

SDL Payload Challenge Rules and Information

The Space Dynamics Laboratory (SDL) has hundreds of successful space missions, including satellite-based sensor systems, ISS instruments, and shuttle and sounding rocket payloads. SDL has 1900+ employees and is headquartered in Logan, Utah. SDL's mission is to advance scientific and defense objectives by researching, developing and characterizing sensor, electronic, and software systems.

Owned by Utah State University, SDL's mission includes enhancing the education and development of scientists and engineers and employs ~150 college students at any given time.

SDL is excited to be involved with the International Rocket Engineering Competition (IREC), sponsoring the payload portion of the competition. After all, in reality there's no reason to launch a rocket unless there's a payload! SDL is offering \$2,250 in cash prizes to teams that produce meaningful payloads.

Objective: Encourage participants to create payloads that accomplish a relevant function and provide useful learning opportunities.

To Enter the SDL Payload Challenge: Submit an SDL Payload Challenge Entry Form no later than two weeks prior to the start of the event. SDL Payload Challenge Forms are available for download from the IREC Cup Documents & Forms page on the ESRA website; email to: payloadchallenge@sdl.usu.edu.

Awards:

- 1st Place Payload Award: \$1000
- 2nd Place Payload Award: \$750
- 3rd Place Payload Award: \$500
- SDL Technology Relevance Award
- Honorable mentions as warranted (Judge's discretion)

Judging Criteria (1000 points possible):

- ***Scientific or Technical Objective(s) (400 points)***
 - How relevant and well-designed is your scientific or technical objective?
- ***Payload Construction and Overall Professionalism (250 points)***
 - Includes make/buy decisions, craftsmanship, material usage, poster, handouts, reports, etc.
- ***Readiness / Turnkey Operation (50 points)***
 - Will the payload interfere with launch operations? Will the payload operate after hours of launch preparation, rail time, heat, waiting for other launches, etc?
- ***Execution of Objective(s) (300 points)***
 - Judges should be informed of results by Saturday at noon or a zero in this category will be assessed.
 - How well did it accomplish the objective(s)?
 - ***Note:*** That rocket failure results in 150 points (half credit – don't know if payload would have worked or not)

SDL Payload Challenge Rules and Information

SDL Technology Relevance Award

- This is a separate award and has no impact on the overall SDL payload challenge and is a recognition award (a certificate and a highlight during the IREC Awards Ceremony), for innovative ideas listed in the three areas listed below.
- This provides an opportunity for students to focus on and integrate technologies relevant to SDL's mission into their payload.
- 2025 Technology Areas: Robotics, Artificial Intelligence, and Infrared