



Be Part of Space History

A guide for entrants — the design challenge, in one page



There is no universal visual language for communicating in space. You can design one of the first candidates — and have it tested by people who have never seen it. **You do not have to win to be in the report. You have to finish.**

Who	Anyone aged 18 or over on Friday 29 January 2027. Alone, or in a team of two to four. No membership, no degree, no aerospace background, no prior anything — students, teachers, engineers, divers, retired marshallers, a parent working alongside their child's class. Everyone is ranked on one scale, because what is being measured is whether the signals work, not who made them.
What	You design one coordinated set of five visual signals for a spacecraft cabin or lunar habitat where speech cannot be heard. The five meanings are fixed; how they look is entirely yours. You submit one recording in a single unbroken take — ungloved, then gloved — with a reference card, a 500-word rationale, your Self-Test Log and an AI statement.
When	Registration opens during World Space Week, 4–10 October 2026. You then have a full academic term — October to January — to research, design, test on real people and revise. Entry closes end of day on Friday 29 January 2027. February is verification, March is the final, May is publication. Roughly six to ten hours of work spread across three months.
Where	Wherever you already are. A room, a camera, a pair of gloves meeting the published standard, and three people who have never seen your design. No lab, no travel, no software, no equipment budget. The final is held online.
Why	As humans move further into space, clear communication matters. Every entry that is accepted and completed is read cold by people who have never seen it, scored, ranked, and written into a report published openly and submitted for conference consideration. Your entry name is in that document permanently. Seventy of the hundred points come from ordinary readers, not from judges.
How	Register free in a few minutes; you are told immediately whether you hold a place or a waitlist position. Take the entry kit and read the published FAQ, design your five signals, test them on three people who have never seen them, revise using what confused them, record one unbroken take, and submit. The form is open from October, and you can replace your entry any time before it closes — the last version received is the one that is verified.

The five meanings

Fixed for every entry, so that entries can be compared. How each one looks is your design.

Hold / stop	Stop what you are doing, immediately	Return / egress	Come back now
Assistance	Medical help needed	Time status	A limit is approaching
Life-support	Personal life-support alert		

The first three are the Core Safety Signals. Confusing them costs more than any other error, and an entry whose readers keep mistaking one for another cannot reach the final.

What you can win

The Space Games Foundation has committed and guaranteed a \$10,000 Awards, Stipends and Recognition Fund for this season. It does not depend on sponsorship. Of that, **\$5,000 is paid to entrants** across eight awards.

Award	Value	How it is decided
Challenge Champion	\$1,500	Highest combined score out of 120, decided at the final
Best Hold, Assist, Life Support, Return and Time	\$500 each	Best-read version of each single signal across the in-contention tier
Best Under Constraint	\$500	Highest gloved recognition rate
Most Improved After Self-Test	\$500	The clearest, best-evidenced revision from your own testing
Space Language Pioneer Award	Honorary	Overall distinction, at the panel's discretion

You do not have to reach the final to win. The five signal awards are decided across every entry read by twelve or more people — so an entry that never advances can still have the best HOLD in the field.

What finishing gets you

Every entry that completes the protocol is read, scored and ranked, and its results feed the season's published findings.

- A certificate of completion, issued to the entry.
- Your own recognition rate, and exactly which of your signals got mistaken for which — bare-handed and gloved, whether or not you advance.
- Your entry name in the published findings, permanently.
- An invitation to the online final. Every entrant, not only finalists.
- Winning designs may be recognised in Academy materials and future rulebooks, with your permission.

The field is capped at what we can measure. Every entry we accept is read by strangers, scored, ranked and written into the published report. That promise is what sets the limit — so registration closes when we reach it, or on the published closing date, whichever comes first. Entrants are confirmed in the order they register.

What is yours

Entrants keep their designs. Entering grants the Academy a licence to test your submission and to publish anonymised findings — never ownership. Using your specific design in a Space Athletics rulebook is a separate question you answer at registration, with credit by name, and declining costs you nothing. Nothing is posted publicly without your written permission, and your video stays unlisted — seen only by officials, session leaders, First Readers and judges.

Signals of Space is an Equal Space™ Challenge of the Space Athletics Academy®, a programme of the Space Games Foundation. Where anything here differs from the published Rules and Regulations, the Rules govern.

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