artemis V mission, NASA intends to “begin to incorporate more commercially procured and reusable hardware to undertake frequent and affordable crewed missions to the lunar surface, initially targeting landings every

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<sup>10</sup> NASA, *FACT SHEET: NASA Unveils Transformative Initiatives to Achieve America’s National Space Policy*, (March 24, 2026), <https://www.nasa.gov/wp-content/uploads/2026/03/ignition.pdf?emrc=69c30166de71c>

<sup>11</sup> NASA, *NASA Charts More Reliable Course for America’s Return to Lunar Surface*, (March 24, 2026), <https://www.nasa.gov/wp-content/uploads/2026/03/going-back-to-the-moon.pdf?emrc=69de345bb74c6?emrc=819e12>

<sup>12</sup> Jessica Traveau, NASA News, *NASA Adds Mission to Artemis Lunar Program, Updates Architecture*, (February 27, 2026), <https://www.nasa.gov/news-release/nasa-adds-mission-to-artemis-lunar-program-updates-architecture/>

<sup>13</sup> See supra note 12

<sup>14</sup> See supra note 11

six months, with the potential to increase cadence as capabilities mature.”<sup>15</sup> To this end, NASA issued an RFI seeking information from both new and established commercial launch providers that could inform NASA’s future acquisition of commercial launch capabilities for Artemis missions.<sup>16</sup>

Through these changes, NASA seeks to create a lunar exploration strategy that’s achievable, affordable, and safe. NASA intends that the increased cadence will allow the agency to build and retain muscle memory between missions, and that a docking demonstration mission will reduce the risks for a subsequent Moon landing mission.<sup>17</sup> NASA also intends to provide more agency technical expertise directly to its suppliers and commercial partners.

### *Building the Moon Base*

The Ignition event also highlighted NASA’s plans for establishing an enduring American presence on the Moon. NASA announced that it would pause development of the Gateway space station and instead shift to focusing on building a base on the South Pole of the Moon.<sup>18</sup> NASA seeks to construct the Moon base in three phases, with support from NASA’s commercial and international partners, and intends to use such a base to support a range of lunar activities and facilitate preparations for future crewed missions to Mars.<sup>19</sup> NASA plans to repurpose relevant elements of Gateway for the construction of the Moon base.

The first phase of the Moon base will see a significantly increased cadence of lunar activities. NASA plans to conduct up to 25 missions to the Moon, including 21 landings.<sup>20</sup> NASA will leverage the CLPS and LTV programs for these missions to deploy instruments and technology demonstrations, including for mobility, power generation, communications, navigation, and surface operation capabilities, while also supporting scientific activities.<sup>21</sup> Key missions in this phase include:

- the MoonFall Drones, which are highly mobile drones that will be deployed over the South Pole of the Moon to perform landing site surveillance and terrain surveying;
- the VIPER rover, which will prospect for resources and map the lunar surface for water and volatiles; and

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<sup>15</sup> Lauren E. Low, NASA News, *NASA Unveils Initiatives to Achieve America’s National Space Policy*, (March 24, 2026), <https://www.nasa.gov/news-release/nasa-unveils-initiatives-to-achieve-americas-national-space-policy/>

<sup>16</sup> System for Award Management, *Request for Information (RFI) Enabling Commercial Lunar Transportation to Support a Sustained Lunar Base*, (March 24, 2026), <https://sam.gov/workspace/contract/opp/4b20c2d3bc6b445bad80caafd049bd59/view>

<sup>17</sup> See supra note 11

<sup>18</sup> See supra note 15

<sup>19</sup> NASA, *NASA Unveils Plan to Establish America’s First Moon Base*, (March 24, 2026), <https://www.nasa.gov/wp-content/uploads/2026/03/building-the-moon-base-1.pdf?emrc=69de66eb185bc?emrc=c0687f>

<sup>20</sup> See supra note 19

<sup>21</sup> See supra note 15

- Radioisotope heater unit demonstrations to test updated nuclear fuel sources and develop capabilities to survive the lunar night.<sup>22</sup>

NASA released an RFI regarding hardware and technologies that could be launched in the next two to four years in support of lunar operations and infrastructure development.<sup>23</sup> NASA is also augmenting the ordering approach for its Lunar Terrain Vehicle (LTV) services contract by moving to a phased task order competition approach that will enable the agency to acquire multiple crewed and uncrewed rovers, to align with the Moon Base initiative. Finally, NASA has released a CLPS task order to deliver an LTV to the South Pole of the Moon, as well as a more general CLPS task order for Moon Base payload deliveries,<sup>24</sup> and an RFP for CLPS 2.0, which will serve as a follow-on phase of the existing program.<sup>25</sup>

Beginning in 2029, NASA proposes moving on to the second phase of its Moon base plans, which focus on assembling semi-permanent infrastructure on the Moon and conducting regular habitation and logistics operations. During this period, NASA plans to both support semi-annual crewed missions to the lunar surface and to deliver up to 60 tons of cargo to the surface using a combination of low, medium, and heavy cargo-class lunar landers.<sup>26</sup> Key missions will include:

- deployment and demonstration of solar power augmentation systems capable of storing and distributing power on the lunar surface;
- establishing and expanding lunar communications by deploying both surface-to-orbital communication stations and a surface system to enable direct communication across the lunar surface; and
- demonstration of nuclear surface power capabilities.<sup>27</sup>

NASA anticipates that Phase 2 will also include the deployment of the Japanese Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) Pressurized Rover, which will serve as a mobile habitat capable of supporting a crew and their surface exploration activities for up to 28 days.<sup>28</sup>

The third phase of NASA's Moon base plan centers on establishing a long-duration human presence on the lunar surface starting in 2032. NASA will establish habitable modules across multiple site locations on the Moon, enabling a continuous human presence while supporting surface science and utilization activities.<sup>29</sup> NASA plans to acquire end-to-end logistics services, expand surface power and communications capabilities, and begin to demonstrate Moon to Earth

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<sup>22</sup> Carlos Garcia-Galan, *Building the Moon Base*, (March 24, 2026), <https://www.nasa.gov/wp-content/uploads/2026/03/2-building-the-moon-base.pdf?emrc=69de66eb18860>

<sup>23</sup> System for Award Management, *Capability Demonstrations & Supply Chain Challenges for NASA Moon Base Development*, (March 24, 2026), <https://sam.gov/workspace/contract/opp/4a7c73f7f9f946bc90037f1849ae07f8/view>

<sup>24</sup> NASA, *Ignition*, <https://www.nasa.gov/ignition/>

<sup>25</sup> System for Award Management, *Commercial Lunar Payload Services (CLPS) 2.0*, (March 24, 2026), <https://sam.gov/workspace/contract/opp/952ef3887980411aacd9dec70a370dd9/view>

<sup>26</sup> See supra note 19

<sup>27</sup> See supra note 22

<sup>28</sup> See supra note 22

<sup>29</sup> See supra note 22

cargo return capabilities.<sup>30</sup> During this phase, NASA also intends to mature any In-situ Resource Utilization (ISRU) technologies that were demonstrated in previous phases.

In his Ignition presentation, Administrator Isaacman estimated that NASA will invest \$20 billion in the Moon base over seven years, and agency leadership indicated that implementing all three phases of the plan would cost \$30 billion over the next decade.<sup>31</sup>

### *American presence in LEO*

The Ignition event also addressed NASA's planned future presence in LEO. NASA announced that "there is no independently-verifiable market research indicating economic viability of a commercial station partially funded by NASA."<sup>32</sup> Given budgetary constraints, NASA believes this lack of a verifiable market creates a significant risk in terms of the ongoing agency resources that would be required to ensure the viability of commercial space stations.

In response to this determination, NASA proposed an alternative approach for the future of LEO, opting to pursue an incremental transition from the ISS to commercial space stations. Under this approach, NASA would procure a government-owned core module that would dock to the ISS.<sup>33</sup> Over time, NASA would transfer ISS hardware to this government-owned module, and CLD providers could attach up to two commercial modules to docking ports on the new core module. The core module would provide propulsion, power, and basic life support capabilities, and the attached commercial modules would provide research and habitation capabilities. Under this approach, NASA's commercial partners could build experience operating in LEO and then could later separate from the ISS to operate as independent, free-flying space stations. NASA intends for this updated framework to be flexible and responsive to the future demand for commercial space station services.<sup>34</sup>

NASA also highlighted plans to stimulate demand for services from commercial space station operators.<sup>35</sup> NASA seeks to expand Private Astronaut Missions to the ISS from one to two missions a year and will allow providers to sell the commander seat on such missions to eligible flyers, a change from NASA's previous requirement that the seat be filled by a NASA astronaut

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<sup>30</sup> See supra note 22

<sup>31</sup> Jack Daleo, Astronomy, *NASA's \$30B plan to build a Moon base*, (March 25, 2026), <https://www.astronomy.com/space-exploration/nasas-30b-plan-to-build-a-moon-base/>

<sup>32</sup> Dana Weigel, *Staying in Low Earth Orbit*, (March 24, 2026), <https://www.nasa.gov/wp-content/uploads/2026/03/3-staying-in-low-earth-orbit.pdf?emrc=69de66eb18f10>

<sup>33</sup> See supra note 32

<sup>34</sup> NASA, *Enduring American Presence in Low Earth Orbit is National Imperative*, (March 24, 2026), <https://www.nasa.gov/wp-content/uploads/2026/03/staying-in-low-earth-orbit.pdf?emrc=69de66eb18cd9?emrc=af581>

<sup>35</sup> See supra note 34

with spaceflight experience.<sup>36</sup> Additionally, NASA plans to enable more commercial activities on the space station and will also consider conducting joint commercial–NASA crew missions.

### *NASA Science Updates*

NASA’s Ignition event also discussed the agency’s Science Mission Directorate. NASA highlighted the upcoming opportunities for science missions that could be conducted as part of NASA’s return of astronauts to the Moon and establishment of an American presence on the lunar surface. NASA also plans to increase the cadence of CLPS missions, which will accelerate the delivery of scientific payloads to the Moon.<sup>37</sup> Firefly Aerospace’s next CLPS mission will deliver the LuSEE instrument later this year, and under a separate CLPS task order, Blue Origin will deliver the VIPER rover.

A NASA RFI seeks inputs on what lunar science and technology payloads could be manifested on missions under the increased CLPS landing schedule.<sup>38</sup> NASA also published a second RFI on its “Science as a Service” initiative, which seeks to leverage commercial capabilities to accelerate technology development and transition of NASA technologies for operational use, while also reducing NASA’s science mission costs.<sup>39</sup>

### *Nuclear Power and Propulsion*

The final portion of Ignition set forth NASA’s plans to develop space nuclear power and propulsion capabilities. NASA expressed a strong interest in transitioning nuclear power and propulsion efforts from Earth labs into space. There are two main projects to carry out that effort: Space Reactor-1 (SR-1) Freedom and Lunar Reactor-1 (LR-1).<sup>40</sup>

The SR-1 Freedom mission, which is planned to launch to Mars in late 2028, will be “the first spacecraft to use a nuclear fission reactor for propulsion beyond Earth orbit.”<sup>41</sup> NASA intends to repurpose the Power and Propulsion element from the Gateway to serve as the spacecraft’s propulsion system, and the system will be powered by a nuclear reactor.<sup>42</sup> Within 48 hours of the spacecraft’s launch, the reactor will be turned on and begin powering the electric thrusters,

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<sup>36</sup> Jeff Foust, *Voyager to fly private astronaut mission to ISS*, (April 16, 2026), <https://spacenews.com/voyager-to-fly-private-astronaut-mission-to-iss/>

<sup>37</sup> NASA, *NASA Science Updates Include New Missions, Support for Moon Base*, (March 24, 2026), <https://www.nasa.gov/wp-content/uploads/2026/03/golden-age-of-science-and-discovery.pdf?emrc=69dce23cc3b1a?emrc=94e92f>

<sup>38</sup> System for Award Management, REQUEST FOR INFORMATION FOR LUNAR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY PAYLOADS FOR EXPANDED LUNAR LANDING OPPORTUNITIES, (March 24, 2026), <https://sam.gov/workspace/contract/opp/130cb34208044e5692942416229bd993/view>

<sup>39</sup> System for Award Management, Request for Information (RFI) Advancement of “Science as a Service” for NASA and Commercial Partners, (March 24, 2026), <https://sam.gov/workspace/contract/opp/b6d664ea8cd3496fa1db744bdab66adb/view>

<sup>40</sup> See supra note 15

<sup>41</sup> NASA, *America Underway in Space on Nuclear Power*, (March 24, 2026), <https://www.nasa.gov/wp-content/uploads/2026/03/america-underway-in-space-on-nuclear-power.pdf?emrc=69dce23cc410f?emrc=837ae2>

<sup>42</sup> See supra note 40

sending the spacecraft to Mars, where it will deploy the Skyfall payload of three Ingenuity-class helicopters, each mounted with instruments to scout for resources and potential landing sites for future missions.<sup>43</sup>

NASA has stated that “SR-1 is the first step in a deliberate sequence” and will enable subsequent space nuclear efforts by retiring nuclear spaceflight risk and strengthening both the supply chains and workforce required for such efforts.<sup>44</sup> The second step in this sequence, LR-1, is a nuclear fission power system that NASA intends to deploy on the lunar surface in 2030 to provide power for the Moon base as well as other activities on the Moon. LR-1 will be informed by the SR-1 Freedom mission, with NASA planning to leverage and adapt technology from SR-1 to support the development of LR-1.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> See supra note 40

<sup>44</sup> See supra note 40

<sup>45</sup> Steve Sinacore, *America Underway in Space on Nuclear Power*, (March 24, 2026), <https://www.nasa.gov/wp-content/uploads/2026/03/5-america-underway-in-space-on-nuclear-power.pdf?emrc=69de345bb8df6>