



STELLAR
XPLOREERS
SPACE STEM PROGRAM

RULES AND PROCEDURES

Document available on www.stellarexplorers.org

Contact staff at competition@stellarexplorers.org

Document revised
16 January 2025



A STEM program of the Air & Space Forces Association

1501 Langston Blvd., Arlington, Virginia 22209 | www.afa.org

© 2023. All Rights Reserved.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Table of Contents	2
About this document	3
Rule Changes for Current Season	3
Introduction to StellarXplorers	4
Chapter 1: Organization & Participants.....	5
1001 StellarXplorers Program Office.....	5
1002 Participating Organizations.....	5
1003 Teams and Team Members	6
Chapter 2: Registration.....	11
2001 Team Registration	11
2002 Competitor Registration.....	11
2003 Technical Mentor Registration.....	12
2004 Registration Fees	12
Chapter 3: Online Competition Round Procedures & Rules.....	13
3001 Competition Technical Requirements.....	13
3002 Education and Training	14
3003 Official Competition Communication.....	15
3004 Competition Windows and Time Restrictions	16
3005 Team Director Supervision and Oversight.....	18
3006 Control of the Competition Area	18
3007 Sharing of Competition Information	19
3008 No Outside Assistance	20
3009 Allowable Resources.....	20
3010 Offensive Activity and Tampering.....	22
3011 Inquiries for Rules Violations	22
Chapter 4: Competition Events, Scoring, Advancement & Awards	23
4001 Competition Events	23
4002 Scoring.....	24
4003 Penalties	25
4004 Advancement.....	26
4005 Awards.....	27
Appendices	29
Appendix A Team Director Agreement.....	29
Appendix B Standards of Conduct	30
Appendix C Safety	31
Appendix D Team Director Alternate / Replacement Request.....	32
Appendix E StellarXplorers Competitor Code of Conduct.....	33
Appendix F Appeal and Backup Date Request Form	34
Appendix G Sponsors and Sponsorships.....	36
Appendix H StellarXplorers Media Guidelines.....	37

About this document

This document serves as the official source of rules and procedures governing StellarXplorers, the National Space Design Competition. All registered StellarXplorers participants – including team directors, mentors, team assistants, and competitors – are bound by the rules and procedures published in this document.

If the rules of the school or organization to which a team belongs are more restrictive than the StellarXplorers rules, then the school's or organization's rules take precedence.

Participants are encouraged to work with the StellarXplorers Program Office to resolve questions regarding these rules before the competition. The following rules apply throughout the StellarXplorers competition season.

Recommendations and suggested updates to this document may be submitted to the National StellarXplorers staff at competition@stellarxplorers.org with the subject *Rule Book Recommendation*.

Rule Changes for Current Season

These changes are **highlighted in yellow** throughout this document.

1. Changes to the Practice Round competition window.

- Practice rounds have been extended by one day, with the Practice Round Competition Window open from 8:00 AM ET on Wednesday to 11:59 PM ET on Sunday.

2. Clarifying STK

- STK should be downloaded and set up to include the Planetary Data Supplement.

3. School closures and alternate competition periods.

- School closures have been added to the list of acceptable reasons a team may request to compete during an alternate competition period.

4. Clarifying Examples of Information Sharing Violations.

- Language was added to clarify that discussing the scenario only on the *round-specific, temporary channel* in the Discord server is not a violation.

5. Clarifying that AI Tools and Resources are strictly prohibited during the competition.

- Language was added to clarify that use of AI Tools and Resources is strictly prohibited. Refer to sections 3008 and 3009 for specific language about these prohibitions.

6. Clarifying language around No Outside Assistance.

- Language was added to clarify that active electronic communication using platforms such as email, blogs, forums, and social media is prohibited.

7. Clarifying Rules on Information Sharing Violations.

- Language was added to clarify that sharing information between teams within the same organization (school, squadron, unit, etc.) *outside* of the competition window is permissible.

8. Clarifying language around Allowable Resources.

- Language was added to clarify that teams may only use the standard (addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, percentage, square root, and memory) functions on calculators.

INTRODUCTION TO STELLARXPLORERS

Working in partnership with leaders in the US space industry, space-focused academia, and government entities, the Air & Space Forces Association (AFA) developed StellarXplorers to inspire students to pursue science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) education and careers.

StellarXplorers welcomes those who are interested in space, no matter what level of experience, as a place to share thoughts, ideas, and experiences with others who share a similar passion for problem solving, team collaboration, and space system design. The National Space Design Competition provides students leadership opportunities and gives participants insight into the industry, with the goal of launching their journey to careers in the space industry and other STEM fields.

The competition can only operate if all competitors, team directors, mentors, team assistants, and staff adhere to the highest ethical standard. All are expected to behave according to the guiding principles outlined in this Rule Book to ensure the competition's success.

Operating Principles

Team directors, competitors, mentors, team assistants, and staff should all use the following operating principles during all aspects of the competition:

- **Competitor Safety and Protection** – Since most competitors are minors, this *MUST BE THE TOP PRIORITY* for all involved. It is the team director's responsibility to ensure the safety and protection of their team while involved in all StellarXplorers activities. They must create a safe environment that provides protection from unauthorized individuals or physical harm and ensure appropriate online activity. If an incident occurs involving the protection or safety of a competitor, the team director has an obligation to follow correct procedures of reporting the incident to local authorities and stop or mitigate the incident immediately. They should also report the incident to the StellarXplorers program office.
- **Fairness** – No participant may attempt to gain or give an unfair competitive advantage to any individual or team. Any questions or concerns regarding fairness should be reported to the StellarXplorers Program Office immediately.
- **Adherence to the Rules** – Everyone involved in the competition must obey the rules and regulations outlined in this document. Team directors are charged with ensuring the teams' compliance. Willful violation of these rules will result in team disqualification.
- **Privacy** – Participants' personal information must be protected by those who have access to the information. The StellarXplorers Program Office may publish participant names and photographs only when appropriate permission is obtained.
- **Transparency** – To ensure openness and honesty, staff and team directors shall engage in two-way communication on competition matters that do not infringe upon fairness. The StellarXplorers Program Office is the organization within AFA responsible for organizing and administering all aspects of the StellarXplorers Program and is responsible for the technical conduct and oversight of the competition. It is also responsible for the setup, operation, and coordination of all systems that support the competition.

Eligibility & Equal Opportunities

Team membership in StellarXplorers will not be restricted on the basis of race, color, religion, ethnicity, national origin, physical or mental disability, sexual orientation, veteran status, experience, gender identity, gender expression, or sex. Any student at a participating school willing and eager to participate is qualified for membership.

CHAPTER 1: ORGANIZATION & PARTICIPANTS

1001 | StellarXplorers Program Office

The StellarXplorers Program Office is the department within AFA's STEM Programs Office responsible for organizing and administering all aspects of the StellarXplorers Program.

The Director of AFA STEM Programs maintains primary responsibility for oversight of major program elements, and the StellarXplorers Director of Operations will orchestrate staff support for the program. The StellarXplorers Program Office will lead the program, being responsible for registration, academics and training, competition scenario development, and this rule book.

During the online rounds of competition, the StellarXplorers Program Office may include the addition of temporary staff assisting with administration of the competition.

1002 | Participating Organizations

Students may compete in the competition provided that their team is fielded by one of the approved organization types below. Although intended primarily for high school-aged students, middle school-aged students may compete on an equal basis.

1. Organizations that can field teams

There is no limit on the number of teams that an organization can field.

- Public school
- Private school
- Parochial school
- Charter school
- Magnet school
- Home school
- Scouting unit
- State-chartered virtual school
- Boys and Girls Club
- YMCA or YWCA
- 4-H Club
- JROTC (any service)
- Civil Air Patrol
- Naval Sea Cadet Corps
- Other youth organizations (with approval from StellarXplorers Program Office)

2. Other Organizations

At the discretion of the StellarXplorers Program Office, other types of organizations may field a team. Requirements for participation are:

- a. *Charter and Youth Program* – The organization shall have a charter that includes a youth program for high school and/or middle school-level students.
- b. *Mission and Purpose* – The organization’s mission and purpose shall be consistent with the principles and values of the StellarXplorers Program and AFA.
- c. *Designated Official Leader* – The organization shall have a leader who is accountable for the organization and is authorized to designate adults to have unsupervised access to minors in the organization.
- d. *Minor Protection Policy and Training* – The organization shall have an official policy for the protection and safety of minors, and mandatory training shall be required for adults who have unsupervised access to minors.

3. Combined Teams




The preference is for students to participate through the school organization through which they receive the majority of their education; however, the StellarXplorers Program Office may consider the creation of a combined team from more than one fielding organization if:

- The organizations’ sizes do not support a full StellarXplorers team.
- The organizations are not fielding other StellarXplorers teams.
- The competitors belong to a common legally recognized entity, such as a school district, non-profit organization, or municipality.
- The team’s competitors should all be located in the same geographic area.


1003 | Teams and Team Members

1. Team Composition (Members)

A. Required Members – Each team must consist of one (1) team director, a one-time verification official, and 2-6 student competitors. A team without these roles filled is ineligible to compete.

 Team Director	 Verification Official	 Competitors
<i>Teacher, parent, or another approved adult leader. Completes the team registration and supervises the team during competition. Sole point of contact for competition-related correspondence.</i>	<i>Organization administrator who verifies that the team director is approved by the organization to work unsupervised with minors and has completed required youth protection training.</i>	<i>Student participants. Must be 2-6 students on a team. There is no U.S. citizenship requirement for any StellarXplorers competition participant.</i>

B. Optional Members – Technical mentors may be part of the team but are not required for participation. Technical mentors are recommended, as they can provide next-level teaching of space operations.


Technical Mentor
<i>Adult volunteer that possesses the technical knowledge to assist in teaching the competition training</i>
<i>Technical mentors and team assistants must undergo the required background check (facilitated and paid for by the StellarXplorers Program Office)</i>

2. Team Member Roles Explained

A. Team Director – StellarXplorers requires one adult to register as the official team director before any students are permitted to compete.

A team must have one (and only one) adult team director of record for each team. This is a non-negotiable requirement. A single team director may lead up to five (5) teams and is responsible for the proper supervision of all their teams during all StellarXplorers-related activities. The team director retains the responsibility and authority to control their teams, including who works with their team. A team director may assist other teams, but only as a registered mentor or team assistant.

To be a Team Director, an individual must meet the following requirements:

1. Eligibility Requirements

- Adult over 18 years of age on or before the team registration deadline.
- Not a competitor or high school-level student.
- Not a member of the StellarXplorers Program Office.
- Vetted and approved to work with minors by a Verification Official (see below).
- Registered as the Team Director for five teams or fewer.
- Agrees to abide by the StellarXplorers Standards of Conduct ([Appendix A](#)).

2. Responsibilities

- a. **Competitor Protection** – The team director’s responsibility includes controlling access to minors in a way that protects them, respects parental prerogatives, and follows legal requirements during all competition training, events, and rounds. Additionally, team directors are:
 - Accountable for mentors and team assistant interactions with the competitors.
 - Responsible for competitor safety and protection during all competition training, events, and rounds. (See [Appendix C](#))
- b. **Competition Integrity** – Fairness and integrity are key components of a successful StellarXplorers competition. Team directors are expected to uphold these principles at the team level during competition by ensuring that their competitors receive no outside assistance in any form, including assistance from another team. Team directors may provide clarification of rules and permissible actions while their teams compete.
- c. **Official Point of Contact** – Official competition related StellarXplorers correspondence is emailed only to team directors, who may disseminate it to their teams. Team directors should monitor their email for up-to-date information and ensure they can receive messages from the StellarXplorers Program Office through their chosen email domains.

The role of official point of contact may not be delegated to a mentor unless the mentor is appointed as a Team Director Alternate (see below).

3. **No Compensation** – Team directors participate on a volunteer basis and do not receive compensation from AFA. AFA has no position with respect to gifts received by volunteers.
4. **Team Director Changes** – If a Team Director is not available to receive email and supervise during a round of competition, they must complete one of two actions:
 - a. **Designate a Team Director Alternate** – If a team director is unavailable for a single round of competition (due to scheduling conflict, unexpected absence, etc.), they must designate an alternate team director. Team director alternates are subject to approval on a case-by-case basis. They must be vetted and approved by the team’s original verification official before approval is granted. Alternates may only act as team director for the approved round of competition and cannot substitute for the team director during future rounds of competition unless an official team director change is requested (See [Appendix D](#)).
 - Whenever possible, the alternate team director should be designated at least 24 hours prior to the starting date of the competition round.
 - b. **Request a Team Director Change** – If a team director is unable to supervise the team over several rounds, they must contact the StellarXplorers Program Office to transfer the team to another organization-approved adult for the remainder of the season. (See [Appendix D](#)).

B. Verification Official – Team directors are required to be vetted and approved to work unsupervised with minors by a designated verification official. Though not members of a team, Verification Officials perform the following critical functions.

- **Verify** that a Team Director is approved by the organization to work unsupervised with minors.
- **Validate** a Team Director’s status as a school employee, school district approved volunteer, or person with an approved relationship with a school or member of a fielding organization.
- **Immediately** notify the StellarXplorers staff if facts or circumstances call into question the fitness of a Team Director to continue to supervise competitors.

Based on the organization type, an individual in the following role(s) should verify the team director:

- School-based teams, including JROTC teams, must be verified by a principal, assistant principal, supervisor, or department head.
 - Parent volunteers acting as team directors will need verification from school principal indicating that they are allowed to work unsupervised with minors.
- CAP teams must be verified by a squadron commander or deputy commander.
- USNSCC teams must be verified by their Regional National Headquarters Representative or an officer higher in their chain of command.
- Home school team directors must be verified by a school official or a homeschool teacher who can be verified by a legally recognized agency that accredits or otherwise approves home school programs.
- Scouting units and all other approved educational organizations must be verified by an organization head or supervisor.

For non-school teams, verification officials must verify that the team director meets the following requirements:

- A member in good standing with the organization.
- Completed appropriate minor or youth protection training.

C. Competitors – A StellarXplorers team must consist of at least two, but no more than six, competitors. To be a competitor, students must meet the following requirements.

1. Eligibility Requirements

- Enrolled in a middle or high school program (or equivalent if home schooled or in an organization that does not make this distinction) prior to the team registration deadline.
- Registered to only one team, even if they are in another organization fielding a team.
- Members of the same school or organization, except in cases of composite team approval by the StellarXplorers Program Office.
 - **NOTE:** *JROTC, CAP, or USNSCC team members must all be official members of the respective unit/squadron/battalion to be eligible for the fee waiver, and to identify themselves as a JROTC, CAP, or USNSCC team.*
- Located in the same geographically contiguous local area as their teammates.

2. Responsibilities of Competitors – It is the responsibility of ALL competitors to abide by the StellarXplorers Competitor Code of Conduct (see [Appendix E](#)). Competitors agree to act ethically each time they participate in a StellarXplorers competition round.

3. Team Captain – Each team director may designate a competitor as the team captain for the online competition. The team captain oversees and directs the team's competition efforts, since the team director and mentor(s) are not directly involved in competition rounds.

D. Technical Mentors – Technical mentors (mentors), are optional yet recommended team technical advisors and subject matter experts. Once registered, a mentor may be chosen by a team director to assist their team. Teams are not required to have a mentor.

1. Eligibility Requirements

- Adult over 18 years of age.
- Not a competitor or high school student
- Vetted (via background check) and approved to work unsupervised with minors.
- Agrees to abide by the StellarXplorers Standards of Conduct (see [Appendix B](#)).

2. Responsibilities – There is no minimum time commitment for mentors, and no limit to the number of teams a mentor may support Suggested responsibilities include:

- Advising the team's team director on skills status.
- Developing, with the team director's guidance, a plan to teach space-related skills and ethics.
- Teaching and assisting competitors with space-related skills and ethics.
- Meeting with the team (with the team director's approval).
- Serving as a guest lecturer during the season on a specific topic.

- 3. Team Directors as Mentors** – A team director may be a mentor for other teams only if they are also registered as a mentor. They do not need to register if they are serving as the mentor for their own team.
- 4. No Compensation** – Mentor positions are voluntary and do not receive compensation from AFA. AFA has no position with respect to gifts received by volunteers. Mentors will not be funded by AFA to travel to the National Finals, unless they are traveling as an official team chaperone (within the eligibility requirements of a chaperone).

3. Team Identification

Team identification is standardized to recognize teams, assign scores, maintain anonymity, and avoid misunderstandings in communication. Teams are identified as follows:

A. Team Identification (Credentials)

- 1. Team Numbers** – Team numbers (e.g., STLXxx-xxxx), are assigned during registration and are the primary means to identify a team for competition purposes.
- 2. Official Names** – The official name of teams belonging to a school is the school's name. The official name of other teams is the organization name (e.g., a Civil Air Patrol team would use their squadron name). Official names may be appended or modified by the StellarXplorers Program Office if they have similar names. Composite teams have an official name assigned by the authority that approved their composition.
- 3. Nicknames** – Teams can create nicknames to unofficially identify themselves at any time. Nicknames must be in good taste and are subject to veto by the StellarXplorers Program Office. Team nicknames are optional and will not be used to officially identify teams.

B. Anonymity – Except for the following situations in which information related to a team's performance (e.g., scores, rankings, advancement) is published, the team will remain anonymous, except for its team number.

- 1. Exceptions during the National Finals Competition** – Teams that advance to the National Finals Competition may have their official and unofficial names, team director's name, and competitors' names published. This information will not be associated with the team's scores. This information may be published in the following places:
 - StellarXplorers website and social media
 - National Finals Competition program
 - Media releases and other AFA newsletters
 - Communications to sponsors and government officials.

Teams winning awards at National Finals may have their official names, competitor names, awards, and rankings (if finishing in one of the top three places), published nationally.

CHAPTER 2: REGISTRATION

2001 | Team Registration

StellarXplorers competition registration opens in May and closes in October. Specific deadlines vary by season. Please see the website for the most current information.

A. Team Registration – Team directors must register each participating team with the StellarXplorers Program Office using the team registration form available on the StellarXplorers website. If a registered team would like to drop out of the competition, a request for team removal should be sent to competition@stellarexplorers.org.

- **Multiple teams** – A team director may register up to five teams under their name. It is the responsibility of the team director to make sure team members know their assigned team number and submit competition documents for scoring using the correct team number. Failure to follow this could result in teams not receiving the proper scores.

B. Team Director Registration – The individual who registers the team is considered the team director (the official head of the participating team). The team registration form includes a section where team director contact information is provided.

2002 | Competitor Registration

A. Competitor Registration – Team directors must add their competitors to their rosters (after their team registration has been verified and approved) using the competitor registration form included in the team approval email.

Each team must have a minimum of two, but no more than six, competitors. All team members must be added to the roster prior to the competitor registration deadline.

- Prior to the competitor registration deadline, team directors can change/edit the members on the roster. To make a change, contact competition@stellarexplorers.org.
- Adding or reassigning members to a team is not allowed after that deadline; however, removal of a team member is allowed at any time.

B. Competitor Survey – After a competitor is added to a roster, they are emailed a link to a short questionnaire. Completion of this questionnaire is strongly encouraged, though not required for participation. The questionnaire is used to collect data (for internal use) on the types of students the program is reaching. The collected information is for internal use only. Competitor information will not be shared for solicitation, though the StellarXplorers Program Office may reach out regarding specific educational opportunities.

2003 | Technical Mentor Registration

Any individual wishing to be a mentor or team assistant must register with the StellarXplorers Program Office.

Mentors and team assistants may work with teams in their physical location or virtually. There is no deadline for mentor or team assistant registration.

A. Background Check – All mentors and team assistants are required to complete a background check conducted by the StellarXplorers Program Office. Background checks completed for other organizations are not sufficient for this requirement. If a mentor or team assistant completed a StellarXplorers background check **within the past twelve months** at the time of registration, this requirement is waived. A team director may arrange and assign mentors and/or team assistants to their team(s), and the team director retains the responsibility for ensuring that the individual(s) assigned have the proper qualifications to work unsupervised with minors.

B. Pairing with Teams – Mentors are paired with team directors only with mutual consent. Team directors will be provided with information on available mentors that they may reach out to about working with their teams. Once a mutual agreement to work together has been established, the team director and mentor must inform StellarXplorers Program Office to appropriately update mentor availability.

2004 | Registration Fees

1. Registration Fees

Registration is considered complete when its applicable fee has been paid (or waived) by the StellarXplorers Program Office. All fees must be paid by the published registration fee payment deadline. See the StellarXplorers website for current fee amounts and registration deadlines.

2. Fee Waivers

Fees may be waived in the following circumstances:

- Title I schools (and schools with inadequate funding) – Team director may be asked to provide documentation of Title I status in the form of a signed letter from a school administrator.
- All-female teams – In an effort to attract more young women to STEM, teams comprised of all-female teams are eligible for a fee waiver.
- JROTC, Civil Air Patrol, and US Naval Sea Cadet Corps teams – Fees waived.
 - ALL team members MUST be cadets in order to qualify for this designation. Teams comprised of both cadets and students from the general high school/middle school population are NOT eligible for a fee waiver under the JROTC/CAP/USNSCC agreement.

CHAPTER 3: ONLINE COMPETITION ROUND PROCEDURES & RULES

During a series of online competition rounds, teams are tasked with determining mission orbits, designing satellites and their components, developing satellite launch scenarios, and completing an academic quiz. All teams are expected to compete during the scheduled competition times.

StellarXplorers operates under the premise that all team directors, technical mentors, team assistants, and competitors conduct themselves with the highest ethical standard. The rules have been instituted to prevent the perception of misconduct that would jeopardize the integrity of the competition and ensure a fair and equitable competition between all teams.

3001 | Competition Technical Requirements

Teams must meet the following basic requirements to participate in StellarXplorers. These requirements are kept to a minimum so that as many teams as possible may compete.

1. Hardware

Teams need a computer to perform training prior to the competition and for the Practice, Qualification, and Semifinal Rounds of competition. Chromebooks and MacBooks are NOT suitable for the competition.

- Processor: Intel® Core™ i5 or better, AMD Ryzen™ 5 or better
- Memory/RAM: 8 GB (minimum); 16+ GB (recommended)
- Disk Space: 3 GB (minimum); 500 GB recommended depending on supplemental modules and data products
- Graphics Card: A graphics card that supports OpenGL 2.0. 1 GB (minimum); 4+ GB (recommended)
- Network Card: Not required, but recommended

2. Operating System

Team computers must have an operating system (64-bit only) with the following: Windows 10, Windows 11, Windows Server 2016, Windows Server 2016 R2, Windows Server 2012, or Windows Server 2019.

NOTE: STK cannot be run on Apple or Chromebook computers at this time.

If you are unsure whether your system can run AGI's Systems Tool Kit (STK), visit the [Ansys website](#) for specific technical requirements.

3. Software

The following software must be installed on all competition computers before a team participates:

- Ansys's Systems Tool Kit (STK) software **with the Planetary Data Supplement**
- Microsoft Office or a similar product (such as Google Documents) capable of producing text documents and spreadsheets.

Teams must download Ansys's System Tool Kit (STK) software onto their competition computers. **Only STK Version 12.5 should be used for the StellarXplorers competition.** Teams CANNOT use any STK tools other than those provided with the standard StellarXplorers-provided License. Use of tools such as CAP, Expert, Analyzer, or Parallel Computing, etc. is strictly prohibited.

New teams will need to establish an account with Ansys to download STK and obtain their STK License. Every team member, if desired, can download the software to their own personal computer.

Full instructions on downloading and requesting licenses for STK 12.5 are provided to the team director upon registration.

4. Network (Internet Connectivity)

It is the team and team director's responsibility to provide and maintain an Internet connection during the competition for time-sensitive competition announcements on the StellarXplorers website and for email traffic exchanges with the StellarXplorers Program Office.

A. Backup Plan – Teams are encouraged to have a backup plan so that they can still compete in the event of a network failure.

5. Email

The StellarXplorers Program Office uses email to transmit competition information to teams. Some spam scanning programs will send these messages to a junk or spam folder. Teams should initiate actions to eliminate these restrictions on their email systems for messages from competition@stellarxplorers.org and info@stellarxplorers.org. The most common difficulty encountered by teams during competition is a school proxy server or firewall blocking their web traffic.

3002 | Education and Training

The StellarXplorers Program Office has a number of resources available for team directors and mentors that may help them teach their students basic space-related principles.

A. Space Training Course

Each StellarXplorers team will be given one license to access to the Space Explorers Course, provided in-kind by Nova Space, Inc. This online course is closely modeled off *Understanding Space*, the textbook used for the Introduction to Space course at the Air Force Academy.

Information about obtaining access to the Space Explorers Course will be shared with team directors prior to the start of the competition season.

B. Academic Quizzes

Academic quizzes are administered during Practice Round 1 and each of the three online qualification rounds through an online quiz-taking platform. The quizzes, designed to be taken as a team, include 20 multiple choice questions. Outside resources are allowed in trying to determine the answer ("open book").

Study guides can be found on the *Training Materials* page of the StellarXplorers website.

C. Systems Tool Kit (STK) Training

The Systems Tool Kit (STK) software is provided free to StellarXplorers teams by Ansys Government Initiatives (AGI) through their Educational Alliance Program, of which StellarXplorers is a member. In addition to the free software, AGI provides a multitude of free online training, including the opportunity for students to earn STK professional certification. The website for the AGI training can be found at <https://www.agi.com/training-and-certification>.

Scroll down to the bottom of the page to find several Teaching Aids.

In addition, STK training specifically tailored to StellarXplorers can be found on the *Training Materials* page of the StellarXplorers website.

D. Practice Rounds

Rounds 1, 2, and 3 each include a practice round. These practice scenarios are unofficially scored and do not impact team rankings.

Participation in these Practice Rounds is encouraged, but not required.

3003 | Official Competition Communication

Emails from competition@stellarxplorers.org and posts on the announcement page (www.stellarxplorers.org/announcements) are the official and primary channels of competition communication from the StellarXplorers Program Office. In the event of technical issues with official email, official competition information will be posted on the StellarXplorers website.

In addition to email, information may be posted on the StellarXplorers website (www.stellarxplorers.org/announcements) during the rounds.

It is of the utmost importance that team directors closely monitor their email during the competition rounds.

Teams will receive two competition emails before each online round and one email after each round. Team directors are the only individuals who receive these emails, and it is their responsibility to ensure that each of the emails listed below are received:

1. Competition Emails before the Round

- **Competition Preparation Email** – An email with important round information (operating system(s), rule changes, etc.) sent 7-10 days before a round. This email comes from competition@stellarxplorers.org (competition-stellarxplorers.org@shared1.ccsend.com).

- **Competition Start Email** – On the Wednesday prior to the online round, team directors will receive an email from competition@stellarxplorers.org (competition-stellarxplorers.org@shared1.ccsend.com) with updated competition information:
 - How to access competition files
 - Competition round-specific information
 - Technical information
 - Changes to instructions since the Competition Preparation Email

If emails are not received in the time frames listed above, the team director should immediately contact the StellarXplorers Program Office. **Failure to receive emails is not grounds for an appeal.**

3. Competition Email during the Round

Should the StellarXplorers Program Office need to communicate clarification or correction of a competition round detail (one that would affect the overall outcome of team performance), a high-importance email will be sent to all team directors. The same information will also ALWAYS be posted to an announcement page on the StellarXplorers website. Teams are strongly encouraged to check this page regularly. **Failure to receive the message or review the announcement page is not grounds for an appeal.**

4. Competition Email after the Round

- **Online Round Results Email** – The online round results email contains the score from the just-completed round. Release of this email is contingent on a variety of factors including inquiries and appeals. The goal for the release of the email is five working days after the completion of the round.

5. Technical Support

Technical support for online rounds is provided by the StellarXplorers Program Office and temporary staff during each competition round. Technical support is available from 9:00 AM to 9:00 PM ET during each scheduled day of the round. .

StellarXplorers technical support may be contacted via email at competition@stellarxplorers.org. This is the primary technical support channel. It may also be used to broadcast critical competition information. Any critical information sent via email from the StellarXplorers Program Office will also be posted to an announcement page on the StellarXplorers website.

3004 | Competition Windows and Time Restrictions

1. Competition Schedule

Below is an overview of the online competition schedule (also available on www.stellarxplorers.org). Teams may compete in any six consecutive-hour period within the scheduled competition dates listed below:

Round	Date
Practice Round 1 (PR1)*	October 9-13, 2024
Qualification Round 1 (QR1)	October 31 - November 3, 2024
Practice Round 2 (PR2)*	November 13-17, 2024
Qualification Round 2 (QR2)	December 5-8, 2024
Practice Round 3 (PR3)*	January 8-12, 2025
Qualification Round 3 (QR3)	January 23-26, 2025
Semifinals (SFR)	February 13-16, 2025

* Practice Rounds have been extended by a day, to include Wednesday.

2. Competition Window

A competition window is the specified time that the competition is conducted during the scheduled round; specifically, the hours where the competition is “live.” Teams cannot compete outside of the designated competition window. The designated competition windows for each competition round are listed below (unless otherwise specified):

Practice Rounds	Qualification Rounds
Wednesday: 8:00 AM – 11:59 PM ET Thursday: 12:00 AM – 11:59 PM ET Friday: 12:00 AM – 11:59 PM ET Saturday: 12:00 AM – 11:59 PM ET Sunday: 12:00 AM – 11:59 PM ET *	Thursday: 8:00 AM – 11:59 PM ET Friday: 12:00 AM – 11:59 PM ET Saturday: 12:00 AM – 11:59 PM ET Sunday: 12:00 AM – 11:59 PM ET *

* If a team chooses to start their competition period after 6:00 PM ET on Sunday, their scenario solution and Academic Quiz must be submitted by 11:59 PM ET. Submissions received after Sunday at 11:59 PM ET are subject to the standard penalty for late submissions.

3. Competition Period

The competition period begins at the team’s chosen start time and lasts for no more than **six consecutive hours**. The time when a team begins the round is chosen at their discretion, as long as the start time falls within the designated competition window hours listed above, and the submission time does not exceed 6 hours from the start time (or, if starting after 6:00 PM ET on Sunday, is before 11:59 PM ET).

The following rules govern the competition period:

- A team is allowed only one competition period (6 consecutive hours) to complete ALL scenario tasks AND the Academic Quiz.
- Teams are not allowed to access the competition round or quiz files or for any reason before they are ready to compete. “Sneak-peeks” or tests of the software are prohibited.
- The times on the team’s computer are for reference purposes only. It is the responsibility of the team to ensure that ALL scenario work and the Academic Quiz is completed and properly submitted by the end of their six-hour competition period. The timestamp on the file submission is used by the StellarXplorers Program Office as the official time of completion.
- Technical issues affecting a team’s performance will NOT result in extra time.

- e. Teams taking more than the allotted 6-hour competition window will receive a scoring penalty.

4. Alternate Competition Times

A. Competition Backup Dates – If the StellarXplorers Program Office must postpone an online round due to a weather emergency, or any other reason, the competition will take place on a designated date before the next competition round.

B. Alternate Competition Periods – Through the appeals process, the StellarXplorers Program Office may grant approval for a team to compete on a mutually agreed upon date before the next online round due to a documented **school closure**, a local weather emergency, a power outage, or other emergency situations that prohibit the team from completing the round during the official competition window.

3005 | Team Director Supervision and Oversight

A. Team Director Supervision of Team(s) – Team directors must supervise their teams during the competition period. The minimal required supervision is:

1. The team director is physically present when competitors are competing in person as a group.
2. If the team director cannot be present, then an alternate team director for that round must be requested and approved by the StellarXplorers Program Office.

B. Oversight Visits to Competition Spaces – Team directors must allow the StellarXplorers competition team, AFA officials, Air Force officials, and Space Force officials to visit their competition spaces to observe the conduct of the competition and fulfill their oversight role. An oversight visit does not relieve the team director of their authority and responsibilities for the team.

C. Information from a Competition System during Competition – StellarXplorers staff may request information on a team's systems for oversight, competition administration, and troubleshooting purposes. Teams must provide the StellarXplorers Program Office information on their system(s) when requested.

3006 | Control of the Competition Area

A. Competition Area – The competition area is the location where one or more than one team competes (e.g., school multipurpose room, computer lab, classroom).

1. **Control of the Competition Area** – The team director (or approved alternate) of a team must be present (i.e., onsite) to administer all competition rounds where teams are competing in person as a group.
2. **Multiple Teams** – In cases where a competition area contains more than one team, team directors should take appropriate action to ensure that no purposeful or inadvertent communication or collaboration occurs between teams. Examples of appropriate action

include keeping teams as far away from each other as possible, keeping the volume of discussions to a minimum, ensuring that any written notes are only visible to individual teams.

B. Interactions with Other Teams – During their competition periods, team members of different teams cannot communicate with each other. Discussion of the competition round with team members outside of one's own team is prohibited.

C. Spectators – Team directors may arrange a spectator area for in-person observation of the competition that limits disruptions to the team. Team directors should ensure that spectators, to include mentors, do not interact with competitors in any way that threatens the integrity of the competition or the safety of the students.

3007 | Sharing of Competition Information

1. Rules Against Sharing Information

Team directors are entrusted with competition round information and should treat it as examination material. Competitors shall share information only within their team space to avoid giving a competitive advantage to other teams. Furthermore, participants shall:

- Structure a competition space or procedures so that other teams' competitors may not gain useful information or a competitive advantage. In competition areas where competition spaces are in separate rooms, a team's competitors may not enter another team's room, except for extreme circumstances.
- Strictly limit distribution of StellarXplorers competition and practice materials and software to their teams. Team Directors shall ensure that **all** the competition materials are deleted after each round per the competition email. All competition materials distributed by the StellarXplorers Program Office are the property of the Air & Space Forces Association, not StellarXplorers participants.
- Not share information concerning the competition materials with anyone outside of their team. **However, teams within the same organization (school, squadron, unit, etc.) may practice, discuss, and review competition materials together outside of a competition window.**
- Not transfer, or cause to be transferred, copies of competition materials to persons who are not currently registered StellarXplorers participants. Transfer of the competition materials to non-StellarXplorers participants is a violation.

2. Examples of Information Sharing Violations

Examples of information sharing violations include:

- Sharing information with another team during a competition window.
- **Sharing information with teams outside of the team's organization (other schools, squadrons, units, etc.), before or after a competition window.**
- Posting specific information on the competition or answers on a social networking site, Discord server (**except the round-specific, temporary channel**), blog, or other website, or through text or email, even after a round of competition.
- Using competition materials from any prior competition round for training.
- Requesting answers, solutions, or other competition assistance on a blog or social media.
- Screensharing, live streaming, or otherwise sharing information with individuals outside of the competition area during the competition period.

3008 | No Outside Assistance

Competitors are responsible for their team’s performance during the competition and may not receive or request assistance from any individual other than fellow competitors registered to that team. Once a competition period begins, team directors, technical mentors, team assistants, members of other teams, and other non-team members cannot coach, assist, collaborate, or advise competitors until the completion of the competition period.

Outside assistance includes direct and indirect advice, suggestions, hands-on assistance, use of AI tools and resources, and active electronic communication using platforms such as email, blogs, forums, and social media.

Team directors, mentors, and team assistants may only assist teams with:

- Administrative issues before the start of the six-hour competition period
- Timekeeping
- Local area network outages and other connectivity issues
- Dangerous or threatening situations that require adult intervention
- Maintaining team’s scoring data at the end of the competition period

In the case of practice rounds and other non-qualification round situations, the StellarXplorers Program Office may allow team directors and mentors to assist the competitors during the competition period.

1. Registered Competitors

Only the competitors registered to the team roster may compete with that team.

- Teams that do not have all their competitors registered by the listed competitor registration deadline **WILL NOT** receive competition-related emails for subsequent online rounds.

3009 | Allowable Resources

1. Computers Designated for Competition Use

A. Devices Used – Each team may only use two computers during the online rounds. The first computer may be used to run the STK software. The second computer, in addition to acting as an STK backup, may be used to perform other activities, such as internet searches or preparing the team’s solution for submission. Teams may also use the standard (addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, percentage, square root, and memory) functions available on calculators.

B. Systems Tool Kit (STK) – “One Instance” Rule – During any online competition round, a team may only have STK running on one computer. Running multiple instances of STK (i.e., having STK open on two or more computers) is prohibited.

C. Backup Devices – Teams may place an additional copy of the competition round’s STK material on a backup computer. If the primary computer fails or the original material is corrupted or deleted, the team may access the backup device. The second instance of the competition STK material may

be opened only if the original material is corrupted or malfunctions. After verifying that the second instance is not corrupt, the original instance must be closed and deleted. If the original instance is not closed and deleted, the team may be subject to an inquiry and a penalty. The competition period time will continue regardless of time required for opening the new competition material.

2. Internet Resources

During online rounds, internet resources such as FAQs, how-to guides, existing forums, and company websites are valid for competition use under the following conditions:

- The resource is **free**, and access has not been granted based on a previous fee, membership, employment, purchase, credit card, or other monetary instrument.
- No token, smart card, common access card, etc., is required to access it.
- The resource is publicly and reasonably available to all teams.
- **AI tools and resources are strictly prohibited under all circumstances.**

3. Electronic Media and Communication Devices

Team directors shall ensure that their teams compete without outside assistance through electronic media or communication devices. The following stipulations apply to this rule.

A. Electronic Media – No prepared electronic media may be used during the competition. Teams **may not** use the following: **advanced math functions available on scientific calculators**; prebuilt Excel files/spreadsheets; software programs such as Java, Python, Matlab, etc.; pre-built checklists or learning aids.

B. Communication Devices – Cell phones, smartphones, and other wireless devices are allowed in the competition space but shall NOT be used to communicate in the competition space. Answering and making calls, texting, etc., shall be done outside of the competition space.

C. Staging Resources – Teams shall not stage or access unauthorized resources on the internet, networks, systems, servers, storage devices, communications devices, etc. Emailing or otherwise transferring unauthorized tools, scripts, and data to the competition computer via another computer or device is also prohibited. Secure FTP sites may not be used.

4. Posting or Publicizing Resources

Publicly posting, distributing, or otherwise publicizing resources that were created for the StellarXplorers competition or events involving StellarXplorers software is **prohibited**.

5. Deletion of Competition Material

All competition-related material from a completed round must be deleted prior to the start of the next scheduled round (this includes practice rounds). Team directors must ensure that the competition material is deleted after the round of competition. Failure to delete past competition files may result in scoring penalties or disqualification.

3010 | Offensive Activity and Tampering

Participants shall not conduct offensive activity against other teams, competitors, the competition system, or non-participants to gain a competitive advantage. Offensive activity includes:

- Hacking
- Interference with another team's ability to compete.
- Social engineering or posting of false information to platforms including social media, text, chat, email, etc.
- Tampering with, copying, or modifying components of competition materials or STK software.
- Tampering with or modifying documents belonging to other participants or the StellarXplorers Program Office.
- Any other activity aimed at manipulating or deceiving other competitors or the StellarXplorers Program Office.

3011 | Inquiries for Rules Violations

In cases of apparent violations of the rules listed above or scoring irregularities, the StellarXplorers Program Office may appoint a StellarXplorers Program Office member to conduct an inquiry. The following items may be part of an inquiry:

A. Competition Material – Materials that involve rule violations or scoring irregularities require special handling of competition data by team directors.

- **Security** – The team director of a team that is the subject of an inquiry, or who has team members that are subjects of an inquiry, shall secure and take measures to prevent access to the competition materials. Materials shall not be opened, modified, or otherwise tampered with unless requested by the investigator.
- **Transfer or Upload** – When required, the team director shall cause the transfer or upload of the competition materials to a designated location.

B. Interviews – Interviews conducted in the course of the inquiry may be held in person, by telephone, or by other means.

C. Questionnaires – The investigator may request that participants involved in an inquiry respond to a questionnaire concerning the inquiry.

CHAPTER 4: COMPETITION EVENTS, SCORING, ADVANCEMENT & AWARDS

4001 | Competition Events

1. Online Rounds

A. Round Topics – The StellarXplorers online rounds contain one or more of the following scored events:

- **Round 1 (Orbit Planning)** – Orbit planning is the main event during the first round. It requires teams to select a mission orbit which best meets a specific set of mission requirements. This round also includes an Academic Quiz.
- **Round 2 (Satellite Design)** – Satellite design is the main event during the second round. It requires teams to design a satellite using a list of available subsystem components which will meet a set of mission requirements. This round also includes an Academic Quiz.
- **Round 3 (Launch Operations)** – Launch operations is the main event during the third round. It requires teams to select a launch vehicle, launch window, or optimum liftoff time, to meet a specific set of mission requirements. This round also includes an Academic Quiz.
- **Semifinal Round** – The semifinal round consists of two of the three events featured in the first three rounds. Teams that qualify for the Semifinal Round will be notified of the selected events prior to the start of the round. This round also includes an Academic Quiz.

A. Submission of answers

- **Academic quizzes** – Quizzes are completed and submitted via an online quiz form during the team's chosen competition period.
- **Scenario solution files** – Scenario solutions are submitted via the provided upload link and/or the selections form. After their initial submission, teams may submit up to one (1) corrected submission if they think they have found a better solution or need to correct an error. The second submission must fall within the team's 6-hour competition period AND within one (1) hour of the original submission.

2. National Finals Competition

The StellarXplorers National Finals is an in-person competition round. Following the Semifinal Round, a separate rules document will be shared with only those teams that have qualified for the National Finals Competition.

Until this document is released, teams should assume that all rules governing behavior in the online rounds apply to the National Finals Competition.

4002 | Scoring

1. Online Round Scores

The following rules govern scoring for all online rounds of competition:

- **Round 1 (Orbit Planning)**– Teams will be scored on their ability to meet the most mission requirements, as outlined in the round’s scenario booklet.
- **Round 2 (Satellite Design)** – Teams will be scored on their ability to meet requirements while keeping the satellite design within cost and weight limitations, as outlined in the round’s scenario booklet.
- **Round 3 (Launch Operations)** – Teams will be scored on their ability to meet the most mission requirements while keeping the launch vehicle within cost and weight limitations, as outlined in the round’s scenario booklet.
- **Semifinal Round** – Teams will be scored on their ability to meet the most mission requirements, as outlined in the round’s scenario booklet.
- **Academic Quizzes** – In each online qualification round, teams will complete an open-book quiz consisting of 20 space-related multiple-choice questions. The quiz must be completed (started and submitted) during the team’s 6-hour competition period. Quizzes submitted beyond the 6-hour time limit will not be accepted. Each correct answer is worth 1 point, for a maximum score of 20 points. Quiz scores count toward the team’s overall online round score.

2. Scores / Results Publication

The StellarXplorers Program Office does its best to publish the results within five working days after the end of a competition round. The results, or links to the results, of the online rounds will be published in the following media:

- StellarXplorers website: www.stellarxplorers.org
- Competition round results email from competition@stellarxplorers.org

Team directors will typically receive the courtesy copy of the results email before the results are published on the StellarXplorers website. To allow team directors the opportunity to notify their teams of the round’s results, the StellarXplorers Program Office requests that participants do not post the results on social media sites before they are posted on the StellarXplorers website.

3. Scoring Appeals Process

Appeals ensure competition fairness by considering unforeseen conditions that impact a team’s ability to compete. They are NOT a vehicle for a team to pursue advancement in the competition by other means. Score correction requests allow team directors to contact the StellarXplorers Program Office if they believe their team’s online round score is incorrect. The following rules apply to appeals:

A. Deadlines – Unless otherwise published by the StellarXplorers Program Office, team directors have 48 hours after the competition round scores are published to submit an appeal. Appeals must be submitted via email to competition@stellarxplorers.org.

B. Originator – Only the team’s team director may originate a team’s appeal or request. Unless a team director can properly document a scoring error, the request will not be considered, and the official score will stand.

C. Grounds Not Considered for Appeals

- Failure to receive competition email - Team directors are expected to contact the StellarXplorers Program Office if a competition email is not received in a timely manner.
- Ignorance of the original competition round dates
- Failure to secure an alternate team director if the primary team director is unavailable.
- Scheduling conflicts
- Internet connectivity issues that are not due to uncontrollable circumstances. Loss of an internet connection is only a cause for an appeal or backup date request if it was caused by a documented weather or man-made emergency that directly affected a team’s ability to compete.
- Failure to properly work out issues with the team’s / organization’s IT department.

D. Format – The format for appeals and requests can be found in [Appendix F](#).

- One Appeal per Round – Teams may only submit one appeal per round.
- Proper Documentation – All appeals and backup date requests must come with appropriate documentation. Examples of appropriate documentation include letters from school principals and news reports outlining school or organization closures.
 - The score sheet sent to the team director is the best documentation to prove a scoring error. The sheet may be copied and emailed to the StellarXplorers Program Office.

E. Decision and Notification of Results – The StellarXplorers Program Office is the final decision authority on appeals and will email the team director the results of the appeal within 3 business days of submission.

4003 | Penalties

Penalties may be applied to teams’ scores for conduct violations during the online rounds. Any team member or participant that does not cooperate in an inquiry may incur a penalty to include the disqualification, suspension, or ban of an individual or team as determined by the StellarXplorers Program Office. Any and all of the penalties below may be applied for any violations of the rules in this document.

1. Minor Penalties

In the event of a minor rule violation, the StellarXplorers Program Office may impose competition penalties on a team, including:

- Score reduction

- Time disadvantage in future competition rounds
- Invalidation of a team's competition round score

A. Excessive Time – In addition to inquiries, a special review process governs competition times in some circumstances. Teams with qualifying scores for advancement to the Semifinals and National Finals will have their competition period times reviewed for irregularities at the end of all previous rounds.

A team found to have exceeded the six consecutive-hour competition period for ANY of the online rounds will be penalized. For example, if a team is found to have taken excessive time in Round 1, the team's score for Round 1 may be less than originally published at the end of Round 1.

Teams exceeding the six consecutive-hour competition period will have their score for that round reduced by 1% for every minute they exceed the six-hour period.

2. Major Penalties (Disqualification)

If the StellarXplorers Program Office rules that a participant or team committed a major rules violation, they may be disqualified. Disqualified participants and teams are ineligible for awards and recognition and are subject to:

- **Suspension** – The terms and time limit of a participant or team suspension from the competition are at the discretion of the StellarXplorers Program Office.
- **Termination** – A participant or team is immediately terminated from the StellarXplorers Program for the entire season.
- **Ban** – A ban is the permanent disqualification of a participant or team from the StellarXplorers Program. It is the most severe administrative penalty that can be imposed. Reinstatement is at the sole discretion of the StellarXplorers Program Office.

3. Other Penalties

Other penalties invoked by the StellarXplorers Competition Staff may affect a team's final score or advancement.

4004 | Advancement

The following is the structure and advancement for the StellarXplorers teams:

1. Practice Rounds

Participation in practice rounds is open to all teams. Unofficial scores from practice rounds do not count toward a team's advancement.

2. Qualification Rounds

The qualification rounds are considered Rounds 1, 2, and 3. All teams may participate in these rounds. A team's performance or participation in Round 1 does not affect its ability to compete in Rounds 2 and 3. Every team is guaranteed eligibility in the qualification rounds.

3. Semifinals Round

At the completion of all three qualification rounds, the top 30% of the registered teams, but not less than 30 teams, will advance to the Semifinals Round based on their cumulative score from the qualifications rounds.

4. National Finals Competition

The top ten (10) teams advance to the National Finals Competition based solely on their Semifinal scores. Scores from the Qualification Rounds will not be carried forward to the Semifinal Round and will not have a bearing on moving on to the National Finals Competition.

5. Tiebreakers

If teams have a tie score that affects advancement to the Semifinals or National Finals, the team with the highest total Qualification Rounds score minus the Academic Quizzes will advance to the next round. If still tied, the team with the highest Qualification Round 3 score advances; if still tied, Qualification Round 2 score; if still tied, Qualification Round 1 score.

6. Replacement Teams

If a team advancing to the Semifinals or National Finals Competition is suspended, unable to compete, or banned, a replacement team may be chosen at the discretion of the StellarXplorers Program Office. The following criteria will be considered when selecting a replacement team:

- The team with the next highest qualifying score from the Qualifying or Semifinals Rounds that was not advanced.
- If a designated replacement team does not respond with information required for competition or logistics when requested, the StellarXplorers Program Office may revoke the designation of the replacement team.

4005 | Awards

The Air & Space Forces Association recognizes excellence in competition and support of StellarXplorers with awards and honors. StellarXplorers sponsors may also elect to recognize teams throughout the competition.

1. Award Authorities

Only the StellarXplorers Program Office can approve presentation of awards by parties outside of the Air & Space Forces Association.

2. National Finals Competition Awards

A. Overall Awards – The top three scoring teams at the National Finals Competition teams will receive recognition for their achievements. They will be crowned the National Champion, National

Second Place, and National Third Place teams respectively. Medals and trophies may be provided to winning teams by the StellarXplorers Program Office.

Note: Team members must attend the National Finals to receive any awards achieved by the team during the National Finals competition.

B. Other Awards – Sponsors or supporters of specific National Finals challenges may present awards to the teams earning the highest score.

APPENDICES

Appendix A | Team Director Agreement

Team directors are vital to the success of StellarXplorers. The StellarXplorers team director not only guides the team through preparation for the competition (with additional assistance at their sole discretion), but more importantly protects the competitors' well-being and the integrity of the competition.

Access To Competitors

1. Coordinate parental notification and permissions to allow their minor children to participate in the program in accordance with the current "StellarXplorers User Agreement and Privacy Policy" published by the Air & Space Forces Association.
2. Coordinate and provide permission for any student to register in the StellarXplorers registration system.
3. Coordinate, arrange, and approve involvement with the team by any technical mentor or team assistants at the team director's sole discretion, whether in-person or online and whether obtained by any other source.
4. Abide by the StellarXplorers Standards of Conduct ([See Appendix B](#))
5. Act as the team's single point of contact for the StellarXplorers Program Office.

Academic Program

1. Deliver basic space systems training to competitors as may be reasonably accommodated at the team director's sole discretion.
2. Encourage competitors to devote time to self-study and preparation for the competition.

Competition Management

1. Uphold the integrity of the competition by ensuring that all rules of the competition as described in the StellarXplorers Rule Book and competition emails are strictly followed.

Competition Logistics

1. Coordinate and support all elements of the preparatory training and online rounds, including arranging a competition location and obtaining necessary computer equipment for training and the online rounds of the competition.
2. Provide feedback to the StellarXplorers Program Office and coordinate feedback from competitors designed to improve the entire program.
3. Agree to coordinate logistics for the trip with the StellarXplorers Program Office (all expenses except entertainment and personal expenditures will be funded), should the team advance to the National Finals Competition.
4. Agree to accompany the team and be responsible for supervision and guardianship during the travel and onsite at the National Finals Competition.

As a StellarXplorers team director, I agree to uphold the highest standards of integrity, sportsmanship, and honesty. I will encourage my team to compete fairly, and with a constructive attitude that celebrates our successes as well as those of other teams. I have read, understand, and agree to execute the responsibilities described in the StellarXplorers Team Director Agreement to the best of my abilities.

Appendix B | Standards of Conduct

Working with young people can be among the most gratifying and impactful endeavors an adult can undertake, but there are also special responsibilities that must be discharged to prevent harm to the minor. As a StellarXplorers team director, mentor, or team assistant, I promise to strictly follow the rules and guidelines in this StellarXplorers Standards of Conduct as a condition of my providing services to the youth participating in StellarXplorers.

As a StellarXplorers Team Director, Mentor, or Team Assistant, I will:

1. Treat everyone with respect, patience, integrity, courtesy, dignity, and consideration.
2. Insofar as practical, avoid situations where I am alone with an individual minor.
3. Use positive reinforcement rather than criticism when working with competitors.
4. Refrain from giving gifts to minors without prior written approval from the parents or guardian of the individual.
5. Report suspected abuse of any kind to law enforcement, school authorities, and the local Child Protection Services agency, as required by law.
6. Cooperate fully in any investigation of abuse of minors.

As a StellarXplorers Team Director, Mentor, or Team Assistant, I will NOT:

1. Smoke or use tobacco products in the presence of minors.
2. Use, possess, or be under the influence of alcohol at any time while working with the team.
3. Use, possess, or be under the influence of drugs (except for medicines proscribed by a doctor) at any time.
4. Pose any health risk to others (e.g., no contact with the team when in a contagious condition).
5. Strike, spank, shake, or slap any youth participating in StellarXplorers.
6. Humiliate, ridicule, threaten, or degrade any youth participating in StellarXplorers.
7. Touch a youth in a sexual or other inappropriate manner.
8. Use discipline that frightens or humiliates any youth participating in StellarXplorers; and
9. Use profanity in the presence of any youth participating in StellarXplorers.

I understand that any action inconsistent with these Standards of Conduct, or failure to act mandated by this Standards of Conduct, may result in my removal and prohibition from any future participation in StellarXplorers.

Appendix C | Safety

Safety and competitor protection are the top priorities of the StellarXplorers Program. A team director should always consider the health and well-being of their team in choosing a competition environment.

Safety and Competitor Protection Requirements

School, organization, and local directives govern the safety and protection requirements of minors and facility standards. Some safety considerations in choosing a competition space are listed below:

- Facility Security
- Adequate Lighting
- Vehicle Safety
- Slip areas caused by ice, snow, water, petroleum products, etc.
- Unsupervised access to competitors by other adults in public facilities
- Crime Areas
- Electrical Safety
- Emergency Services
- Trip Hazards
- First Aid Kit

Team directors should mitigate any safety issues through remedial action or warnings to competitors and mentors.

Reporting

In the event of an accident or other incident involving competitors in a StellarXplorers event, organization and local reporting procedures shall be followed. After notification of proper local authorities, team directors should notify the StellarXplorers Program Office following a significant incident at a StellarXplorers event. Incidents of interest to the StellarXplorers Program Office are:

- Competitor who is a missing person last seen at a StellarXplorers event.
- Injured competitor requiring hospitalization.
- Criminal act against a competitor, team director, chaperone, mentor, competition team, or StellarXplorers supporter.
- Severe weather or natural disaster that could negatively affect the competitors or the competition.

Reports to the StellarXplorers Program Office can be transmitted via email to competition@stellarxplorers.org.

Appendix D | Team Director Alternate / Replacement Request

Team directors ensure that minors participating in the competition are protected and that parental prerogatives are respected. Any individual acting as a team director alternate or replacement team director is expected to assume the same responsibilities of protecting minors and preserving the integrity of the competition by ensuring that all competitors conduct themselves in a fair, ethical, and sportsmanlike manner.

Alternate = acting as team director for one or two rounds

Replacement = taking over as team director for the remainder of the competition season

Requests for a team director alternates or replacements must be submitted to competition@stellarxplorers.org in the following format.

From: [Team Director's Email Address – should match email address on file with StellarXplorers]

Sent: [prior to the team beginning the competition round]

To: competition@stellarxplorers.org

Cc: [Verification Official's email address] [Team Director Alternate / Replacement email address]

Subject: Team Director [Alternate or Replacement] Request

I will be unable to participate in the StellarXplorers competition [*SPECIFY ROUND(S) OF COMPETITION*]. My team information is below:

Team Number: STLX11-xxxx

Organization Name:

I request that StellarXplorers communication be sent to my [alternate or replacement]. Their contact information is below:

Full Name:

Email Address:

Phone Number:

I certify that [NAME OF ALTERNATE] agrees to the Team Directors' Agreement and Standards of Conduct in the StellarXplorers Rule Book.

Appendix E | StellarXplorers Competitor Code of Conduct

As a participant in the StellarXplorers National Space Design Competition:

1. I will consider the ethical and legal implications of my actions every time I participate in StellarXplorers.
2. I will not conduct, nor will I condone, any actions that interfere with another team's or individual's computer system.
3. I will not illegally copy or distribute software or other intellectual property.
4. I will not visit inappropriate web sites while preparing for, or participating in, StellarXplorers.
5. I will not participate in, or condone, cyberbullying which includes such behaviors as teasing, threatening, intimidating, humiliating, sexual harassment, racial harassment, and stalking.
6. I will follow the StellarXplorers rules of competition and will accept appropriate guidance from my team director.
7. I will not tamper with, modify, or attempt to manipulate any element of the StellarXplorers competition or scoring systems.
8. I will ensure the confidentiality of the competition materials and will not share information about the competition with members outside of my team.
9. I will delete any competition materials following the completion of the round.
10. I will not attempt to deceive, hoax, or "prank" other teams by forwarding or posting erroneous or deceptive information on the internet, by email, or on social networking sites.
11. I understand that violation of this code of conduct is grounds for my immediate dismissal from my team and the disqualification of my team from StellarXplorers competition.

Appendix F | Appeal and Backup Date Request Form

All requests and appeals should be sent to competition@stellarxplorers.org.

From: (Team Director's Email Address)

Sent: (No later than deadline – Eastern Time)

To: competition@stellarxplorers.org

Subject: Appeal: [Team Number] – [School or Organization Name]

Subject of Appeal. (One Sentence)

Requested Action. (One Sentence)

Originator. (Team Director's Name)

Facts Bearing on the Appeal (One fact per subparagraph. Facts must answer *who, what, where, when, why*.)

- a.
- b.
- c.

Additional Comments. (Limit 100 words)

Supporting Attachments. (Limit two. Official documents and scoring data provide the best documentation.)

- 1.
- 2.

See next page for example appeal.

EXAMPLE APPEAL

From: Doe, Jane [mailto: Jane.Doe@schools.edu]

Sent: Friday, December 15, 2018, 3:48 PM

To: competition@stellarxplorers.org

Subject: Appeal: STLX11-9999 – Freedom High School

Subject of Appeal. Power Outage Prevented Freedom High's Participation in Round 2.

Requested Action. To Reschedule Round 2, StellarXplorers Competition.

Originator. Jane Doe

Facts Bearing on the Appeal

- a. At approximately 3:00 pm EST, Friday, December 15, 2018, the M High School team setup for Qualification Round 2.
- b. At approximately 3:30 pm EST, Friday, December 15, 2018, a snowstorm caused a power outage that shutdown our school's computer network, until Monday, December 18, 2018.
- c. The Metro High School Principal, Dr. Baker, ordered the school closed at approximately 4:00 pm and sent home all people remaining in the school. (See Attachment 1.)
- d. Due to the time of day, my team was unable to move to a nearby location to continue the competition.
- e. Travel on Metro area roads was becoming dangerous, so I sent the team members home. (See Attachment 2, News Story, 5th paragraph).
- f. I contacted the StellarXplorers Program Office at approximately 4:00 pm, Friday, December 15, 2018, and told them, that my team could not participate in the Round 2 of the StellarXplorers Competition.

Additional Comments: Any consideration you can give our team would be appreciated. We scored 5th overall in Round 1 and I am sure that we would have done as well or better in Round 2. If there is anything I can do to allow the Freedom High School team to re-compete in Round 2, please let me know.

Supporting Attachments (Limit 2)

- Letter from Principal Baker
- News Article

Appendix G | Sponsors and Sponsorships

The Air & Space Forces Association and its StellarXplorers Program take great care in the branding of StellarXplorers. Our sponsors must have common values with the Air & Space Forces Association and make a significant contribution to the StellarXplorers Program before they can be associated with the program.

National Sponsors

Our national sponsors provide the resources to sustain the StellarXplorers Program across the United States. According to their sponsorship level, StellarXplorers' national sponsors earn recognition in StellarXplorers events, as well as name association with StellarXplorers. StellarXplorers literature and other media contain the sponsors' logos. National sponsors conduct their sponsorship through the StellarXplorers Program Office.

If you know of anyone interested in becoming a StellarXplorers national sponsor, or if you want to know more about sponsorship, please visit our website at www.stellarxplorers.org or contact the StellarXplorers Program Office by email at info@stellarxplorers.org.

Local Team Sponsors

Local businesses may sponsor specific local teams but may not use the StellarXplorers logo in their advertising. If a team advances to the National Finals Competition or is involved in another event other than a team competition, the team may not use the local sponsor's name, logo, or other identifying characteristics.

Appendix H | StellarXplorers Media Guidelines

StellarXplorers is a great opportunity for your high school or organization, such as JROTC, USNSCC, and CAP, to draw local and state media coverage. Television stations, newspapers, and radio stations are generally interested in good stories of youth doing good things, and StellarXplorers is a terrific example of that.

We encourage you to work through your school administration or unit public affairs representative when handling any media inquiries.

We also ask that you adhere to the following guidelines:

- StellarXplorers should be written as one word, with a capital “S” and a capital “X”
- At its first mention, the complete title of the program should be used: “StellarXplorers - National Space Design Competition.”

In every release or interview please ensure the following is communicated:

- StellarXplorers was established by the Air & Space Forces Association.

Any use of the StellarXplorers logo or other collateral must be approved by the StellarXplorers Program Office. Use of the logo and the name, “StellarXplorers” must conform to the branding guidelines found on www.afa.org.

National media inquiries may be directed to AFA’s Director of Communications (Amy Hudson, AHudson@afa.org).