

IAF HUMAN SPACEFLIGHT SYMPOSIUM (B3)
Utilization & Exploitation of Human Spaceflight Systems (3)

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THE NEXT DECADE OF THE INTERNATIONAL SPACE STATION PARTNERSHIP

Abstract

The International Space Station (ISS), which is recently celebrated its 20th consecutive year of productive, crewed on-orbit operations, is the centerpiece of NASA's efforts in low-Earth orbit. The Station is now in the midst of its most productive and impactful utilization phase, with more crew, visiting vehicles, research, technology, and commercial activities. NASA is planning for the next decade of growing research and development both on the Station, and on future commercially-owned and operated platforms that will one day replace the Station. NASA's goal is to maintain a permanent presence in low-Earth orbit (LEO) in collaboration with the ISS International Partners through and beyond the life of the Station itself. As NASA and its International Partners plan to continue to expand humanity's reach beyond LEO, the Station will continue to help close capability and risk gaps to enable these future missions. The Station will also continue to return benefits to humanity through basic and applied research, and serve as a proving ground for new commercial capabilities. The actual end-of-life of the Station will be determined not by a specific date, but by when all of the research and development that requires the ISS itself is completed, and when a replacement platform is available on-orbit on which to transition ongoing research and development activities. NASA will work with industry over the next decade to enable these future platforms to come on-line, much as it helped develop the crew and cargo transportation systems that now fly with regularity. NASA is committed to maintaining a permanent human presence in LEO and a U.S. National Laboratory capability through the life of the Station and beyond. NASA remains committed to the ISS International Partnership and looks forward to the next decade of productive cooperation on-orbit as we plan for our future in space together.