

Transcript

Planet Mercury – Why spend the money?

JOE ZENDER:

We're sending two probes actually to Mercury, but actually the money we use, we pay engineers, technicians and scientists and so on, and actually the money is going back to the European industry and universities and institutes. So I think the money is not put in actually a satellite and moved over to Mercury. The money is spent here.

SANTA MARTINEZ:

The contribution to the industrial development and also to the development of the technology is very, very big. So in a way, the development that we are doing for the space missions contributes to the development that we need for other type of areas.

DAVID ROTHERY:

We're flying to Mercury with an iron drive, for heaven's sake. That's pretty cool technology.

SANTA MARTINEZ:

At the same time, I think exploring another planet, which has some similarities with our Earth planet, I think it contributes to understanding also some of the processes on our own planet.

DAVID ROTHERY:

If you want to understand the planet we're sitting on here now, you've got to understand the neighbors.

JACK WRIGHT:

We only have five terrestrial planets or bodies in the inner solar system that are easily accessible for astronomers and planetary scientists to look at. The Earth, Venus, Mars, our own moon counts to a degree, and then Mercury. And they are all different. If we are to understand how terrestrial bodies form and how they live out their lives in solar systems and what their fate will be whenever we point our telescopes into the wider universe, we have to know what's going on in our own neighborhood before we're going to be able to make any informed discoveries and decisions about what's out there.

STEFANO ORSINI:

There are two things. First is expand our mind. And then understand the Earth and live better here.

REBECCA THOMAS:

We don't know what we don't know. So we don't know the things that we might be able to discover by going to Mercury.

LOUISE PROCKTER:

The fundamental human need to explore. Don't we all want to understand why we're here, why are we here in the solar system, what makes us so special? And by looking at other planets around us, we can understand what makes Earth so very unique. And this, of course, is starting to help us understand exoplanets, look for other Earth-like planets.