NASA's plans and budget for the next 10–20 years (2026–2046)

1. Return to the Moon and establish a permanent base

1. Return astronauts to the Moon and establish a permanent lunar outpost.
2. Develop new spacecraft, propulsion systems, and nuclear power for space travel.
3. Continue exploring the solar system, including Jupiter's and Saturn's moons.
4. Expand space telescopes and the search for planets that might support life.
5. Develop commercial space stations and reduce reliance on the International Space Station.

2. Send humans to Mars

The goal is to develop the technology necessary to send astronauts to Mars, potentially during the 2030s. Principal challenges include:

- Developing spacecraft capable of transporting astronauts over a journey lasting many months.
- Protecting astronauts from radiation.
- Providing food, water, oxygen, and reliable power.
- Developing landing systems capable of delivering substantial equipment to Mars.
- Developing habitats and possibly producing fuel and other necessities from Martian resources.

BUDGET

2025 enacted	$24.84 billion
2026 enacted	$24.44 billion
2027 requested	$18.83 billion

The 2027 figure is a presidential budget request, not a final congressional appropriation. Congressional proposals have differed substantially. For example, a Senate committee's 2026 NASA authorization legislation proposed $25.3 billion for 2027. An authorization, however, is not the same as an enacted appropriation.