NASA Announces Deep Impact Future Mission Status

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As NASA's Deep Impact flyby spacecraft prepares to execute its sixth trajectory correction maneuver, program managers at agency headquarters in Washington are investigating future options.

Today's scheduled burn places the spacecraft on a trajectory to fly past Earth in late December 2007. The maneuver allows NASA to preserve options for future use of the spacecraft.

"This maneuver will keep the spacecraft in the vicinity of the inner planets, thereby making the task of tracking and communicating with it easier," said NASA's Director of Solar System Division, Science Mission Directorate, Andy Dantzler.

Dantzler announced today that all investigators interested in using the Deep Impact Flyby Spacecraft for further science investigations must submit proposals to the 2005 Discovery Program Announcement of Opportunity for a Mission of Opportunity.

"All proposals for use of the Deep Impact spacecraft will be evaluated for science merit and feasibility along with all submitted proposal for Missions of Opportunity," he said. "The spacecraft is being offered as is. Proposers must include mission management and spacecraft operations in the total proposed funding."

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