

The US tested robots operating on the Moon

Scientists are conducting tests that will allow the four-legged robot Spirit to move on rough terrain, simulating the harsh conditions of the Moon and Mars. This project is led by the University of Southern California (USC), with funding from NASA.

The robot, named Spirit, will test how to move on the rugged terrain of Mount Hood in the state of Oregon, USA. Accordingly, the robot must move on difficult and variable surfaces, walking from hard or rocky surfaces, to soft ground surfaces such as snow or sand.



Dr Cristina Wilson of Oregon State University, said: 'With each step a four-legged robot takes, it can feel mechanical resistance to its legs, similar to the way humans walk on surfaces. On uneven surfaces, we can detect how the ground is moving under our feet; a robot with legs has the same ability. Through this, we can collect data to further our understanding of how the planet's surface was formed and how it will move in the future.'

The research project, called Project LASSIE: Automated Surface Science in Analog Environments, demonstrates that the Spirit robot can learn to navigate and adapt to each new challenge, in preparation for future missions. destiny in the future when humans and robots work together in space. The Mount Hood terrain robotics efforts will help design future machines and how they deal with different terrains and how they collect data as they move.

'My team's role in this project is to ensure the robot can sense and maneuver for planetary science,' said Feifei Qian - Assistant Professor of Electrical and Computer Engineering at the University of Southern California. That means we want the robot to be able to move from place to place, to get to the points where we want to take any measurements. Second, we are doing something very novel which is turning each leg of the robot into a sensor so that as the robot takes each step, we want the robot to collect information about the environment.'

The project is sponsored by the US Space Agency NASA for a period of 2 years with a total value of up to 2 million USD, allowing robot groups to support astronauts in performing many different tasks on the moon. The research team includes experts from NASA, Texas A&M University, Georgia Institute of Technology, Oregon State University, Temple University and the University of Pennsylvania.

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