

Jan 19, 2017 16:07 CET

Claudie Haigneré, first European female astronaut to chair Jury of the DStv Eutelsat Star Awards

Essay and poster winners to be announced on 7 February in Lagos, Nigeria

Johannesburg, Lagos, Paris, 19 January 2016 – Nearly 6,000 secondary school students have entered the DStv Eutelsat Star Awards competition since it was established by Eutelsat and MultiChoice Africa in 2011. The sixth edition shows sustained interest from African learners aged 14 to 19, adding fresh impetus to the mission shared by MultiChoice and Eutelsat to encourage young minds to positively change their world via innovative thinking in science and technology.

The essay, poster winners and runners-up of this year's edition will be revealed at a ceremony to be held in Lagos, Nigeria, on 7 February.

Leading female astronaut to chair Jury for the first time

A former astronaut and French Minister, now special advisor to European Space Agency's (ESA) Director General, Claudie Haigneré has accepted to chair the prestigious Jury of the DStv Eutelsat Star Awards. It is the first time a woman takes on this assignment, acting as a strong incentive for students dreaming big, especially young women, to live up to their full potential.

Claudie Haigneré will preside over an international panel of skilled industry experts, alongside government and academic world members: Ronke Bello, CEO at Innovative Technology Literacy Services Ltd (Nigeria), Rodney Benn, Regional Director for Africa at Eutelsat, Melt Loubser, GM: Broadcast Technology MultiChoice Africa, Elizabeth Ohene, journalist and former Minister of State to the Ministry of Education, Science and Sports (Ghana), Prof. Stephen Simukanga, Former University of Zambia Chancellor and now

Director General of the Higher Education Authority, John Ugbe, Managing Director: MultiChoice Nigeria and Jenerali Ulimwengu, well known writer, columnist and lawyer (Tanzania).

Paving the way for Africa's bright future

High-standards of accuracy, creativity, originality and innovation will guide the jury's decision on the best essay and poster. This year's topic pushed students to envision the role played by satellite technology in the Africa of the future.

The academic and career paths of previous winners prove that embracing science and technology fields is a source of inspiration that can unlock opportunities for Africa. To name a few, 2014 Zimbabwean essay winner Joseph Mahiya is currently enrolled in a programme run by the Mastercard Foundation. The scholarship is for an undergraduate degree in Computer Science with Software Engineering as well as Electrical Engineering starting August 2017 at West Virginia University in the USA. Eva Chemgorem, the 2012 poster winner is studying for a Bachelor of Science in Economics at Daystar University, Nairobi and will soon pursue a minor in International Relations. She hopes to use her education to shape policy and economic development in Kenya and the rest of world.

Who will follow in their footsteps? Next winners to be revealed on 7 February!

About the DStv Eutelsat Star Awards

In 2010 MultiChoice Africa and Eutelsat combined their expertise to initiate an annual pan-African student competition called the [DStv Eutelsat Star Awards](#). The DStv Eutelsat Star Awards encourages 14-19 year-old students to write an essay or design a poster on a satellite-related topic. Country winners from across Africa then compete in the overall awards for a trip to the Eutelsat facilities in Paris, with the essay winner travelling onwards to witness a live rocket launch. Runners-up win a trip to South Africa as guests of MultiChoice Africa and the South African National Space Agency at

Hartebeesthoek. Schools attended by the overall winners also receive a DStv installation, including dish, television, state-of-the-art PVR decoder and free access to the DStv Education Bouquet. Winners at national levels win prizes such as computers or tablets.

More on Claudie Haigneré

Now special advisor to ESA's Director General, Claudie Haigneré began her career in the medical field as a renowned rheumatologist and researcher in biomechanics and physiology of movement. After a PhD thesis in neurology, she joined the European astronaut programme and flew on Russia's Mir space station for 16 days in 1996. In 2001, she went back into space and was the first European woman to fly on the ISS (International Space Station). From 2002 to 2004, she was Minister delegate for Research and New Technologies in the French government, and became Minister delegate for European Affairs the following year.

Since then she has also been an administrator of Universcience (representing the Palais de la Découverte and the Cité des sciences et de l'industrie in Paris), in addition to her activities for ESA.

About Eutelsat Communications

Established in 1977, Eutelsat Communications (Euronext Paris: ETL, ISIN code: FR0010221234) is one of the world's leading and most experienced operators of communications satellites. The company provides capacity on 39 satellites to clients that include broadcasters and broadcasting associations, pay-TV operators, video, data and Internet service providers, enterprises and government agencies.

Eutelsat's satellites provide ubiquitous coverage of Europe, the Middle East, Africa, Asia-Pacific and the Americas, enabling video, data, broadband and government communications to be established irrespective of a user's location.

Headquartered in Paris, with offices and teleports around the globe, Eutelsat represents a workforce of 1,000 men and women from 37 countries who are experts in their fields and work with clients to deliver the highest quality of

service.

For more about Eutelsat please visit www.eutelsat.com

Press

Vanessa O'Connor Tel: + 33 1 53 98 37 91 voconnor@eutelsat.com

Marie-Sophie Ecuier Tel: + 33 1 53 98 37 91 mecuer@eutelsat.com

Investors and analysts

Joanna Darlington Tel. : +33 1 53 98 35 30 jdarlington@eutelsat.com

Cédric Pugni Tel. : +33 1 53 98 35 30 cpugni@eutelsat.com

Follow us at: