

NASA Advisory Council Recommendation

NASA Press and Outreach Programs 2011-03-02 (SC-02)

Recommendation:

NASA's ongoing program of scientific challenges and exciting science missions (those launched in the coming year, in development, and planned over the rest of the decade) will provide outstanding results and new discoveries. The NASA Advisory Council encourages NASA's press and outreach programs to strengthen their focus on science missions and stands ready to help formulate, facilitate, and champion these activities.

Major Reasons for the Recommendation:

NASA's science programs provide numerous opportunities for carrying the excitement of the U.S. space program to the public throughout the next decade and beyond.

Consequences of No Action on the Recommendation:

Missed opportunities to inspire the next generation of space explorers and inform the public about the results of NASA's science programs.

NASA Response:

NASA concurs with this recommendation. NASA's Office of Communications will continue to complement the Science Mission Directorate's (SMD) education and outreach work and enhance proven communications strategies that have resulted in unprecedented, positive news coverage and external recognition of NASA's science activities. NASA will capitalize on these successes and look for new opportunities to inform and inspire more diverse audiences about science endeavors.

A range of communications tools currently enables us to bring science to the public worldwide. Examples include the use of Emmy award-winning NASA TV daily broadcasts to over 30 million viewers of science missions, findings, discoveries, and educational programs. The Agency's www.nasa.gov, one of the general public's most visited Web sites, receives millions of visits per week -- with the majority viewing science-related pages. NASA plans to expand multimedia opportunities with movie and documentary companies, cable and talk shows, musical artists, publishing companies, and many other commercial entities to inspire them to utilize NASA science content and mission themes. We also will continue to cultivate strategic partnerships with museums and alliances with world-renowned commercial companies such as LEGO, Disney, and Google.

We have a focused and strategic process in the world of social media. Twitter, Facebook, and other sites are populated daily with science images and content. Announcements of findings and discoveries are immediately shared with millions. NASA has been openly recognized as a Government leader and innovator in this new and rapidly expanding communication venue that reaches an audience of tens of millions.

Enclosure

We will continue to pursue new communication technologies, computer and mobile applications, and high-definition imagery, with emphasis on greater transparency in science activities, to further increase engagement opportunities. These capabilities will enable NASA to introduce a broader community to the benefits of space research and development and their contributions to national priorities and the Nation's economic growth.

Science activities will be a key focus of the Office of Communications. NASA is committed to meet and exceed expectations -- with welcome support from NAC members -- to further engage and inspire the public, to the greatest extent possible, in the vast NASA science portfolio.