

Impact Program

Fact Sheet

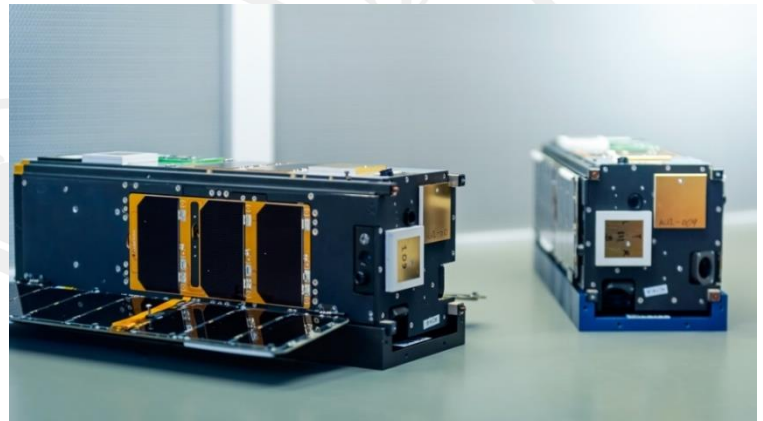


NRO Mission

The National Reconnaissance Office (NRO), an Intelligence Community element and Department of Defense organization, is responsible for developing, acquiring, launching and operating America's reconnaissance satellites, as well as operating associated data processing facilities that collect intelligence information in support of national security.

IMPACT Overview

The IMPACT program is a research and development effort led by the NRO's Advanced Systems and Technology (AS&T) directorate that uses CubeSats to provide early evaluation of new technologies in space. This collaborative launch program provides a risk-tolerant workspace for experimental payloads, matures multiple novel technologies per launch, and drives miniaturization—all while helping both new and seasoned commercial partners rapidly develop, mature, qualify, and transition new technologies into NRO systems.



Two, 3U IMPACT CubeSats prior to launch integration

Efficiencies & Benefits

To assist with the NRO's research and development goal of rapid technology infusion, the IMPACT program provides the following benefits:

- Matures multiple novel technologies per launch through experiment and technology miniaturization;
- Serves as the front end of the NRO's technology pipeline, researching future mission capabilities;
- Maintains a risk-tolerant approach to evaluate technologies at varying maturity levels;
- Partners with government, industry and academia to mature, qualify, and transition new technologies into NRO systems;
- Provides a results-driven feedback loop for technology development ,enabling rapid iteration and incremental technology development cycles;
- Offers a regular launch cadence for technology demonstrations, typically as a low-cost rideshare launch;
- Leverages a low-risk and adaptable spacecraft bus that enables easy onboarding and off-boarding of technologies throughout the satellite development timeline, and
- Hosts the NRO's Greenlighting program, which evaluates the performance and space survivability of new technologies developed by commercial vendors in a streamlined fashion.

NATIONAL RECONNAISSANCE OFFICE

