

Oak Park Mission 18

Fact Sheet

Program Overview

Each community participating in SSEP is provided a very real research asset – launch services to transport one student team designed microgravity experiment to the International Space Station (ISS) where it is operated by the astronauts.

The Oak Park community will conduct a local **Flight Experiment Design Competition**, engaging potentially hundreds of students in teams of typically 3-5, with each team vying for the community's single experiment slot by proposing a microgravity research program that can be carried out in the mini-laboratory. The competition is conducted through formal submission of real (but grade level appropriate) research proposals by the student teams – as is standard practice for professional researchers. 50-80 flight experiment proposals are typically secured across a single pre-college community.

Microgravity is the condition in which people or objects appear to be weightless.



Example patch →



Mission Patch Art and Design Competition

There will be an all grade **Mission Patch Art and Design Competition** allowing hundreds of students across the Oak Park community to capture through art and design their community's SSEP experience. Up to two Mission Patches accompany the community's selected flight experiment to low Earth orbit.



We invite communities participating in SSEP Missions 14-19 to use their Mission Patch competitions to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Apollo Landings on the Moon, and humans returning to the Moon with NASA's Artemis Program starting in 2024.

Trip to Washington D.C. (Delegation from Oak Park)

An annual SSEP National Conference held at the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum in Washington, DC, immerses delegations of students in a real research conference where they formally present to **their peers** on experiment design and science results (explore the [2019 Conference page](#), and video clips of presentations archived on the Scientific Return and Reporting pages, see e.g., [Mission 13 to ISS Scientific Return and Reporting](#)).

Implementation Timeline:

- Experiment Design and Proposal Writing (9 weeks): Early September, 2023 – Early November, 2023
- Flight Experiment Proposals due to Oak Park District Review Committee: November 10, 2023
- Local Step 1 Review Board selects 3 finalist proposals, submits to NCESSSE: November 21, 2023
- Formal selection of Oak Park School District flight experiment: December 18, 2023
- Ferry Flight of SSEP Payload to ISS for Mission 18, estimated launch date: Late Spring 2024
- SSEP National Conference for Oak Park School District in late June or early July 2024, most likely held at the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum, Washington, DC.