

IAF BUSINESS INNOVATION SYMPOSIUM (E6)
Strategic Risk Management for Successful Space & Defence Programmes (4)

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CREATING STARTUPS WITH NASA TECHNOLOGY: REDUCING RISKS FOR NASA, INVESTORS
AND ENTREPRENEURS THROUGH A PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP

Abstract

In contrast to the "fail-fast-fail-often" Silicon Valley paradigm, "failure is not an option" is an adage often observed in traditional space activities. New Space aims to reconcile both perspectives. In order for that to happen, innovation and risk mitigation should take place in tandem, a role that public-private partnerships can play in helping establish a successful entrepreneurial space ecosystem.

That is the context for the program "Creating startup with NASA technologies", launched by the New York Space Alliance (NYSA) in collaboration with NASA through a Space Act Agreement. Signed in 2018, the initiative seeks to bridge the gap between NASA and startups. It aims to lower risks for all parties involved, including the public sector, investors, entrepreneurs, and customers, and create sustainable space and non-space businesses.

The first phase of the program focuses on transferring NASA technology to participants in a pilot program in New York. Through a series of initiatives, NYSA has been assisting startups with licensing NASA technologies for both space and non-space commercial applications. Preliminary results will be presented as part of the celebrations of the 50th anniversary of the lunar landing. The occasion will also mark the launch of the second phase of the program, which will tap on the New York startup and innovation ecosystem to support NASA's space missions.

Benefits for stakeholders involved are multiple. Impact in New York city and state is expected by nurturing a nascent space-based startup ecosystem, contributing to a dynamic startup community, creating both high quality and vocational jobs, attracting and retaining talent, and stimulating economic activity, among others. In parallel, NASA engages a new innovation ecosystem and show concrete examples of economic benefits for its research activities. The Agency is also reaching a new community of entrepreneurs to create solutions to support space exploration. Entrepreneurs have access to patent-protected technologies and algorithms vetted for technical and commercial viability, as well NASA technical personnel and facilities for additional support.