

The 2026 International Space Development Conference Sets Records

National Space Society Annual Conference Joined NASA Leaders, Astronauts, and Space Entrepreneurs with Space Enthusiasts, Professionals, Advocates, and Students

MERRITT ISLAND, FL, UNITED STATES, July 2, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The National Space Society's annual [International Space Development Conference](#) concluded on June 7 and was widely praised by attendees, with one of the best domestic attendance records in recent years.



Apollo 17 astronaut Harrison "Jack" Schmitt speaks at ISDC 2026. Credit: NSS/Travis Wicks

The conference, which will be in its 45th year in 2027, hosted NASA leaders, space entrepreneurs, academics, scientists, engineers, and young space leaders. Attendees included space professionals, space advocates, students, and space enthusiasts. The conference is the largest of its kind, with over 1000 attendees annually, and welcomes ordinary citizens as well as space professionals.

[Featured speakers](#) included Apollo 17 astronaut, Harrison Schmitt, Apollo Flight Director Gerry Griffin, bestselling science fiction author David Brin, and astronauts Michael López-Alegria, Steven Hawley, Susan Kilrain, and Robert "Hoot" Gibson. Also featured were the principal investigator of NASA's Psyche mission Lindy Elkins-Tanton, former NASA Chief Scientist Jim Green, SETI Institute CEO Bill Diamond, planetary scientist Pascal Lee, and Aarti Holla-Maini, the Director of the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs. This first presence of a United Nations representative at an ISDC was notable.

Representatives of Firefly, Axiom Space, and Vast offered fascinating insights into the status of their efforts to build a commercial future in space. Their advice was aimed at a wide variety of attendees, from serial space entrepreneurs to students preparing to enter the workspace. As one example, Axiom Chief Astronaut López-Alegria provided an exciting overview of his company's approach to building a commercial space station for the post-International Space

Station future. Additionally, key members of the Firefly Blue Ghost team received an award from the NSS honoring the first fully successful commercial landing on the Moon.

The NSS's education team hosted educational workshops and hundreds of student participants from two major NSS competitions: the Live in a Healthy Space Design Competition and the Gerard K. O'Neill Space Settlement Contest. Also featured were student poster sessions in which young people from around the globe presented their ideas of space settlements. Many students were recognized at multiple award ceremonies.

Three finalist teams from the Martine Rothblatt Space Settlement in Our Lifetime Business Plan Competition presented their business plans to an audience of space professionals and enthusiasts, and the three cash prizes were awarded based on audience scoring. The winners took home a total purse of \$32,000.

The ISDC is the oldest and largest citizen's space conference in the world, and anyone is invited to attend. Special discounts are available for seniors, students, and National Space Society members. For more information on ISDC, see the conference website at isdcspace.org.

ISDC 2027 will be held in Los Angeles, CA, on May 27-30th at the Sheraton Gateway Los Angeles Hotel.

ABOUT THE NSS

The National Space Society is the preeminent non-partisan citizens' voice on space exploration, development, and settlement, reaching millions through its membership, numerous outreach channels, and media activities. The organization was founded in 1987 via a merger of the National Space Institute and the L5 Society. To learn more about the NSS and its mission to establish humanity as a spacefaring species, visit us on the web at nss.org.

Rod Pyle

+1 626-399-4440

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