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Space Exploration and Innovation: Competition or Cooperation? The space race between the United States and the Soviet Union was a competition between two global superpowers. A number of firsts were achieved: the first satellite, first man in orbit and landing men on the moon. This began in the early years of the Cold War where the United States and the Soviet Union were locked in economic and military competition. It was a period of intense rivalry. Yet when the Soviet Union collapsed, Russia and United States changed tactics and worked together to develop and innovate new technology. The cooperation between the United States and Russia has led to combined missions and the construction of the International Space Station. This existence of two radically different catalysts for technological innovation in space exploration makes for an important question: is cooperation or competition better strategy. This can be analyzed when looking at the NASA budget and predicted Soviet budget overtime as it changed in response to world events.

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