

National Aeronautics and
Space Administration



Introduction to International Cooperation at NASA

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International Cooperation at a Glance

- Cornerstone of NASA's activities since 1958
- Over 6500 agreements with 169 nations and international organizations historically; around 650 currently active agreements with 138 unique partners
- Every Mission Directorate has international partnerships; 2/3 of agreements are for NASA science missions

A vibrant space-themed background featuring a large blue planet in the foreground, a bright yellow sun, and various other celestial bodies like Saturn and Mars against a starry sky. The scene is framed by curved blue and yellow lines.

Current Guidelines

- International Partners are generally government agencies due to significant level of investment and legal requirements
- No exchange of funds
- Cooperation must have scientific and technical merit and demonstrate specific benefits
- Collaboration is structured to establish clearly defined managerial and technical interfaces to minimize complexity and protect against unwarranted technology transfer
- Cooperation must be consistent with U.S, foreign policy objectives of each Partner

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Space Act Agreements

OIR produces International Agreements

The National Aeronautics and Space Act grants NASA the authority to enter into Space Act Agreements with a wide range of entities, both domestic and international, to advance its mission.

Until an appropriate Agreement is signed, NASA should not:

- commit resources to implementing joint responsibilities,
- share sensitive information or technology,
- exchange equipment, or
- share use of facilities.

A vibrant space-themed background featuring a large blue planet in the foreground, a bright yellow sun, and various other celestial bodies like Saturn and Mars against a starry sky with nebulae.

Generally* Below Agreement Threshold

The following information can generally be exchanged without an International Agreement:

- Publicly available information
- Mission objectives, requirements, specifications, anything that would be in an unclassified Request for Information, Request for Proposals
- General, non-export-controlled interface information
- Performance parameters
- Goals
- General system descriptions:
 - Size
 - Weight
 - Speed
 - Pressure, radiation
- Discussions about 'What' are generally acceptable.

*You may confirm any questions with OIIR!

Above IA Threshold

The following information **cannot** be exchanged without an Agreement:

- Discussions about 'How'
- If interface information describes how to integrate two components/systems
- If interface information bleeds into assembly discussions
- Export-controlled information

Key Takeaway: Consult with OIR early for any international activity, especially for discussion about “how”



Lifecycle of a New IA

1. Drafting phase
2. Initial approval phase
 - Internal at NASA
 - External at State Department
3. Negotiation phase
4. Final approval
5. Signing



#1 and 2 FAQ: How long do agreements take/why does it take so long?

A: It varies; the agreement can speed through and/or slow down at any stage above due to complexity, policy ambiguity, funding issues, political processes. One year is a good rule of thumb.

A vibrant space-themed background featuring a large blue and white planet (Earth) at the bottom, a bright yellow sun, and various other celestial bodies including a ringed planet, a reddish planet, and a dark blue planet. The background is filled with stars and nebulae in shades of blue and green.

Timeline

- Generally international agreements should be in place by PDR or KDP-C.
- Approach OIRR one year ahead of the date of PDR to get the process started.