ispace to Transport JAXA's Transformable Lunar Robot Payload to the Moon, Conduct Operations and Provide Lunar Data

The Japanese space agency awarded ispace with a contract to deliver its robot to the lunar surface and became one the company's first lunar data customers

Tokyo, Japan, May 27 – The Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) has signed a contract with Japan's ispace, inc. (ispace), under which the latter will provide lunar payload delivery, operations, and data acquisition services.

Under the agreement, a robot provided by JAXA will be transported to the Moon on ispace's lunar lander during the company's 'Mission 1' planned to launch in 2022[1] as part of its commercial lunar exploration program known as 'HAKUTO-R'. ispace will deliver JAXA's transformable lunar robot—a small-scale, two-wheeled rover—to the Moon and provide communication and operations during the robot's lunar surface exploration.

In addition to payload delivery, this service agreement is among ispace's first announced contracts relating to its lunar data business, which was announced last summer with the concept name, *Blueprint Moon*. Under the agreement, ispace will acquire and transfer several sets of lunar data to JAXA, such as telemetry and lunar imagery. The data to be acquired by ispace is intended to improve the design accuracy and automatic operation and driving technology for the crewed pressurized rover, currently under research at JAXA.

At 80mm (3 in.) in diameter, the robot payload received from JAXA is roughly the size of a baseball. The robot will be integrated onto ispace's lunar lander and deployed upon landing on the surface of the Moon. The robot is jointly being developed by JAXA and non-space commercial companies. Please refer to JAXA's press release for more information here.

JAXA selected ispace for its mission in an open bidding process.

Takeshi Hakamada, Founder & CEO of ispace: "We are honored that JAXA has entrusted ispace's lunar payload transportation service to deliver its robot to the Moon and lay the framework for its future lunar surface exploration. We're also pleased to make history as the first commercial service provider to a governmental lunar surface mission in Japan."

■ About ispace, inc. (https://ispace-inc.com/)

ispace is a lunar exploration company with over 130 staff and offices in Japan, Europe and the United States. Founded in 2010, ispace managed Team HAKUTO, one of the 5 finalists in the Google Lunar XPRIZE competition. The company is building a small commercial lunar lander, which aims to provide a high-frequency, low-cost delivery service to the Moon, as well as a lunar rover for surface exploration. Aspiring to be a gateway for the private sector to bring their business to the Moon, ispace has also launched a lunar data business concept to support companies with lunar market entry. ispace is part of a team led by Draper, which was selected by NASA to compete in its Commercial Lunar Payload Services (CLPS) Program, and ispace Europe was selected by ESA to be part of the Science Team for PROSPECT, a program which seeks to extract water on the Moon.

■ About HAKUTO-R (https://ispace-inc.com/hakuto-r/)

HAKUTO-R is a multinational commercial lunar exploration program operated by ispace. It includes ispace's first two lunar missions: Mission 1, a soft lunar landing planned to launch in 2022[2], and Mission 2, a lunar landing and

[1] Planned as of May 2021.
[2] Planned as of May 2021.

deployment of a rover planned to launch in 2023[3]. For both missions, the HAKUTO-R lander is planned to launch on SpaceX's Falcon 9 rocket. The program aspires to lay the groundwork for high-frequency lunar transportation. Corporate Partners of HAKUTO-R include Japan Airlines, Suzuki Motors, Citizen Watch, Mitsui Sumitomo Insurance, NGK Spark Plug, Takasago Thermal Engineering, Sumitomo Corporation, and Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corporation and SMBC Nikko Securities Inc. Media Partners for HAKUTO-R include TBS, Asahi Shimbun, and Shogakukan.

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[3] Planned as of May 2021.