

# “Mars Generation” National Opinion Poll

*Preliminary Snapshot Report*

With the success of the Mars Curiosity rover landing, the following survey was designed to measure attitudes and levels of support toward human and robotic exploration of Mars. The survey was conducted between February 4, 2013, and February 6, 2013, targeting a stratified random sample of 1,101 respondents representing a 95% confidence level and margin of error of +/-3%. The survey was conducted by email and targeted a nationwide sample. All efforts were made to ensure a representative sample of the U.S. population 18 years and older given normal standards of statistical sampling.

The “Mars Generation” survey was conducted by the independent market research team of **Phillips & Company** ([www.phillipscompany.com](http://www.phillipscompany.com)) and sponsored by **Explore Mars, Inc.** ([www.exploremars.org](http://www.exploremars.org)), a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization and **The Boeing Corporation**.

*The full report, including demographic data, is scheduled to be released on March 4, 2013.*

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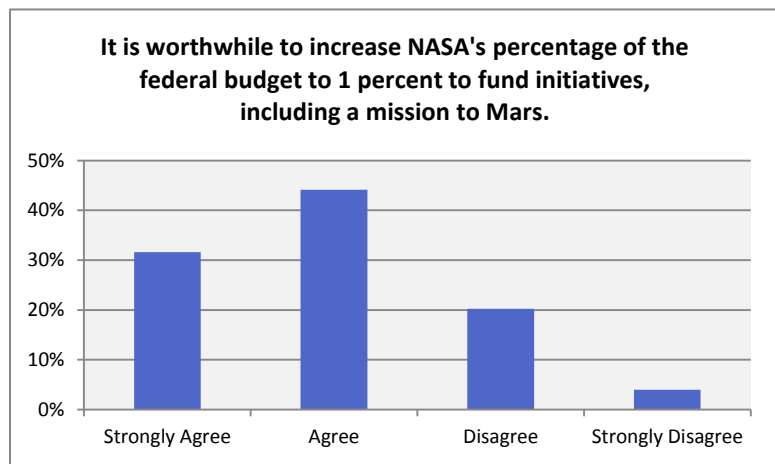
**What do you think is NASA's percentage of the overall federal budget?  
 Use the scale of 0 to 6 percent to represent your answer.**

On average, Americans believe that NASA spending represents 2.43% of the federal budget with a standard deviation of 1.68%. Of respondents polled, 95% believe NASA spending falls within 0.75% and 4.11% of the federal budget. In reality, NASA's budget in FY2011 was \$18.4 billion representing 0.5% of the federal budget.

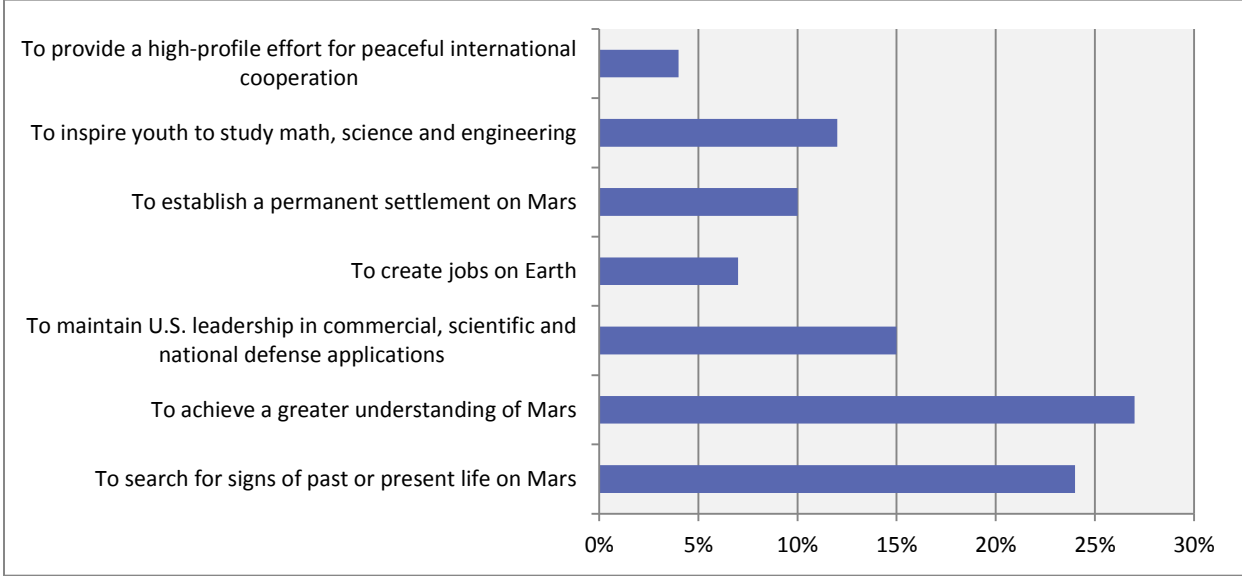
**Indicate whether you "Strongly Agree," "Agree," "Disagree" or "Strongly Disagree" with the following statements:**

#		Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	# of Respondents	Mean
1	It is worthwhile to increase NASA's percentage of the federal budget to 1 percent to fund initiatives, including a mission to Mars.	31.61%	44.14%	20.25%	4.00%	1,101	1.97
2	The settlement of Mars should be left to privately-funded private sector efforts.	13.53%	32.15%	45.50%	8.81%	1,101	2.50
3	It is necessary for the Government to fund initial technologies to send humans to explore Mars.	23.07%	48.96%	23.43%	4.54%	1,101	2.09
4	If Curiosity, NASA's rover, finds evidence of past or present life on Mars, we should send a human crew to verify the finding.	31.15%	53.13%	12.62%	3.09%	1,101	1.88
5	NASA should strengthen and expand partnerships with the private sector to send humans to explore Mars.	32.15%	51.23%	14.17%	2.45%	1,101	1.87

- 75% of Americans Strongly Agree or Agree that it is worthwhile to increase NASA's percentage of the federal budget to 1 percent to fund a mission to Mars.
- 54% of Americans believe that settlement of Mars should not be left to privately-funded private sector efforts and that there should be a strong NASA role.
- 84% of Americans support sending humans to Mars if Curiosity finds signs of past or present life.
- However, 83% of Americans believe that NASA should strengthen and expand partnerships with the private sector to send humans to Explore Mars.



**Which one of the following reasons do you think best supports sending humans to Mars?**



According to the majority of Americans, the top three reasons for human exploration of Mars are 1) to achieve a greater understanding of Mars, 2) to search for signs of life, and 3) to maintain U.S. leadership in commercial, scientific and national defense applications.

**In regard to sending humans to Mars by 2033, rate how much of a barrier you think each issue is by selecting “Not a Barrier,” “Slight Barrier,” “Strong Barrier” or “Barrier That Cannot Be Overcome.”**

#		Not a Barrier	Slight Barrier	Strong Barrier	Barrier That Cannot Be Overcome	# of Respondents	Mean
1	Technology shortfalls	14.44%	52.86%	29.52%	3.18%	1,101	2.21
2	Affordability	4.63%	21.53%	65.49%	8.36%	1,101	2.78
3	Motivation	45.50%	32.06%	19.71%	2.72%	1,101	1.80
4	Politics	5.99%	26.16%	58.31%	9.54%	1,101	2.71

When asked to rank potential barriers to Mars exploration, 73% of Americans believe that the greatest barrier is affordability and 67% believe politics to be a limiting barrier. Technology and motivation are not seen as significant barriers by the majority of Americans.

Please rank the missions in order of value to our country from 1 to 4, with 1 being the most valuable and 4 being the least valuable. You may check each number only once.

#	Answer	1	2	3	4	Total	Mean
1	Sending humans directly to Mars to find evidence of past life and demonstrate whether humans can live on other planets	33.33%	25.25%	19.44%	21.98%	1,101	2.30
2	Sending humans to the Moon to test hardware that can be used for future missions and eventually establish a Lunar settlement	27.61%	32.97%	21.80%	17.62%	1,101	2.29
3	Sending robots to bring a small asteroid back to Lunar orbit for long-term human study closer to Earth	24.70%	19.07%	28.16%	28.07%	1,101	2.60
4	Sending humans to an asteroid to mine, or develop capabilities to divert its orbit	14.35%	22.71%	30.61%	32.33%	1,101	2.81

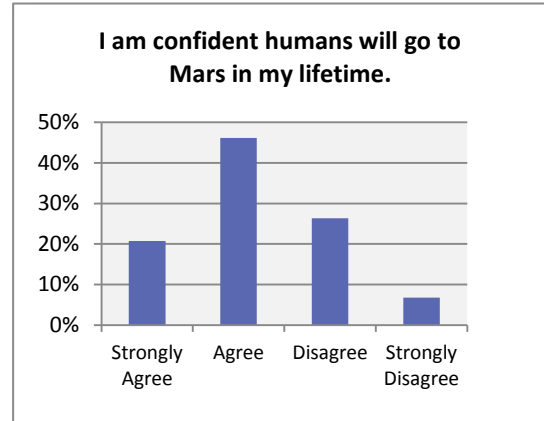
Americans ranked sending humans to Mars as the most important mission to our country.

Americans also ranked the goal of sending humans to the Moon as a top priority with a combined 61% ranking this mission as having the highest or second highest value to our country.

Indicate whether you "Strongly Agree," "Agree," "Disagree" or "Strongly Disagree" with the following statements:

#		Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total	Mean
1	Returning to the Moon is necessary before sending humans to explore Mars.	25.89%	41.05%	29.06%	4.00%	1,101	2.11
2	Human exploration of an asteroid would be worthwhile.	20.62%	59.31%	16.35%	3.72%	1,101	2.03
3	I am confident humans will go to Mars by 2033.	20.98%	50.14%	23.98%	4.90%	1,101	2.13
4	I am confident humans will go to Mars in my lifetime.	20.71%	46.14%	26.34%	6.81%	1,101	2.19

- Americans are confident that humans will walk on Mars.
- 71% of Americans are confident that humans will go to Mars by 2033; and both men and women agree with no distinguishable difference.
- Young people are more confident.
- 73% of Americans ages 18-24 are confident humans will go to Mars by 2033.
- This age group of 18-24 has the highest confidence percentage that humans will go to Mars by 2033 and in their lifetime.
- The majority of Americans ages 18-54 are confident humans will go to Mars in their lifetime.
- Americans from all diverse racial groups support Mars exploration.
- 71% of both white and black Americans are confident humans will go to Mars by 2033.
- 79% of Asian Americans are confident humans will go to Mars by 2033, and 80% of Native Americans are confident of this.



**There are currently two operational NASA rovers on Mars, including Curiosity. Of the statements below, which one do you most agree with?**

#	Answer	Response	%
1	The United States should send both humans and robots to Mars.	742	67%
2	The United States should send only robots to Mars.	306	28%
3	The United States should not explore Mars.	53	5%
	Total	1,101	100%

- 67% of Americans agreed the U.S. should send both humans and robots to Mars.
- Only 5% of Americans believe we should not explore Mars.

**If the international space community committed to a joint mission to Mars, the United States should:**

#	Answer	Response	%
4	Join the committee regardless of the United States' position within the group	594	54%
3	Join the committee, but only if the United States takes the lead role	257	23%
2	Strive to be the first to explore the planet	189	17%
1	Decide not to participate	61	6%

When asked if the international space community committed to a joint mission to Mars, 54% of Americans said the U.S. should join regardless of its position within the group.