Mars Program: The Andy Thomas Space Foundation Schools Challenge

South Australian schools (Catholic, Independent or Public) are invited to participate in the Andy Thomas Space Foundation Challenge. Students in Years 7, 8 and 9 will be competing for ten prizes of $4,000 each: (assigned spots available for metropolitan schools, rural schools and low socio-economic schools).

The 10 selected schools will use the prizes to implement their Challenge Proposals. This will involve developing and implementing a project that describes how Space Technology and the Buzz Aldrin Foundation 'Giant Mars Map' can be utilised to link to the Australian Curriculum and stimulate student interest in Space. Schools are encouraged to choose topics relevant to their interests and Australian Curriculum subject links.

The selected projects will be announced in early-May 2023 and the winners of each school category will receive their awards at the High Schools Challenge showcase on 31st October 2023.

Overview

The Andy Thomas Space Foundation is committed to promoting and supporting the highest quality space activities in Australia to drive progress in education, research and innovation, to ensure that the space sector is a key contributor to Australia's economic transformation. Education systems increasingly recognise the importance of developing students' skills and knowledge for tomorrow's innovative world.

Space touches the lives of all citizens and young people are especially fascinated by space. There is strong evidence that space has an unusual power to inspire. People who have pursued space and science-related careers have often cited specific forms of inspiration from learning about astronomy, cosmology and human space endeavours.

Space represents hope for the future - it will help our country to transition to a knowledge economy and will provide exciting long-term secure career opportunities for our young people.

The Andy Thomas Space Foundation Challenge aims to enhance student and teacher engagement and stimulate students from Years 7, 8 and 9 to choose STEM subjects in their curriculum by:

- encouraging the alignment of curriculum utilising 'Space Technology' and the 'Giant Mars Map' to stimulate student interest in future space travel and solutions (e.g. environmental, economic or social)
- allowing students and teachers to improve their STEM engagement and literacy and to connect space science and technologies with their everyday lives. As a main outcome, all students and teachers involved with the Challenge will have a greater understanding of:
    - Space Skills involved with current and future Mars projects
    - South Australia's Priority Growth Areas
    - Career opportunities in the space and other high technology sectors in Australia
    - The Australian Space Agency's Civil Space Priorities
    - How STEM subjects within the Australian Curriculum link to 'real life' space technology systems and applications

- The importance of motivating students to continue studying and enrolling in senior STEM subjects through being inspired by career possibilities in the space and related high-tech sectors

Applicant Requirements

All interested schools are invited to submit a proposal.

Proposals must address the following topics in an on-line application outlining:

1. The name of the Challenge Project

2. Year level and number of students

3. How the project will be conducted (in teams, by class or in some other mode)

4. Names of lead and supporting teachers

5. Name and contact details of Finance Officer/Business Manager

6. Principal's endorsement (including signing off to share any Assessment Tasks/Learning Assessment Plans developed through the Program)

7. Outline of the Challenge Project (maximum 1,200 words) in relation to:

- Space Technology and 'Mars Projects'
- How the project aligns with one of more of the Australian Curriculum Subject Areas
- How the project aligns with the Buzz Aldrin Space Foundation 'Giant Mars Map'
- Outline of the project budget including temporary relief teacher fees, travel/excursion costs to the Australia Space Discovery Centre, Hamilton Secondary College, equipment and material resources and other costs
- How the Challenge project will be conducted during Term 2 or Term 3 (up to 8 weeks including a final recorded presentation and written report to be submitted to the Foundation).

Proposals must be received no later than midnight SA time on Wednesday 19th April 2023 for both Term 2 and Term 3 applications.

Timeline: Round 2 Applications

Date (2022)	Term: Week	Description
22nd March 2023	Term 1: Week 8	Applications Open
4th August 2023	Term 3: Week 2	Applications Close
7th August 2023	Term 3: Week 3	Shortlisting of proposals and final judging by selection panel
8th August 2023	Term 3: Week 3	Winning schools are notified
10th August 2023	Term 3: Week 3	Announcement of finalist schools
14th August 2023	Term 3: Week 4	100% of prize is paid to the finalist schools
14th August 2023 to 20th October 2023	Term 3: Week 4 to Term 3: Week 10	Finalist schools for Both Term 2 and 3: • initiate the proposed projects (school defines timeline) • have access to the Giant Mars Map for 1-2 weeks • have access to an expert adviser arranged by the Foundation for one hour of virtual or in person advice and feedback • visit the Australian Space Agency Discovery Centre and Hamilton Secondary College

		• prepare a final online presentation for the Foundation (using on-line tools, video and/or PowerPoint) and nominate curriculum to be submitted
Tuesday 31st October 2023	Term 4: Week 3	Final presentation by the finalist schools for selection of winner in each school category at Presentation Day at Space Discovery Centre

Selection Process

A selection committee will select the successful schools. The selection committee will consist of representatives of the Foundation and Hamilton Secondary College.

Special consideration will be given to applications for additional financial support for the project costs of low socio-economic schools. Please include such requests in your Proposal.

*Rural and Metropolitan schools defined according to SA Department for Education 2020 classifications * Low Socioeconomic Schools categorised by ACARA My School website (Home | My School) and an Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA value) ((guide-to-understanding-icsea-values.pdf (myschool.edu.au)) of less than 1000 in 2019.

Publicity

The Foundation reserves the right to publish information about successful applicants as set out in the personal application documents Foundation.

The successful applicant agrees to complete both a written and recorded (video recording) testimonial/ reflection of the program following their completion or as requested by the Foundation. These testimonials are able to be used in all printed and virtual media published by the Foundation.

The successful applicant agrees to complete a short survey at the commencement and completion of their program to provide feedback to the Foundation

More Information

If you need further information or have particular questions, please email: educationfund@andythomas.foundation