

THE NATIONAL SPACE SOCIETY WELCOMES BEYOND EARTH INSTITUTE'S SPACE SOLAR POWER INITIATIVE FOR A CLEANER ENVIRONMENT

Clean and Unlimited Power from Space Will Mitigate Climate Change

WASHINGTON, D.C., USA, August 9, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The National Space Society is pleased to support the Beyond Earth Institute's recently announced open memorandum to top U.S. government leaders, "[Presidential Policy Directive: National Strategy for Space Solar Power](#)."

This initiative is summarized by Steve Wolfe, the president of Beyond Earth: "Space solar power represents the ultimate space technology that will benefit Earth. SSP could be the linchpin that will enable the world to achieve net-zero carbon emissions by 2050."

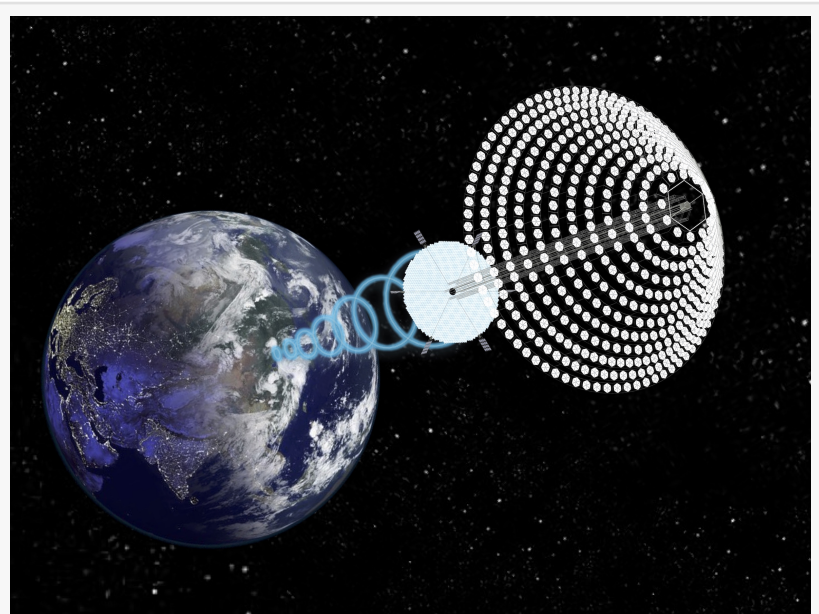


Illustration of a space solar power station in orbit.
Credit: John Mankins

Beyond Earth's initiative echoes work that the National Space Society has undertaken for decades—to further research and implementation to move the study of solar power from space into a near-term reality.

"Space solar power is truly one of the bright lights in near-term space technology today," said Dale Skran, NSS COO. "John Mankins, who works with both the NSS and Beyond Earth, has long been the world leader in this area, and has contributed his substantial talents to furthering the study of SSP. It's time to take SSP from the drawing boards to the skies, providing clean, limitless, and safe energy for the entire world." Mankins is a member of both the NSS Board of Directors and the NSS Policy Committee.

The core idea behind space solar power is to fabricate a fleet of orbiting platforms that gather light from the sun and convert it into energy that is then beamed to Earth-based stations. From



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there, it can be distributed via existing power grids to almost anywhere on the planet.

"Space solar power is clean, safe, and once the costs of building these orbiting and ground-based stations are amortized, essentially free," said Michelle Hanlon, President of the NSS. "The sun provides an unlimited supply of energy we have barely begun to tap, and orbiting systems, unlike ground-based ones, will allow us to harvest this energy 24 hours per day, with no need for expensive battery backup."

The NSS joins Beyond Earth in suggesting that we establish the needed technical foundation to begin delivery of this energy in the near future. This can be done in a series of steps.

"An early demonstration of SSP could be a station supporting the upcoming Artemis Moon base and should supply continuous power to show key economies of scale by 2030," said Randy Gigante, the Chair of NSS Policy Committee. "We also support added emphasis on commercial, Earth-orbiting solar power satellites to rapidly reduce the price of electricity both in space and on the Earth."

The NSS recommends government investment of at least \$500 million per year with the goal of a pathfinding orbital demonstration by 2030 and full-size operational units by 2035. This would put SSP funding on a par with federal funding for fusion energy, which has been in development for many decades but has not yet moved into practical application. Space solar power, on the other hand, requires no technological breakthroughs—just the application of technologies we already understand and can accomplish. "There are no technological showstoppers here," Gigante said. "We only need the willpower to accomplish it."

Space solar power was initially researched in the United States in the 1970s, but when government funding for this research was reduced, Japan and China began their own intensive efforts. "It's important that the U.S. remain a leader in SSP efforts, both to leverage our strong technological base in spaceflight and to provide power first domestically, then to an energy-hungry world," Skran said. "The result will be a cleaner environment, a vast net reduction in carbon emissions globally, and a better world for our children, who currently live in fear of a climate that has spun out of control in their future. We owe this to them, and to our planet"

To learn more about space solar power, see the new award-winning NSS video "[Dear Earth](#)." For a deeper dive into SSP, download our relevant publications, including "[Space Solar Power: Enabling a Green Future with Economic Growth](#)." Other NSS SSP publications can be found [here](#).

The National Space Society was founded in 1987 via a merger of the National Space Institute, founded to promote citizen support for the American space program, and the L5 Society, based on the work of space settlement pioneer Gerard K. O'Neill. The NSS is the preeminent citizen's voice on space exploration, development, and settlement. For more information go to space.nss.org.

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