

Forging the Future: Public-Private Partnerships in Space Innovation

John Bailey, Panelist



John Bailey serves as center director of NASA's Stennis Space Center near Bay St. Louis, Mississippi, a position he has held since April 2024. In that role, Bailey provides executive leadership, overall direction, and management of the center. He is responsible for implementing NASA's mission in rocket propulsion testing, and for developing and maintaining NASA's world-class rocket propulsion test facilities. He also oversees a unique federal city that is home to more than 50 federal, state, academic and private organizations, and numerous technology-based companies. Prior to being named center director, Bailey served as NASA Stennis deputy director, responsible for coordinating and executing all rocket propulsion testing capabilities at NASA Stennis, as well as managing the federal city. He also served as acting center director January-April 2024. Bailey also

previously served as associate director of NASA Stennis, providing leadership and managing the institutional capabilities that supports federal city operations and NASA's rocket propulsion testing capabilities at NASA Stennis. Bailey began his career as a communications engineer with the U.S. Air Force and progressed to lead electronic communications testing worldwide. Bringing his leadership expertise to NASA in 1999, Bailey served in various roles, managing and leading technical and non-technical organizations and supervising employees with a wide variety of skills and backgrounds. Early in his NASA career, his leadership roles included service as manager of Intellectual Property and Dual Use Technology Development; chief of the Technology Development and Transfer Office; chief of the Science and Technology Division; deputy manager of the Office of External Affairs; technical assistant to the director of the Engineering and Test Directorate; and strategic business manager for the Office of the Center Director. Bailey was selected as deputy director of the NASA Stennis Engineering and Test Directorate in 2015 and advanced to the role of director that same year. In those capacities, he provided leadership and management of critical rocket propulsion test assets exceeding \$2 billion in replacement value and managed projects more than \$221 million. The portfolio included high priority propulsion test projects, an extensive array of technology development projects, and major test complex construction activities, including restoration of the Thad Cochran Test Stand (B-2) to support the historic SLS (Space Launch System) core stage Green Run test for NASA's Artemis program. During his career, Bailey

has received numerous awards. In 2023, he was one of 14 NASA employees to receive a Presidential Meritorious Award. The award, one of the most prestigious in career civil service, recognizes exceptional leadership, accomplishments, and service over an extended period. Bailey obtained a bachelor's degree in electrical engineering from the University of South Alabama in Mobile in 1988. Shortly thereafter, he began his career as a civil servant with the Air Force at Keesler Air Force Base in Biloxi, Mississippi. During that time, he earned a master's degree in business administration from the University of South Alabama in 1998.