

Prospects for next-generation solid planetary missions from Japan

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When NASA's Messenger and New Horizon missions reach the both ends of 9-planet chain in our Solar System, the first-generation planetary exploration will be completed; we will finish looking at every planet in our Solar System. The first-generation planetary explorations brought us a series of astonishing surprises and a great amount of knowledge on our world. However, the completion of the first generation makes us wonder, "Should we continue planetary exploration?" If the answer is yes, what target should we focus on? In this paper, we will address these two points and propose what Japanese space agency should/can do and what Japanese planetary scientists should do.