

Value of America's Space Program

Overall, Americans value our nation's space program. Despite having little specific knowledge of the space program, Americans continue to hold it in high regard. In fact, more Americans place a high value on the space program than indicate they are familiar with it; 43% to 16%, respectively. Less than one-in-five (16%) Americans describe themselves as either "extremely" or "very" familiar with the space program. Most (73%) describe themselves as only "somewhat" (43%) or "slightly" (30%) familiar.

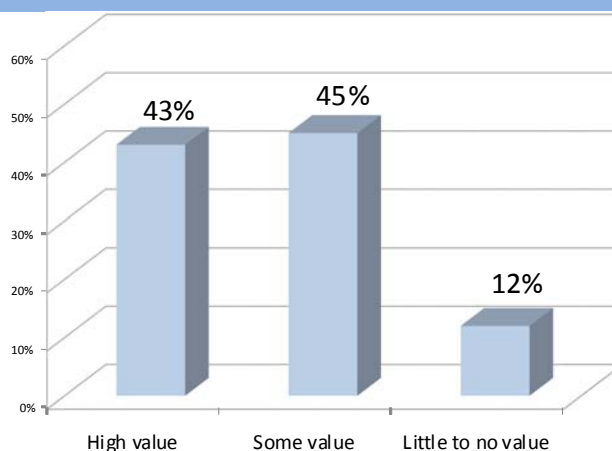
GeraldG – Effingham, SC

I think that there are many good and useful things that are coming from the space program that will help us in everyday life. All of the things that are learned are useful to us in some way.

TiffanyM – Chicago, IL

I think what is necessary is a thirst for knowledge of the galaxy and what makes up the solar system. By utilizing the resources available through NASA, we are able to understand a little more about the world we live in, the solar system and surrounding planets/debris, etc.

Value Placed on America's Space Program



CSE National Survey of n=1,018 Adults January 2009

10

Technology Transfer

Certainly one of the challenges being faced is awareness of the impact NASA has on people's daily lives. Left to their own devices, few Americans recognize the significant impact from NASA – just about one-in-four (24%) Americans say they regularly use NASA spinoff technology products. By comparison, about a third (31%) are either unsure or say they do not use these products. The balance (46%) is less committal, but clearly not specifically aware of the impact on their lives from products derived from NASA technology.

Following an initial question regarding NASA spinoff products, survey respondents were posed with a brief list of examples of consumer products originally derived from NASA technology. Upon reviewing the short list of these consumer products, there was a wholesale change in the view of how NASA impacts their daily lives. Nearly three-in-four (72%) indicate they use spinoff technology products all the time.

Public Perceptions of America's Space Program



Frequency of Use (Before List)	%	List of NASA Spinoff Products	Frequency of Use (After List)	%	
Yes, all the time	24%	Vacuum cleaners	Ski boots	Yes, all the time	72%
Yes, occasionally	14%	Radial tires	Temper-foam pillows	Yes, occasionally	21%
Probably	32%	Ear thermometers	Scratch-resistant lenses	Probably	6%
Not sure	29%	Cordless tools	Water purifiers	Not sure	1%
No	2%	GPS systems	Smoke detectors	No	1%

Participants in a qualitative project were asked to review the NASA @ Home and City website. There is no question that the website represented the tipping point for many participants in how they viewed NASA. However, it is important to note that the net effect of the website exercise did not as much change how many participants viewed NASA, as most generally have a positive image and see value in it. Rather, what the website exercise did was lay a contextual foundation supporting how most participants already viewed NASA.

LaurindaB – Salem, MA
Wow, I honestly never realized how much NASA space exploration has impacted so many things here. I guess they are a part of day to day life. I definitely learned a little more on how NASA and space exploration effects us here.

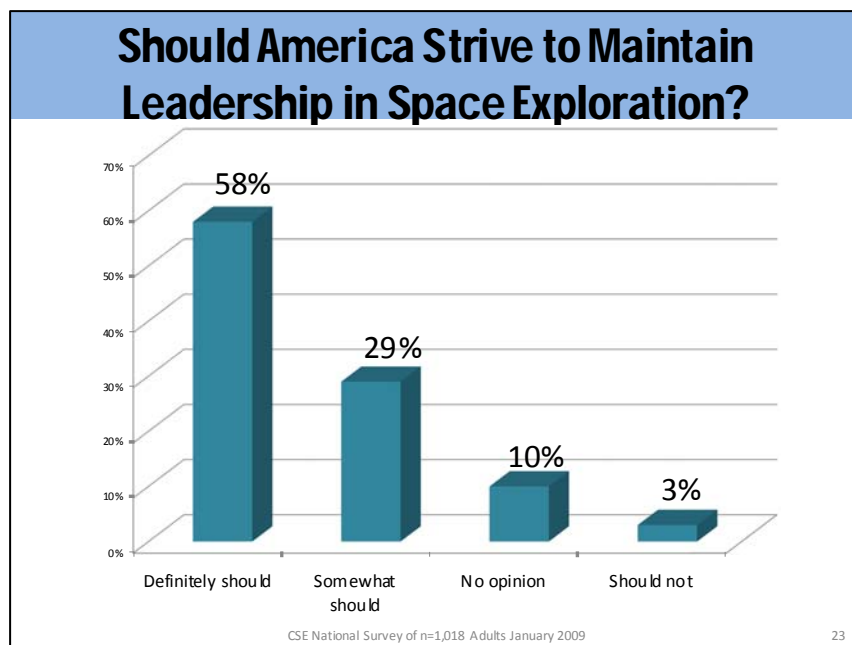
LindaH – Oklahoma City, OK
I am literally sitting here with my mouth dropped open. I cannot believe the impact Space exploration has on day to day living. There are uses no one would ever link to NASA. It definitely changes the way I look at NASA. I just wish other people could be informed of NASA research in the way I was. It has opened my eyes in a whole new way.

KrystalJ – Bethesda, MD
All I have to say is WOW . . . never knew how much NASA actually influenced what we use on a daily basis and to make our life's easier.

GleeW – Fort Wayne, IN
At the beginning of this journey, I had guessed at some of the things I Thought were contributions of NASA technology. I also said that if I was remotely right about my guesses that they were the same as a grain of sand compared to the actual impact made by that organization. I love being right And this time someone besides me knows it. I see NASA in a whole new light.

Leadership in Space

Not only do Americans place a high value on our space program, the consensus is that America should strive to maintain its position as the global leader in space exploration. Asked what America's response should be, knowing that nations such as China, Russia and India have set their sights on supplanting America, 87% of Americans say we "should" maintain our leadership position. More specifically, a solid majority (58%) says America "should definitely" maintain our leadership position.



EdB – Tulsa, OK

Yes very important! I feel it is important cause if we lose the lead we will lose the income to other countries, as well as we can lose the technological advances to other countries as well which would mean the loss of jobs this would create.

JudyG – Asheboro, NC

At least China and Russia would appear to have 'unpure' motives. They have shown in the past (and continue to show) a less than honorable way of treating their citizens. I would not feel safe with them as global leaders in space.

Budget

It probably comes as no surprise that very few Americans are able to identify NASA's percentage of the federal budget. What was a surprise – from both the survey and the qualitative project – was:

1. How far off many were in projecting NASA's budget allotment;
2. The level in surprise after knowing NASA receives less than 1%.

JosephT – New York, NY

Too little relative to the benefits it provides in defense, scientific techniques, and commercial spin-offs from its activities.

DawnD – San Diego, CA

I believe we really should focus more money into NASA and less into weapons of Mass Destruction and 50 billion dollar toilet seats

Familiarity with America's Space Program

Among the key findings discovered in this research is the more familiar one is with the space program, the more likely they are to place a high value on it. Among those Americans who describe themselves as familiar, a full three-quarters (73%) say they place a high value on the space program. Conversely, a majority (56%) of those less familiar place only "some value" on it.

Familiarity with Space Program	%
Extremely familiar	3%
Very familiar	13%
Somewhat familiar	43%
Slightly familiar	30%
Not at all familiar	11%

PatG – Medford, OR

I would say this is sad, NASA is one of our most important government agencies without proper funding we short change our hopes for the future. Just because they don't have a program that is full of glory at this time doesn't mean that they do not continue to improve our lives.

LindaB – Nashville, TN

I may not comprehend the total necessity of NASA and space exploration, but, if we don't explore and keep our future in constant thought, we may not have a place to call home for our grand children or their grand children unless we find a way to stop polluting our EARTH and ways to refertilize her, to make her healthier.

Research Methodology

The findings detailed in this summary are the result of two dynamic projects conducted on behalf of the Coalition for Space Exploration. The survey was conducted January 2009 among n=1,018 adult Americans. The verbatim responses were generated from a series of online bulletin board focus groups conducted among n=106 adult Americans in May 2009. Full reports for both the quantitative and qualitative projects are available from the Coalition for Space Exploration.

About the Coalition for Space Exploration

The Coalition for Space Exploration is a group of space industry businesses and advocacy groups that collaborate to educate and inform the public and Congress on the value and benefits of space exploration and to help ensure the United States remains a leader in space, science and technology – key factors that benefit every American, strengthen our nation's economy and maintain our national security. To learn more, visit www.spacecoalition.com.