



Universities Space Research Association

&

**Space Policy Institute,
George Washington University**

Present a Symposium on

SCIENCE FOR A NEW ERA OF EXPLORATION

THE PATH FROM THE MOON TO MARS

Science Priorities, Readiness, and Enterprise Integration



Thursday, March 26, 2026 | 1:00 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.

Holiday Inn
Washington DC National Mall
550 C Street SW, Washington, DC

<https://newsroom.usra.edu/2026-usra-symposium/>

1:00 p.m. Welcome and Introductory Remarks

- **ELSAYED TALAAT**, President and CEO, USRA
- **SCOTT PACE**, Director, Space Policy Institute, George Washington University

1:10 p.m. Frederick A. Tarantino Memorial Address

- **NICOLA “NICKY” FOX**, NASA Associate Administrator, Science Mission Directorate

1:40 p.m. From Volatiles to Life: The Decadal Science Agenda

This panel focuses on "What are we looking for?" from the 2025 National Academies report on Mars science. It explores the transition from "following the water" to "searching for life" and the Moon's role as a laboratory for planetary history.

- **ERIKA WAGNER**, Business Development, The Exploration Company
- **LUCIE LOW**, Chief Scientist, Axiom Space
- **BETHANY EHLMANN**, Director, Laboratory for Atmospheric and Space Physics, UC Boulder
- **WALTER S. KIEFER**, Director, Lunar and Planetary Institute

2:40 p.m. Coffee Break

3:00 p.m. The Hardware and the Humans: Can We Deliver?

This panel will discuss needed lunar and Martian surface technologies, management of exploration campaigns, human health risks and challenges, and the role of universities in training the next generation of space workers.

- **CHARLES POWELL**, Associate Director for Space and Spectrum, Office of Science and Technology Policy
- **JAMES D. POLK**, NASA Chief Health and Medical Officer
- **JAMES GREEN**, former NASA Chief Scientist
- **DAN EVANS**, NASA Assistant Deputy Associate Administrator for Research, Science Mission Directorate

4:00 p.m. Enterprise Integration from the Moon to Mars

Panelists will discuss "How do we work together?" It focuses on the synergy between human and robotic precursors, roles and responsibilities for government and industry, and ensuring interoperability with commercial providers and international partners.

- **KEVIN COGGINS**, Deputy Associate Administrator, NASA Space Communications and Navigation Program
- **JACOB BLEACHER**, Chief Exploration Scientist, NASA
- **JONATHAN LUNINE**, Chief Scientist, Jet Propulsion Laboratory
- **ROB CHAMBERS**, Senior Director, Space Exploration Strategy, Lockheed Martin

5:15 p.m. Closing Remarks and Discussion

- **SCOTT PACE**, Space Policy Institute
- **ELSAYED TALAAT**, USRA

5:30 p.m. Invitation to the Reception

- **JOAN RAMAGE**, Chair, USRA Council of Institutions

Attendance is by invitation only.



Please scan the QR code above for more information including webcast and speaker biographies.

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