

UKSDC National Final 2015: Results

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

On 28th and 29th March, Imperial College London hosted over 200 students aged 14 to 18 who were participating in the sixth 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, designed to travel powered by solar sails in a cycler orbit between the Earth and Mars in the year 2060. They received advice throughout the weekend from Imperial College undergraduates with specialist knowledge relevant to the design process.

The winning design, called Balaluceras was proposed by 'Vulture Aviation', and was comprised of a multi-torus design which was praised by the judges for its detailed radiation shielding and cargo handling systems. The team included students from Quintin Kynaston Academy, Capital City Academy, Westminster School, Nonsuch High School for Girls, Bishop Stortford's College, and Riddlesdown Collegiate School. They had earned their places either by winning at a regional heat or producing a top video entry.

This year's judging panel included Anita Gale, an Associate Technical Fellow and senior project engineer at Boeing; Jeremy Curtis, Head of Education at the UK 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.

Trisha Saxena, 18, Vulture Aviation's president, said "Whenever people talk about the UK Space Design competition it seems to be about the sleepless nights and stressful deadlines that look impossible to meet, but winning the competition this year makes it all worth the effort. As president of Vulture Aviation I know what a struggle it was to complete our design on time and it's truly thanks to every single member on the team that we won. It's a privilege to be able to represent the UK at the international final and I genuinely hope we can win this year!" A student at Nonsuch High School for Girls, Trisha earned her place at the UK Final by winning the Central England heat at the University of Oxford.

From the 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 2016 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 are given a list of design requirements and 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, the UK Space Agency, the Exilarch's Foundation, the Garfield Weston Foundation, and the Penelope Foundation.

Photos

Photos are available on the UKSDC website at uksdc.org/press

For further information and photos

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