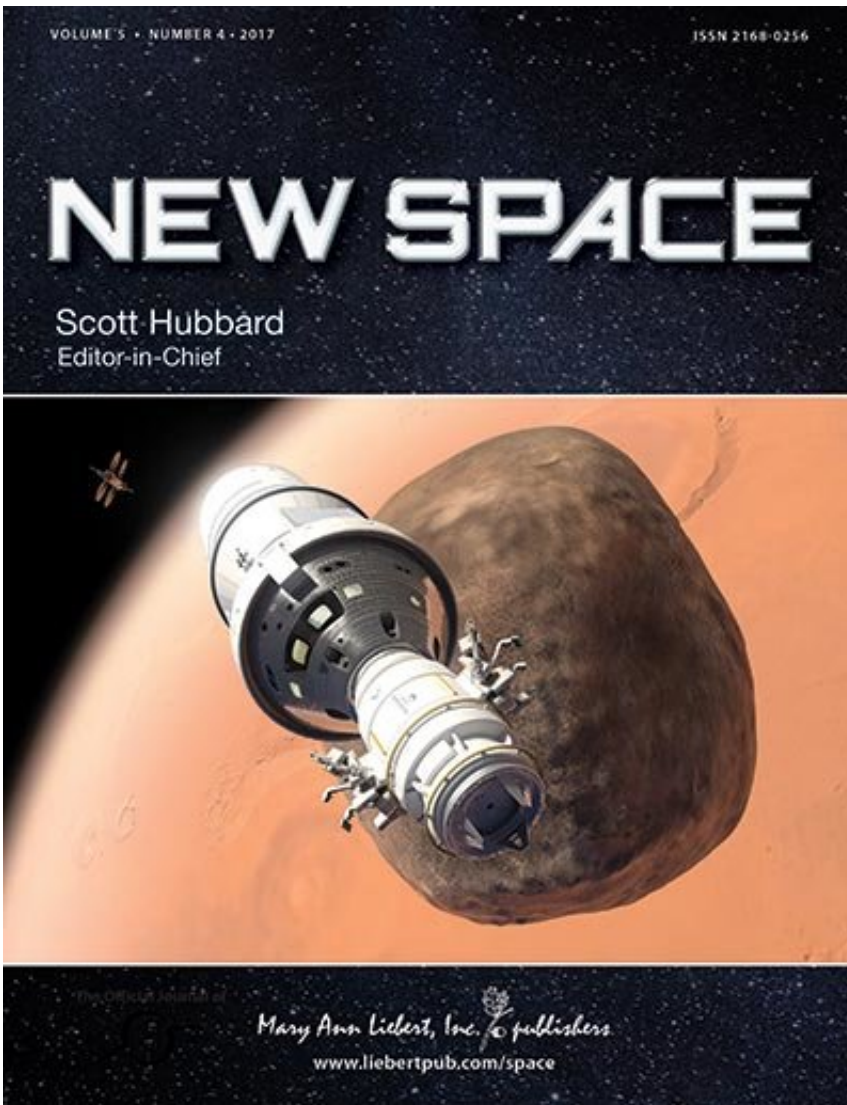


# Space program should focus on Mars, says editor of New Space

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Credit: Mary Ann Liebert, Inc., publishers

The U.S. space exploration program should continue to focus on robotic sample recovery and human missions to Mars, says Scott Hubbard, Editor-in-Chief of *New Space*. He details the benefits and risks of this strategy in an editorial entitled "Keeping the Focus on Mars," published in *New Space*.

Scott Hubbard, Adjunct Professor in the Department of Aeronautics and Astronautics at Stanford University and former director of NASA's Ames Research Center, recounts the past four Administrations' commitments to [space](#) exploration, beginning with President Kennedy's promise in 1961 to send a man to the moon and return him safely—the only initiative that has been successfully funded and completed. In October 2017, Vice President Pence proposed that NASA should plan "human missions to the moon" as a "stepping stone" for subsequent human missions to Mars. In the current editorial, Professor Hubbard presents possible ways to offset the large cost of space exploration, including international partnerships, and he discusses what makes Mars such a compelling scientific target.

"I strongly advocate completing the Mars Sample Return," says Professor Hubbard. "That initiative alone will show continued U.S. leadership and perhaps provide answers to the most fundamental questions humans ask: 'Are we alone?' I also believe that any future human exploration plan must keep moving toward Mars."

**More information:** Scott Hubbard, Keeping the Focus on Mars, *New Space* (2017). [DOI: 10.1089/space.2017.29012.gsh](https://doi.org/10.1089/space.2017.29012.gsh)

Provided by Mary Ann Liebert, Inc

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