

Looking for a space-related project to engage students with and participate in the 2009 International Year of Astronomy? Students for the Exploration and Development of Space is pairing up with the International Year of Astronomy to provide a contest geared towards educating students about the largest international cooperation project in space today – the International Space Station (ISS). A panel of industry leaders will choose 3 winners, one from each of the following categories:

Elementary School (1st-4th grades or ages 6-10)

Show a basic understanding of the ISS by building a model. This model may be constructed from any range of materials, including but not limited to toilet paper rolls, aluminum foil, tissue boxes, string, etc. These models will demonstrate the overall look of the space station.

Models will be judged on:

- Overall appearance
- Creativity in materials
- Craftsmanship

Middle School (5th-8th grades or ages 10-14)

Show a basic understanding of the ISS by building a model and writing a short paper to accompany the model. The essay should be between 300 and 500 words.

Papers may be the following topics:

- Daily life on the ISS
- Research and the ISS
- History of the ISS
- Why I want to go to the ISS

Papers will be judged on:

- Clarity of ideas
- Thoroughness of explanation
- Mechanics (spelling and grammar)

The models may be constructed from any materials, and will convey both the overall appearance of the space station and show some detail. Students are encouraged to be as creative as possible with their models.

Models will be judged on:

- Overall appearance
- Creativity in materials
- Craftsmanship
- Attention to technical detail and scale

High School (9th-12th grades or ages 14-18)

Work to understand the basic principles of the ISS and demonstrate that knowledge through a written paper as well as a detailed scale model of the ISS. Written papers should be a minimum of 500 words. Papers may be on any topic relating to the ISS.

Some examples include (but are not limited to):

- Daily life technologies on the ISS and how they compare to those commonly used on earth
- Specific research conducted on the ISS
- Political aspects of the station

Models will be judged on:

- Overall appearance
- Creativity in materials
- Overall creativity
- Craftsmanship
- Attention to technical detail and scale

Individuals or groups may enter the contest. The contest is open to any school or school-aged individual worldwide. The deadline for entering is December 1st. One winner from each category will be chosen by a panel of industry professionals and SEDS executive board members. The results will be announced no later than December 31st. The winning contestants will receive prize packages, including but not limited to International Year of Astronomy and Astronomy Cast pins and space-themed posters for each student, video telescope tours, and a Galileoscope for each classroom.

To submit an entry to SEDS-USA, please take photos in a standard image format (.jpg, .gif, etc.) from each side of the model, and up to 5 additional photos may be submitted showing off particular details that the contestants would like to be brought to the attention of the judges. E-mail the photos to Keri Bean at outreach@seds.org. If you must mail the photos or video on a CD, they must be *received* by November 15th. Contact Keri Hancock at high-school@seds.org for mailing details. A video showing the model will also be acceptable. The video must be no longer than 5 minutes and be submitted to a free video hosting website such as YouTube or e-mailed in a standard video format (.avi, .mov, .mpeg, etc.)

The SEDS executive board reserves the right to disqualify a submission for any reason. No plagiarism will be tolerated.

For further information, please contact Keri Bean at outreach@seds.org.