



SCIENCE

# International Cooperation at NASA

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# International Cooperation: Overview

- International cooperation at NASA:
  - Has been a cornerstone of NASA's activities throughout its history
  - Since 1958, NASA has concluded over 4000 agreements with over 100 nations and international organizations
  - Over 700 active international agreements
  - Cooperation now established with every region in the world
  - 8 partners account for 50% of the agreements
    - ESA, France, Germany, UK, Italy, Canada, Japan, Russia
  - Every Mission Directorate has international partnerships
  - By mission area: 2/3 of agreements are for NASA science missions



# Why International Cooperation?

- Benefits of international cooperation:
  - Leverage resources (financial, technological, scientific, etc.)
  - Access foreign capabilities or geography
    - Adds unique capability and/or expertise
    - Increases mission flight opportunities
    - Enhances the scientific return
  - Promote U.S. foreign policy interests
    - NASA follows foreign policy guidance from the U.S. Department of State



# Challenges to International Cooperation

- Management complexity
  - Decision-making is inherently more complex
  - Communication challenges
  - Differing specifications, standards and assumptions
- Technical and programmatic risk
  - Interdependence – someone is on the “critical path”
  - Interfaces are difficult to manage at a distance; it’s harder to monitor progress and get early warning of problems
  - Multiple partners with multiple interfaces adds complexity
- Political risk
  - Budgetary and bureaucratic uncertainties
  - Potential linkage to political activities unrelated to the cooperation



# International Cooperation: Current Guidelines

- NASA international partners are generally government agencies due to the significant level of investment and legal requirements
- Each Partner funds its respective contributions, but contributions need not be equivalent
- Cooperation must be consistent with foreign policy objectives of each Partner
- Projects/Partnerships:
  - Must have scientific and technical merit and meet NASA program objectives
  - Must be mutually beneficial (demonstrate specific benefit to each Partner)
  - Are structured to protect against unwarranted technology transfer
  - Are structured to establish clearly defined managerial and technical interfaces to minimize complexity
  - Are documented in a written, binding agreement, closely coordinated with the U.S. Department of State and other U.S. government agencies as needed



# Why Do We Need International Agreements?

- International Agreements are tools that:
  - Clarify responsibilities of the partners
  - Confirm commitments and terms
  - Document the quid pro quo and benefits of the cooperation
  - Protect investment and interests, such as:
    - Technical data rights
    - Intellectual property rights
    - Allocation of risk – cross-waiver of liability
  - Allow import/export of technical data and goods
  - Confirm arrangements to meet international obligations, such as UN Registration Convention, if necessary



# When Do We Draft International Agreements?

- International Agreements are drafted *after* final selections are made; agreements are not typically drafted for Phase-A Studies
- International Agreements are not required for proposals or Concept Study Reports
- Non-U.S. Participation Requirements are detailed in sections 5.7 and 5.8 of the AO
- If the AO proposal is from a foreign entity – or if U.S. AO proposal includes foreign participation – a Letter of Commitment is needed from the foreign partner’s government agency or funding institution, acknowledging the activity and preferably indicating sufficient funds will be made available
- Note: International Agreements will likely take several months to put into place!



# NASA's International Agreements

- NASA's International Agreements do **NOT** trump export control laws & regulations

**An International Agreement does not replace a contractor's need for a Technical Assistance Agreement**





# Thank You

## Office of International and Interagency Relations (OIIR)

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