'The Only Way is Up': Ground control to Irish Transition Year Students – The Irish Centre for Composites Research (IComp) announces an out of this world opportunity:

UL launched project for Transition Year Students to Send their Research to Space

The Irish Centre for Composites Research (IComp), based at the University of Limerick, through its partnership with NanoRacks LLC, announces an out-of-this-world opportunity for one lucky Irish team of transition year students: the opportunity to design an experiment and fly it on the International Space Station (ISS). The project entitled 'The Only Way Is Up' will be the first of its kind in Irish history; allowing a research project designed by Irish transition year students to spend 30 days orbiting the Earth. The experiment will fly to the ISS on-board a launch vehicle, scheduled for launch in autumn 2014. An example of an experiment that has flown is the study of epoxy hardening in the microgravity environment.

The launch event for the project will be held at the National Centre for Excellence in Maths and Science Teaching & Learning (NCE-MSTL) at the University of Limerick on September 19th at 4pm, with a showing of the documentary movie 'Orphans of Apollo' at 7.30pm that same evening. NASA astronaut Nicole Stott is scheduled to participate in the opening event and share some of her experiences about being an astronaut.

Interested school teachers are invited to visit www.icomp.ie for more details about the project and how to take part. The first stage of the project requires all interested Transition year school teachers to register online (see events section on www.icomp.ie) and express their interest in being involved in this exciting project. The online registration page will remain open until the end of September and after this a number of schools will be selected for school visits. The selected schools will be given a presentation about the microgravity environment and will be provided with more information about the project. Ultimately just one experiment will get to fly on-board the ISS in space.

This project is being run in collaboration with the National Centre for Excellence in Maths and Science Teaching & Learning (NCE-MSTL) at the University of Limerick and is funded by Faculty of Science and Engineering University of Limerick and Science Foundation Ireland Discover Programme and with support by the Materials & Surface Science Institute (MSSI). The project is enabled through NanoRacks LLC (www.nanoracks.com) which is working in partnership with NASA under a Space Act Agreement as part of the utilization of the International Space Station as a National Laboratory.