

Canada to send rover to Moon by 2026: minister

May 27 2021



Canada plans to land a robotic rover on the Moon.

Canada will land a robotic rover on the Moon within five years, its industry minister said Wednesday, announcing that Ottawa plans to "dream big" as it advances its competitive stake in the growing global

space market.

"Canada will be part of space history," Francois-Philippe Champagne told a news conference.

"We recognize that global interest in space and in the [space industry](#) is on the rise," he said. "As the whole world looks to the stars we are ready to make Canada a world leader in research, technology and innovation so that we can be there as well."

"Let's seize the moment. I don't think there's ever been a better time to be Canadian, and dream big."

The Canadian Space Agency (CSA) will partner with the United States' NASA on the mission, according to a statement.

Two Canadian companies will first be selected to develop concepts for the rover and science instruments for the mission.

The rover will be tasked with exploring a polar region of the Moon and carrying out scientific work, as well as taking images and collecting data on the surface.

In the meantime, a Canadian astronaut is set to take part in a [lunar mission](#) for the first time in 2023, as part of the NASA-led Artemis project, it was announced in December.

The mission, Artemis II, will see a crewed test flight sent into orbit but will not involve an actual landing on the Moon, according to the US space agency.

The following year, Artemis III aims to land astronauts, including the first woman, on the Moon. This will be the first landing since Apollo 17

in 1972.

Ottawa has invested Can\$36.5 million (US\$30 million) over the past year to advance lunar and space technologies including micro-rovers, and to build a third-generation robotic arm dubbed Canadarm3. Its predecessors were deployed on space shuttles and the International Space Station to stickhandle payloads.

A total of Can\$2 billion has been earmarked for the Canadian space program over the next two decades.

The global space market, the government said, is expected to triple to Can\$1.1 trillion. Canada currently has a 1.3 percent share of this market.

In a sign of the industry's global growth, an unmanned rover from the United Arab Emirates, a hitherto [space](#) minnow, will be transported to the Moon next year, lunar exploration firm iSpace announced in April.

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Citation: Canada to send rover to Moon by 2026: minister (2021, May 27) retrieved 25 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2021-05-canada-rover-moon-minister.html>

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