

47th SYMPOSIUM ON SAFETY, QUALITY AND KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT IN SPACE  
ACTIVITIES (D5)

Knowledge Management and Collaboration in Space Activities (2)

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KEYNOTE: THE GOVERNANCE OF KNOWLEDGE AT NASA

**Abstract**

Knowledge management is nothing new at NASA. Most earlier efforts across the agency came in response to specific or local concerns. In an effort to achieve greater collaboration and coordination across NASA, knowledge for programs and projects is now governed by NASA Policy Directive (NPD) 7120.6, “Knowledge Policy on Programs and Projects.” Rather than serving as a top-down mandate, the policy establishes that the knowledge management enterprise operates on a federated basis, such that each Center and Mission Directorate determines the approach that best meets its needs, with the understanding that knowledge applicable to all NASA missions and Centers will be shared to the extent possible across the entire agency.

The policy sets out roles and responsibilities for senior leaders and NASA employees at every level, and it identifies the individuals with primary responsibility for knowledge in each organization. The NASA Chief Knowledge Officer (CKO) is responsible for coordinating agency-wide initiatives to advance capabilities in identifying, capturing, and transferring knowledge. Each Center and Mission Directorate also has a Chief Knowledge Officer (CKO) who is responsible for facilitating the capture and sharing of stories, case studies, and lessons learned; serving as advocate for the knowledge needs of his or her organization; and supporting the NASA CKO to ensure the effective implementation of the agency’s knowledge policy.

The policy also provides a common language for defining and discussing knowledge at NASA. It established six categories for describing the current range of knowledge activities taking place across the agency: online tools, search/tag/taxonomy tools, case studies and publications, lessons learned and knowledge processes, knowledge networks, and face-to-face knowledge services.

The policy reflects the efforts of a CKO community that shares a commitment to sustaining NASA’s knowledge resources, and it charts a course toward greater integration across the agency.