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Asha Balakrishnan Named Director, Science and Technology Policy Institute

ALEXANDRIA, Va. (October 2025) — IDA appointed Asha Balakrishnan as the new Director, Science and Technology Policy Institute (STPI), effective October 25. She succeeds Kristen Kulinowski, who has led STPI since 2021.

Asha brings nearly two decades of experience to the role, having supported the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy across five presidential administrations since joining STPI as a Research Staff Member in 2007. She has served in STPI leadership positions for the past four years, most recently as Deputy Director.

“Asha brings a wealth of expertise in space policy, research and development evaluation and STEM education,” said IDA President Norty Schwartz. “I look forward to her continued contributions and leadership in this new role.”

Throughout her tenure at IDA, Asha has conducted policy research on critical space policy issues including orbital debris mitigation, space weather, space situational awareness and global trends in space. She has also led several evaluations and assessments for federal sponsors on a wide range of topics supporting the science and technology enterprise.

Beyond her work at IDA, Asha has served as an adjunct professor at George Washington University and as an American Society of Mechanical Engineering Congressional Fellow on the House Science Committee’s Subcommittee on Space and Aeronautics.

Asha holds a bachelor’s degree in mechanical engineering from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. She also holds both a master’s degree and doctorate in mechanical engineering from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

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