

Space studies students to launch satellite into the stratosphere

Adelaide, Australia: The opportunity to hear astronauts talk about life in orbit, and the launch of a high altitude balloon to the edge of space, are among the highlights of this year's Southern Hemisphere Space Studies Program (SH-SSP), which is being launched at the University of South Australia today.

The five week program, hosted by UniSA in collaboration with the International Space University (ISU), is aimed at educating the next generation of space professionals, with 32 participants from nine different countries due to learn about all aspects of international space activities – from satellite applications to human space exploration to space policy.



Minister for Education and Training, Simon Birmingham, is launching the Southern Hemisphere Space Studies Program and says it provides students and researchers a broad understanding of the key activities and knowledge areas required by today's space professions.

"The Southern Hemisphere Space Studies Program draws together students from around the world to the University of South Australia, which has uniquely been chosen as the International Space University's partner in this international space education venture," Minister Birmingham said.

"The skills and opportunities those participating in the program receive are a perfect example of the innovation agenda that is at the heart of the Turnbull Government's vision for Australia's future.

"Those students and researchers who take part in the Southern Hemisphere Space Studies Program will gain vital insight that will strengthen their career paths as Australia's next generation of space professionals or leaders in science and innovation."

For the wider community there will be four public events taking place as part of the program, including an International Astronaut Panel where attendants can discover what life is like in space from experts including Canadian Astronaut and medical specialist, Dr Bob Thirsk and former European Space Agency Astronaut and scientist, Dr Jean-Jacques Favier of France.

UniSA Bachelor of Engineering (Mechanical & Mechatronics) student Tristan Perkins describes participating in the program as a golden opportunity.



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“I am hoping to gain an insight into the many intricacies and facets that go on within the space/aerospace industry both in Australia and abroad and I am particularly interested in the aspects involving space engineering, systems integration and how these aspects can impact/enhance the human spaceflight experience.

“Attending this program is an opportunity like no other for a student in my situation, and the fact that it is at UniSA, is one that I could not pass.”

The launch of a stratospheric balloon to reach “near space”, 25km above Mount Barker in the Adelaide Hills, will form part of the learning experience, as this year’s SH-SSP team project is to design, assemble, integrate and test a remote-sensing and communications payload suitable for high altitude ballooning.

John Connolly, most recently NASA’s Chief Exploration Scientist, has been given the responsibility of leading International Space University’s SH-SSP. He says the stratospheric balloon launch represents the equivalent of a sub-orbital rocket launch, with its small satellite demonstrating the value and application of space science in regard to Earth bound priorities.

“The group research project or 'White Paper' that will be presented in the final week of the program this year will be on the topic of Food and Water Security and will consider how space technologies and space systems can be best utilised to improve the production, monitoring and availability of global food and water needs.”

“As a practical preparation for our White Paper group research project on Food and Water security, the stratospheric satellite project will allow the SH-SSP participants to gain hands-on experience of preparing and launching a payload, and performing the collection and analysis of visible and near infra-red images of local South Australian agricultural areas.”

Further information about the Space Studies Program can be found under:
<http://www.isunet.edu/about/southern-hemisphere-program>

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The **International Space University**, founded in 1987 in Massachusetts, US and now headquartered in Strasbourg, France, is the world’s premier international space education institution. It is supported by major space agencies and aerospace organizations from around the world. The graduate level programs offered by ISU are dedicated to promoting international, interdisciplinary and intercultural cooperation in space activities. ISU offers the Master of Science in Space Studies and Master of Science in Space Management programs at its Central Campus in Strasbourg. Since the summer of 1988, ISU also conducts the highly acclaimed nine-week Space Studies Program at different host institutions in locations spanning the globe. ISU programs are delivered by over 100 ISU faculty members in concert with invited industry and agency experts from institutions around the world. Since its founding, 25 years ago, more than 4000 students from over 100 countries graduated from ISU. www.isunet.edu

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