



Near Earth Asteroid-Scout

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- NASA announced that its new spacecraft, named NEA Scout has completed all required tests and has been safely tucked inside the Space Launch System (SLS) rocket. **NEA Scout is one of several payloads that will hitch a ride on Artemis I, which is expected to be launched in November.**
- Artemis I will be an uncrewed testflight of the Orion spacecraft and SLS rocket. Under the Artemis programme, NASA has aimed to land the first woman on the Moon in 2024 and also establish sustainable lunar exploration programs by 2030.
- Near-Earth Asteroid Scout, or NEA Scout, is a small spacecraft, about the size of a big shoebox, known as a cubeSat. **Its main mission is to fly by and collect data from a near-Earth asteroid.** It will also be America's first interplanetary mission using a special solar sail propulsion.
- NEA Scout will use stainless steel alloy booms and deploy an aluminum-coated sail. The large-area sail will generate thrust by reflecting sunlight. Energetic particles of sunlight bounce off the solar sail to give it a gentle, yet constant push. Over the time, this constant thrust can accelerate the spacecraft to very high speeds, allowing it to navigate through space and catch up to its target asteroid.
- **The spacecraft will take about two years to cruise to the asteroid** and will be about 93 million miles away from Earth during the asteroid encounter.

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