

# Australia Launches Space Agency



The Australian Space Agency has been formed as of 1 July with the goal of tripling Australia's space economy by 2030, launching a new era for extraterrestrial Australian endeavors.

The Space Agency will initially focus on developing international partnerships, and serve as a coordinating body for industry and government.

This announcement has been welcomed by Australia's spatial professionals, with Surveying & Spatial Sciences Institute (SSSI) characterising the development as 'a renaissance of Australian leadership in space-borne Earth observation.'

"Australia's spatial and other professionals have long been leading figures in space programs around the world. Despite this, we have – until now – been the largest first world economy without a national space agency", said Gaby van Wyk, President of the SSSI. "The Australian space program will have a positive impact on so many aspects of our lives: technology, the environment, agriculture, transport and infrastructure planning, mining, smart cities, education, health, aviation and many more."

Wyk concluded that the global space industry was worth over \$400 billion, with enormous economic and community multipliers, and Australia would be better positioned to lead and leverage this growing industry due to the Australian Space Agency.

The Australian Space Agency will have a very different profile relative to a behemoth such as NASA, with a fraction of the funding, and its stature in dealing with other departments and space-related procurement yet to be determined. In the era of new space, it appears to be positioned more as an accelerator for Australia's space-reliant industries that will rely on close collaboration with business to advance its aims.

Agency head Dr. Megan Clark AC has indicated that Canberra is the most appropriate location for the new agency, a view backed by Chief Minister Andrew Barr.

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