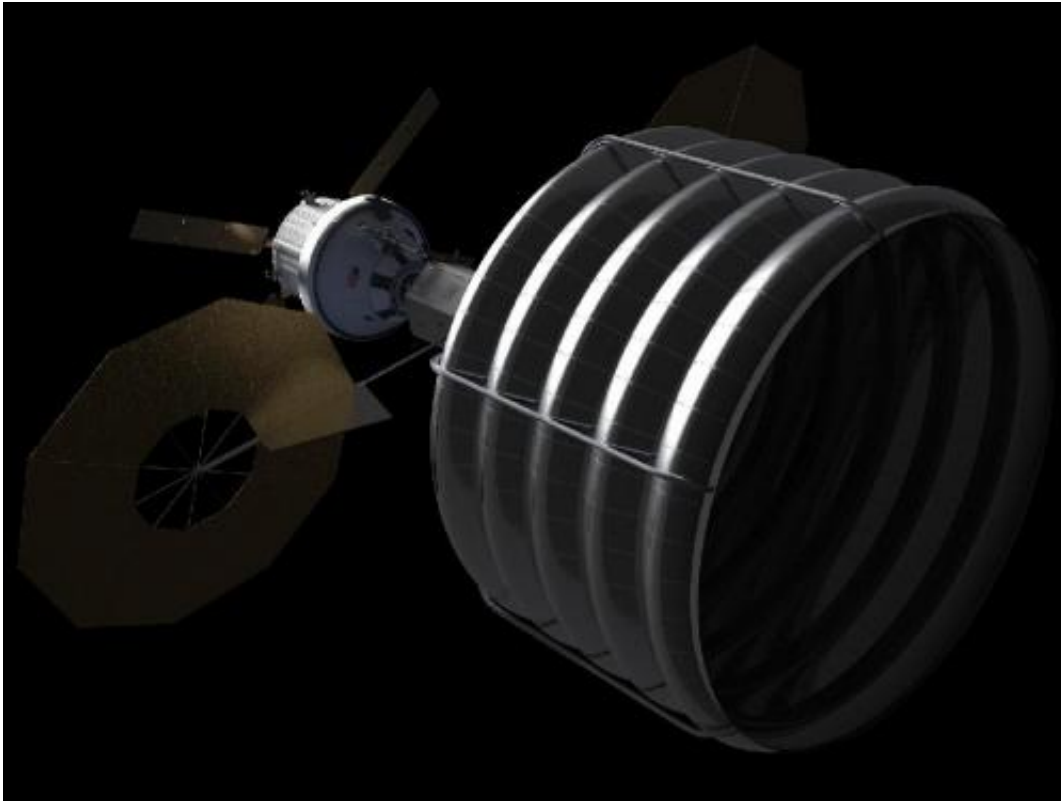


NASA announces Asteroid Grand Challenge

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By leveraging capabilities across all of NASA, the agency is developing a first-ever mission to identify, rendezvous with, capture and redirect a small asteroid into a stable orbit in the lunar vicinity, and then send humans to visit it using the Space Launch System rocket and Orion spacecraft. This mission represents an unprecedented technological feat and allows NASA to affordably pursue the Administration's goal of visiting an asteroid by 2025. It raises the bar for human exploration and discovery while taking advantage of the diverse talents at NASA. This image represents a notional spacecraft with its asteroid capture mechanism deployed. Image Credit: NASA/Advanced Concepts Lab

NASA announced Tuesday a Grand Challenge focused on finding all asteroid threats to human populations and knowing what to do about them.

The challenge, which was announced at an asteroid initiative industry and partner day at NASA Headquarters in Washington, is a large-scale effort that will use multi-disciplinary collaborations and a variety of partnerships with other government agencies, international partners, industry, academia, and citizen scientists. It complements NASA's recently announced mission to redirect an asteroid and send humans to study it.

"NASA already is working to find asteroids that might be a threat to our planet, and while we have found 95 percent of the large asteroids near the Earth's orbit, we need to find all those that might be a threat to Earth," said NASA Deputy Administrator Lori Garver. "This Grand Challenge is focused on detecting and characterizing asteroids and learning how to deal with potential threats. We will also harness public engagement, open innovation and [citizen science](#) to help solve this global problem."

Grand Challenges are ambitious goals on a national or global scale that capture the imagination and demand advances in innovation and breakthroughs in science and technology. They are an important element of President Obama's Strategy for American Innovation.

"I applaud NASA for issuing this [Grand Challenge](#) because finding asteroid threats, and having a plan for dealing with them, needs to be an all-hands-on-deck effort," said Tom Kalil, deputy director for technology and innovation at the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy. "The efforts of private-sector partners and our [citizen scientists](#) will augment the work NASA already is doing to improve near-Earth object detection capabilities."

NASA also released a request for information (RFI) that invites industry and potential partners to offer ideas on accomplishing NASA's goal to locate, redirect, and explore an asteroid, as well as find and plan for asteroid threats. The RFI is open for 30 days, and responses will be used to help develop public engagement opportunities and a September industry workshop.

More information: www.nasa.gov/asteroidinitiative

Provided by NASA

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