



Catherine Koerner

Associate Administrator for Exploration Systems Development

Catherine Koerner is the associate administrator for the Exploration Systems Development Mission Directorate at NASA Headquarters in Washington. She is responsible for the development of NASA's Moon to Mars architecture, defining and managing the systems development for Artemis missions, and planning for integrated deep space exploration approach.

Koerner was formerly the deputy associate administrator for the mission directorate, providing leadership and management of human spaceflight development and operations related to NASA's Moon and Mars exploration goals. She was responsible for establishing and defining future space exploration architectures while overseeing development of new space transportation systems and supporting capabilities that are critical for human-led deep space exploration and scientific research.

Prior to her position at NASA Headquarters, Koerner was NASA's Orion Program manager at NASA's Johnson Space Center in Houston, where she was responsible for oversight of design, development, and testing of the Orion spacecraft. Before leading the Orion Program, Koerner served as the director of Human Health and Performance Directorate, focusing on enhancing crew health and performance and mitigating risks associated with human spaceflight. The core capabilities in the directorate include space and clinical operations; biomedical research and environmental sciences; human systems engineering and development; strategic planning, benchmarking, collaboration, and open innovation.

As a former NASA flight director at NASA Johnson, Koerner led teams in mission control during space shuttle and International Space Station missions. She also previously held several leadership positions within the space station program during its assembly phase and managed NASA's cargo resupply services contracts for it, helping foster a commercial space industry in low Earth orbit. Before joining Johnson in 1991, she worked at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Southern California, where her career with the agency began as a mission design engineer.

Koerner earned her Bachelor of Science and Master of Science degrees in aeronautical and astronautical engineering from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. She has received numerous awards including a Presidential Rank Award in 2019, two Outstanding Leadership Medals (2006, 2013), NASA's Exceptional Service Medal (2007), Johnson's Center Director Commendation (2017) and numerous Group Achievement Awards.