

Google Lunar XPRIZE selects five teams to compete for US\$6 million in milestone prizes

February 20 2014

The Google Lunar XPRIZE announced today the five international teams selected as finalists for Milestone Prizes, with a total purse of US\$6 million to be awarded this year. After reviewing 33 total submissions, the nine member independent judging panel selected 11 submissions from the following teams: Astrobotic (US), Moon Express (US), Hakuto (Japan), Part-Time-Scientists (Germany), and Team Indus (India).

The Milestone Prizes were added to recognize the technological achievements and the associated financial hurdles faced by the teams as they vie for the US\$30 million Google Lunar XPRIZE, a global competition to land a robotic spacecraft on the moon by December 31, 2015.

The three categories of Milestone Prizes are as follows, along with which teams are competing:

- Landing System Milestone Prize: US\$1,000,000 per team - based on the hardware and software that enables a soft-landing on the moon (Astrobotic, Moon Express, Team Indus)
- Mobility Subsystem Milestone Prize: US\$500,000 per team – based on the mobility system that allows the craft to move 500 meters after landing (Astrobotic, Moon Express, Hakuto, Part-Time-Scientists)

- Imaging Subsystem Milestone Prize: US\$250,000 per team – based on producing "Mooncasts" consisting of high-quality images and video on the lunar surface (Astrobotic, Moon Express, Part-Time-Scientists, Team Indus)

In order to compete for the Milestone Prizes, teams had to submit documentation to the judging panel, defining the key technical risks they face and how they intend to retire them. Selected teams must now accomplish the milestones outlined in their submissions through testing and mission simulations under the scrutiny of the judges, in order to win the prizes. Teams have until September 2014 to complete the prize requirements and the winners will be announced on an ongoing basis throughout 2014.

"Every strategy presented to us was imaginative, forward-thinking and ambitious, which made it difficult to choose only a handful to proceed to the Accomplishment Round," said David Swanson, chair of the Google Lunar XPRIZE judging panel. "As there are increasing fiscal constraints threatening the ability of governments to fund exploration, the need to recognize the bold technical achievements of these privately-funded teams is greater than ever."

Competing for the Milestone Prizes is an optional part of the Google Lunar XPRIZE. Teams that chose not to participate in the Milestone Prizes are still eligible to win the Grand or Second Place Prizes. The prize money for the Milestone Prizes will be deducted from any future Grand or Second Place Prize winnings of that team. To accommodate the possibility of teams winning Milestone Prizes and not subsequently going on to win the Grand or Second Place Prize, Google has increased the maximum prize purse to US\$40 million.

XPRIZE is also considering additional Milestone Prizes for technical achievements after lift-off on the way to the moon, to be announced at a

later date.

More information: For more details on the Milestone Prizes, please visit www.googlelunarxprize.org/prizes/milestone-prizes.

Provided by XPRIZE

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