



NASA Releases Final Request for Proposals for Commercial Space Stations in Low Earth Orbit; Industry Proposals Due December 8

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On October 9, 2026 NASA released its final Request for Proposals inviting U.S. companies to submit plans for commercial space stations to follow the International Space Station. Proposals are due December 8, 2026, with contract awards expected in spring 2027.

NASA released its final Request for Proposals on Friday, October 9, 2026, inviting U.S. industry to submit plans for the next generation of commercial space stations in low Earth orbit, according to NASA news release 26-086 from NASA Headquarters.

The agency says the solicitation is meant to keep a continuous American presence in low Earth orbit after the International Space Station retires. Proposals are due Tuesday, December 8, 2026, and NASA says it expects to make contract awards in spring 2027.

What NASA is asking for

- Companies interested in designing, building, testing, certifying and operating commercial low Earth orbit destinations.
- Destinations able to provide end-to-end destination and transportation services for human spaceflight.
- NASA intends to award firm-fixed-price, multi-award, indefinite-delivery/indefinite-quantity (IDIQ) contracts covering development, certification and services.

- The structure: NASA would select two or more contractors through early development, followed by a competitive task order for final design, test and evaluation, plus certification and services from one or more contractors.

How the solicitation got here

NASA says it published two Requests for Information in March 2026 on low Earth orbit destinations and transportation, followed by a draft Request for Proposals in July, an industry day, and one-on-one meetings with interested companies. The agency also points to its "Ignition" industry event earlier this year.

What the Administrator said

NASA Administrator Jared Isaacman said in the release that NASA "will continue to need a place to conduct research, develop technologies, train crews, and prepare for missions to the Moon and Mars," and that "the economics ultimately have to work." He said NASA wants "credible plans, strong technical execution, and companies prepared to invest in destinations that can serve NASA while developing additional customers and markets of their own."

Why it matters locally

Space station work touches launch sites, contractors and suppliers well beyond Florida and Texas. Communities near NASA centers and commercial space companies may see the effects of this competition through hiring, facility plans and future launch traffic. Notice Nearby will follow the award announcement expected in spring 2027.

Key dates

- October 9, 2026: Final Request for Proposals released.
- December 8, 2026: Proposals due.
- Spring 2027: Contract awards expected, per NASA.

Source

- NASA news release 26-086, "NASA Seeks US Industry Plans for Commercial Space Stations," October 9, 2026 (nasa.gov). Media contacts listed: George Alderman and Joshua Finch, NASA Headquarters, 202-358-1600.

Notes

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