



A legacy of revolutionary creativity

Since its beginning in February 1998, NIAC has encouraged an atmosphere of creative examination of seemingly impossible aerospace missions and of audacious, but credible, visions to extend the limits of technical achievement. Visionary thinking is an essential ingredient for maintaining global leadership in the sciences, technology innovation and expansion of knowledge. NIAC has sought creative researchers who have the ability to transcend current perceptions of scientific knowledge and, with imagination and vision, to leap beyond incremental development towards the possibilities of dramatic breakthroughs in performance of aerospace systems.

By setting visionary standards for selection, NIAC has inspired the technical community to reach beyond current programs, inspire a credible reexamination of scientific principles and visualize aerospace architectures and systems for which enabling technologies may not be available. The concepts selected by NIAC for further development have been examined by their peers based on criteria for technical credibility and revolutionary potential. Further examination of the selected advanced concepts is facilitated by NIAC to encourage feedback from a broad spectrum of the technical community and to expand the possibilities for further development by government, industry and private investors. As a result of NIAC's very active and inclusive process of nurturing advanced concepts, several of the advanced concept programs in government agencies and private industry have leveraged NIAC's investment and have provided additional funding for further development or noted the concepts in their long range plans.

NIAC's focus on visionary advanced concepts whose complete development may stretch decades into the future is inspiring present and future generations of space scientists, engineers, and enthusiasts. In a modern setting where the presence of humans in space is now routine, the fact that NIAC captures the imagination of the general public and technical community represents a priceless contribution to our national space effort.

The staff of NIAC is honored to have had this opportunity to lead this unique institute and to have worked with the exceptionally creative NIAC Fellows and the many accomplished scientists and engineers who contributed to the peer review process, participated in oversight of NIAC's activities and provided continuing encouragement. We are also deeply indebted to the technical and public press as they have embraced NIAC's advanced concepts.

We are especially grateful for the funding provided by NASA over the last nine years and for the unwavering support of many exceptional scientists and engineers at NASA Headquarters and the NASA Centers.

NIAC's legacy of revolutionary concepts and an atmosphere of scientific creativity will endure.

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