

UKSDC National Final 2014: Results

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

On 29th and 30th March, Imperial College London hosted 200 students aged 15 to 18 participating in the fifth national final of the annual UK Space Design Competition (UKSDC).

This year the students were asked to present detailed designs for a mobile space settlement housing 10,000 people, and designed to move small near-Earth asteroids close to the Earth and the Moon where they could be mined and processed.



The winning design, proposed by 'Grumbo Aerospace', was highlighted by the judges for its innovative ideas for zero-gravity sports, detailed solutions to oxygen production issues, and use of machine learning to improve automation. The team included students from Queen Elizabeth's School, Barnet, Nonsuch High School for Girls, Cardiff Sixth Form College, Trinity School, Croydon, and Wallington County Grammar School who had earned their places either by winning at a regional heat or in a video competition.

This year's judging panel included Professor David Southwood, President of the Royal Astronomical Society and former Director of Science and Robotic Exploration at the European Space Agency; Dr Randall Perry, founder of the UKSDC and a senior research investigator at the Impacts and Astromaterials Research Centre at Imperial College London; and Helen Oliver, a research associate at the University of Cambridge Computer Laboratory.

Andrew von Maydell, Grumbo's president, aged 15, said "When I found out that our team had won, it felt fantastic. It was great to see our work over the two days finally all come together. Being able to make something that we were all proud of ourselves, and that impressed the judges, was a great feeling."

Jithu Subhash, a member of Grumbo, aged 17 said "I was elated when it was announced that our team had won. I was so amazed at the scale of our achievement and the tremendous journey that led us to a victory. I felt a sense of pride for working with such an awesome company with incredible people. I felt honoured and proud to be able to take what I had learned throughout the competition and take it to an international level. I can't wait to go, it's going to be a truly memorable experience."

Matthew Eagling from Trinity School, Croydon, was presented with Grumbo's Dick Edwards Award for Leadership. The four awards remember Dick Edwards, one of the competition's co-

founders, and is given to students who display exceptional but quiet leadership in their company.

From this winning company, twelve members were selected to form the British team which will go on to the international final at NASA's Kennedy Space Center this summer, competing against teams from all over the world.

The 2015 competition is already in the works, and anyone interested in getting involved should contact general@uksdc.org.

Notes for editors

About UKSDC

UKSDC is a unique engineering challenge for students aged 15 to 18, which asks them to propose a detailed design for a future human settlement. The students, in 'companies' of 50, must choose their own leaders and produce designs for every aspect of the settlement from airlocks to artificial gravity.

After briefings from experts in engineering, robotics, and communications, the students have 18 hours to work on their designs, which they present to a panel of judges on the second day of the event.

The international competition traces its roots back to the original US competition started in 1983 by space shuttle engineer Anita Gale and her husband Dick Edwards as part of the Boy Scouts' celebration of the twentieth anniversary of the Moon landings.

The UK Space Design Competition is organised and funded by the Space Science and Engineering Foundation with generous support from other sponsors, including the Royal Academy of Engineering, Imperial College London, and the UK Space Agency.



Photos





For further information and photos

Joseph Dudley

Director of Media & Communications, Space Science & Engineering Foundation

Email: j.dudley@uksdc.org

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