

China and Russia Welcome International Participation in Lunar Research Station Project

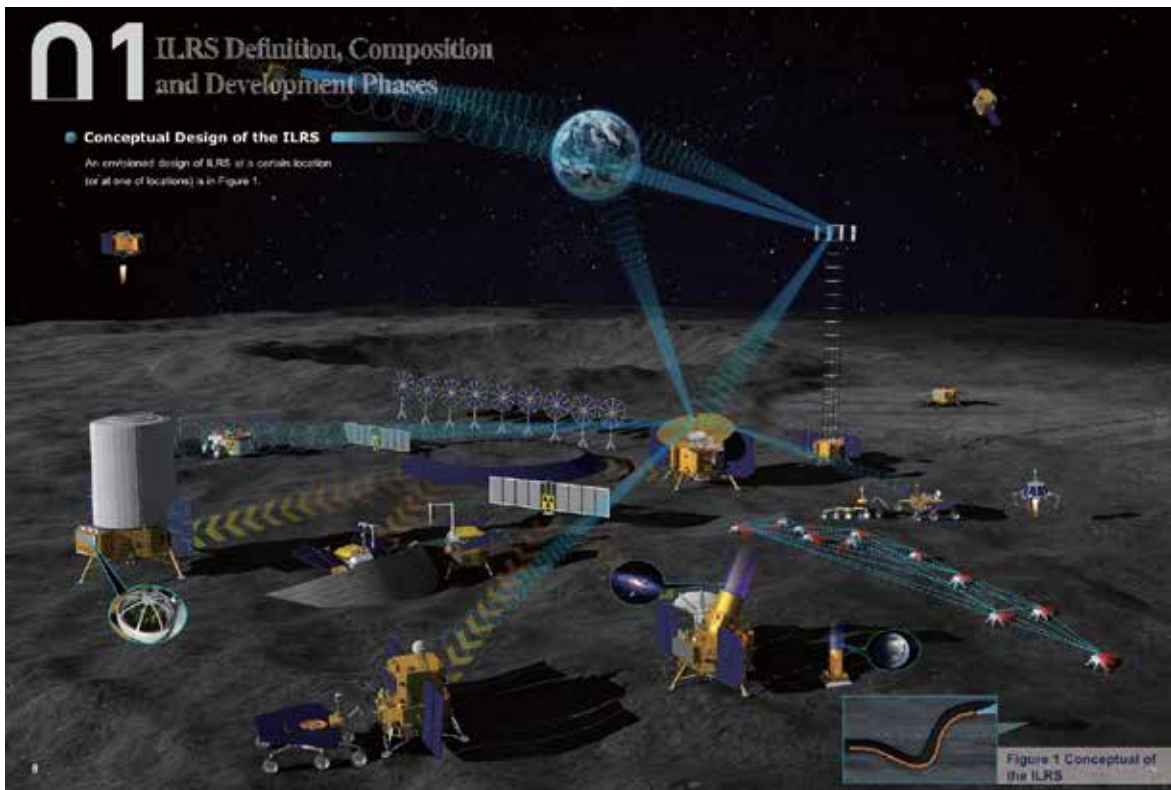
On June 16, at a forum held during the session of the Global Space Exploration Conference, a hybrid meeting occurring both online and offline, China and Russia jointly released the *International Lunar Research Station Roadmap (V1.0)* and the *International Lunar Research Station Guideline for Partnership (V1.0)*, further opening the joint-venture to international cooperation.

Formally announced on March 9, 2021, the International Lunar Research Station (ILRS) is a complex of facilities to support multi-disciplinary and multi-purpose scientific activities on the Moon jointly initiated by the China National Space Administration (CNSA) and the Russian State Space Corporation

“Roscosmos” (ROSCOSMOS), based on the two countries’ respective plans for lunar exploration. Late April, in the *JOINT STATEMENT Between CNSA and ROSCOSMOS Regarding Cooperation for the Construction of the International Lunar Research Station*, the two sides promised to open the project to all potential international partners for cooperation.

ILRS will be open to all interested international partners for cooperation in its planning, substantiating, engineering, development, implementation and operation, to strengthen scientific research exchanges and promote the peaceful exploration and use of outer space in the interests of all humankind, says the *Joint Statement*.

“The Parties welcome tangible and intangible



The conceptual design of the envisioned International Lunar Research Station, as released in the *ILRS Guideline for Partnership* (Credit: CNSA)

participation of international partners in the cooperation for the construction of ILRS in any aspect of the mission at each stage, and are convinced that all the participants will benefit from the cooperation,” the *Joint Statement* asserts.

Ensuing the *Joint Statement*, the newly released *Roadmap* and *Guideline for Partnership* give details on different aspects of the project, including the ILRS definition, composition and development phases; cooperation guidelines; and proposals of cooperation opportunities. The release of the two documents is to help potential partners better identify applicable areas and missions to participate in, offering a series of cooperative opportunities for all interested international partners in different phases of the ILRS project.

“CNSA and ROSCOMOS jointly invite all interested international partners to cooperate and contribute more for the peaceful exploration and use of the Moon in the interests of all humankind adhering to the principles of equality, openness and integrity,” affirmed the two sides in the release. “China and Russia welcome international partners to participate in all above phases and all-hierarchy levels of each phase.”

To ensure the project’s smooth progress, the *Roadmap* and the *Guideline for Partnership* will be further updated with milestone layouts and plans, as well as procedures for future partners to join the cause.

(Source: CNSA)

01 ILRS Definition, Composition and Development Phases

Conceptual Design of the ILRS

The set of missions of ILRS tentatively includes:

2031		ILRS-1 mission	Establishment of command center, basic energy and telecommunication facilities, to satisfy the needs of lunar infrastructure, lunar autonomous operations and long-term research and exploration.
		ILRS-2 mission	Establishment of lunar research and exploration facilities, such as lunar physics, geological profiling, lava tube exploration, lunar sample collection.
		ILRS-3 mission	Establishment of lunar in-situ resource utilization technology verification facilities.
		ILRS-4 mission	Verification of the general technologies for following explorations such as lunar biomedical experiment, distributed sample collection and return.
2035		ILRS-5 mission	Establishment of lunar-based astronomy and earth observation capabilities.