

Dr. Philip Christensen is a Regents Professor of planetary geoscience in the School of Earth and Space Exploration at Arizona State University. His work is focused on developing, building, and operating infrared cameras and spectrometers, five of which have flown to Mars on NASA's Mars Observer, Mars Global Surveyor, Mars Odyssey, and the two Mars Exploration Rover missions. These instruments use infrared observations to map the surface composition, search for habitable environments, and help select the sites for future Mars landers and rovers. They have discovered ancient lake deposits, salt deposits evaporated from water early in Mars history, and sites of recent snow accumulation and melting. Most recently he has begun developing an infrared spectrometer for the OSIRIS-REx mission, which will study a small asteroid and return samples to the Earth. Over the past 10 years, Dr. Christensen has been working on concepts for Earth-orbiting cameras and sensors to study the urban environment of cities worldwide. Dr. Christensen is a Fellow of the American Geophysical Union and the Geological Society of America, received the Geological Society of America's G.K. Gilbert Award in 2008 and NASA's Exceptional Scientific Achievement Medal in 2003 and NASA's Public Service Medal in 2005. He served on the NRC Planetary Science Decadal Survey in 2010-2011 as the chair of the Mars Panel and is currently the Co-Chair of the NRC's Committee on Astrobiology and Planetary Science.