Press Release

The Options for the Future of the Space Station

ANDREW EVANS | SEPTEMBER 25, 2018

The International Space Station (ISS) was originally intended to last only until 2015, but Congress has extended its funding, and the Trump Administration has now proposed privatizing it. AAF's Director of Technology and Innovation Policy Will Rinehart examines the plausibility of different options for the ISS's future. He also looks at the need for reforming how research and the resulting intellectual property are handled on the station.

An excerpt:

> *Research is only a portion of the total income projected for the ISS if it were to go private. According to a study by the federally funded Institute for Defense Analysis's Science and Technology Policy Institute, the ISS could serve as a destination for private space flight participants or government astronauts. It could also be a hub for on-orbit assembly of satellites and manufacturing, specifically high-grade silicon carbide and exotic fiber optic cables, for use on Earth or in space. It's also possible to utilize the lab for media, advertising, and observation. The total projected revenue from these activities ranges from $455 million to $1.19 billion. Yet these projections are speculative: Predicting revenues for any industry 10 years in advance is difficult, much less for the highly nascent space industry. And it is unclear if even the high end of these revenue projections would cover the costs of maintaining and upgrading the ISS.*

Read more here.