

14TH IAA SYMPOSIUM ON BUILDING BLOCKS FOR FUTURE SPACE EXPLORATION AND
DEVELOPMENT (D3)

Space Technology and System Management Practices and Tools (4)

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OUTCOME AND STATUS OF NASA'S NEXT STEP AWARDS

Abstract

In October 2014, NASA's Advanced Exploration Systems issued a solicitation for partnerships called the Next Space Technologies for Exploration Partnerships, or NextSTEP. The Broad Agency Announcement (BAA) sought proposals for concept studies and technology development projects in three key areas: advanced propulsion, habitation, and small satellites. The overarching NextSTEP objective was to advance deep space exploration capabilities to support more extensive missions in the proving ground — the space near Earth that extends just beyond the moon where we can take risks and solve problems outside Earth's protective magnetosphere. A key factor in the NextSTEP BAA was that prospective partners were required to contribute a minimum 50 percent corporate resources contribution toward the effort. The contributions could be in the form of funding, facilities, direct labor, travel, consumables or other in-kind contributions that either occurred in recent years or will occur during the period of performance of the contracts. For this first phase of NextSTEP, NASA selected 12 awardees – seven in habitation (four integrated habitation concepts and three advanced life support systems and integrated concepts), three in propulsion, and two in small satellites. Due to the response from industry, successful progress during this first phase, and NASA's desire to explore all potential habitation concepts, NASA will issue an additional NextSTEP BAA in spring 2016 to allow the potential for more companies to enter into the habitation capability area. All current performers will be providing deliverables in mid-summer 2016, specifically to define their statements of work, schedule, and technical approaches for follow-on phase 2 development efforts. At the same time the new NextSTEP BAA will provide the opportunity to select additional partners to be awarded for this phase. The entire effort builds on how NASA has increasingly embraced public-private partnerships to expand the frontiers of knowledge, capability, and opportunities in space. This cost-sharing form of partnership is a relatively new concept at NASA, one that is aimed at stimulating the economy and fostering a stronger space industrial base and commercial space market. This paper will explore the value of cost-sharing partnerships and share the status of the NextSTEP awards.