

History

On April 12, 1961, Yuri Gagarin aboard the Vostok 1 became the first human to travel in space. This would mark humanities entry into history as a spacefaring race. On July 20, 1969, Apollo 11 lands on Luna. Neil Armstrong made history by being the first human to walk on Luna, and the first human to walk on an astronomical object other than Earth.

In 2015, billionaire philanthropist Elon Musk and his SpaceX corporation successfully landed and recovered the first stage of its Falcon 9 rocket after delivering 11 communications satellites to orbit. This represents the first-ever orbital class rocket landing, and humanity's first major shift towards sustainable space travel.

Human space exploration began in earnest in the late 21st century. In 2069 CE, Armstrong Outpost in Shackleton Crater on Luna was founded as humanity's first extraterrestrial settlement.

In 2070, billionaire Victor Manswell, dissatisfied with the pace of official exploration, leading to a series of private ventures began funding his own extrasolar colonization endeavor. The Manswell Expedition, as it became known, successfully launched five years later with 300 cryogenically-frozen colonists bound for the Alpha Centauri system, but communications with the expedition's ship were soon lost and the colonists classified as missing.

In 2103, the European Space Agency established Lowell City in Eos Chasma on Mars, paving the way for additional settlements and scientific outposts throughout Sol.

In 2137, the Ashland Energy Corporation successfully extracted helium-3 from Saturn's atmosphere, beginning a new era of fusion research. On the wave of this success, they merged with Eldfell Construction to vertically integrate the two companies' strengths. Ashland would recover the raw materials for energy production, and Eldfell would build power plants, refineries, and pipelines on nearby worlds to distribute Ashland's products to the consumer. Eldfell-Ashland Energy was born.

In 2142, Gagarin Station became the farthest human-made structure from Earth. The station came to be known as Jump Zero, because it was the launching point for early failed attempts at faster-than-light travel before mass effect field technology was developed.

In 2147, trace amounts of a new element, element zero (or eezo) was discovered on Mars. This led to further exploration of the red planet.

In 2148, human explorers on Mars uncovered a long-ruined Prothean observation post, with a surviving data cache that proved Protheans had studied Cro-Magnon humans millennia ago. While religions tried to assimilate this discovery into their doctrine, a global rush began to decipher the petabytes of data from the outpost.

In 2149, a human science team exploring the edge of the system near Pluto discovered that Charon was not a moon at all, but an enormous piece of ancient technology encased in a layer of ice hundreds of kilometers thick for thousands of years, known as a mass relay, that had been used by the Protheans. The discovery was not completely surprising, however, since the Prothean ruins found on Mars had mentioned such a device. While the scientific theory behind the creation of mass relays was still beyond humanity's reach at the time, scientists were able to reactivate the dormant relay.

Exploratory probes sent through the Charon Relay immediately dropped out of contact, and it was determined that the only way to learn what was on the relay's other side was to send actual explorers through. Led by Jon Grissom, a team of brave men and women willing to risk their lives traveled through the relay, and discovered that it led to Arcturus, a small system with a sun and three planets. Their successful return made them heroes, and Jon Grissom became the face of the Systems Alliance as humanity entered a new age of unparalleled discovery and expansion.

In 2150, the Systems Alliance began the first surveys for colonization prospects outside the Sol System. One of these surveys discovers the planet Terra Nova.

To defend its expanding territory, in 2151 humanity began constructing a massive military fleet and space station at Arcturus, the nexus of several key mass relays, even though they had yet to encounter another intelligent spacefaring race.

An accident at Singapore International Spaceport exposes hundreds of humans to dust-form element zero. Roughly 30% of the children born in Singapore after element zero exposure suffer from cancerous growths.

In 2152 The Delta Pavonis Foundation, a major consortium based on Earth, begins settlement of humanity's first extra-solar colony world, the planet Demeter. Later that year, additional colonies were founded on Eden Prime and Terra Nova.

In 2154, there is a second publicized accident involving the exposure of humans to element zero.

In 2155, The Systems Alliance occupies completed portions of Arcturus Station, intended to become the Alliance's headquarters, though the station is still estimated to take a decade to be completely constructed. Arcturus Station is a 5-kilometer diameter Stanford Torus-type space station, at the trailing Lagrange point of the gas giant Themis and will house an estimated 45,000 personnel once completed.

In 2156, A small number of human children exposed to element zero exhibit minor telekinetic abilities.

2157 (Present): The operation of the Charon Relay has had the side effect of circularising Pluto's elliptical orbit. Recently, a small Alliance Naval Exploration Flotilla research team exploring space beyond the Shanxi-Theta relay consisting of three frigates and two cargo vessels have discovered an inactive Mass Relay and are attempting to reactivate the dormant technology.