

HUMAN SPACE ENDEAVOURS SYMPOSIUM (B3)
Astronauts: Those Who Make It Happen (5)

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THE 2008-2009 ESA ASTRONAUT SELECTION CAMPAIGN MEDICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL
COMPONENTS

Abstract

The European Space Agency faced a daunting task of filtering through an expected 30,000 applications when it decided to recruit and select the best possible Europeans for 4 new Astronaut positions. Thus, the selection team implemented an initial medical filter. It required interested applicants to pass a JAR-FCL 3, Class 2 physical examination. After the applicant uploaded his/her medical certificate to the selection website, he/she then received unique credentials to continue the application process. This first medical filter served two purposes. It provided an early medical screening that would filter out some applicants for medical reasons, and filter out others who were insufficiently committed to arrange a medical examination. The entire application process was conducted online and required electronic document submission. Internal proprietary criteria filters were applied to each set of application documents to yield a second filter. Applicants that passed this round were then invited to a psychological screening round via computer-based tests that assessed cognitive capabilities, technical knowledge, language skills, and spatial awareness/analysis capabilities. Subsequent to this stage, applicants were then invited to a second psychological screening round focusing on personal interviews, group testing simulations and computer tests focused on ascertaining individual personality traits and performance in teams. Beyond this stage successful applicants were invited to an intense round of medical examinations focused on thorough screening of all physiological systems to screen out disease and/or identify high probability disease conditions likely to develop. Following this screening round, detailed medical files of each successful applicant were reviewed by appointed members of the ESA Medical Board for final recommendation to the ESA Director General for consideration.