

Roscosmos Wants \$440 Million to Build Inflatable Space Stations

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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A Nasa official being shown around the facilities of the Bigelow Aerospace firm in Las Vegas, Nevada.

Russia's space agency, Roscosmos, has requested 16 billion rubles (\$440 million) for the development of inflatable space station habitats, Interfax reported Monday, citing a copy of the proposed federal space program for 2016-2025.

The program, which Russian media reports say was submitted to the government last week, contains proposals for a number of ambitious projects, including moon bases and super-heavy lift rockets.

Two inflatable space station modules — which are generally made by surrounding a flexible air bladder with interwoven layers of Kevlar and Mylar, and are lighter and cheaper to launch than metal-cylinder versions — were tested by U.S.-based Bigelow Aerospace in 2006 and 2007. NASA is also looking to develop its own inflatable modules for the International Space Station and future space station projects.

Roscosmos, whose involvement in the International Space Station program through 2020 is hanging in the balance due to the Ukraine crisis, wants to build its own inflatable module with a five-year lifespan and a pressurized compartment volume of 300 cubic meters that would be ready for launch in 2021, the report said.

It is unclear whether the Russian module would be part of the International Space Station program or an independent Russian space station, plans for which have been discussed by Deputy Prime Minister Dmitry Rogozin, who oversees the Russian space industry. Roscosmos has so far declined to comment on the strategy document, which has yet to be approved.

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