Space Explorers

Game Rules



The conquest of space was one of the main human achievements of the 20th century. In 1957, the first satellite named "Sputnik 1" has been placed into orbit. Four years later, Yuri Gagarin has performed the first human space flight on "Vostok 1" ship.

This game is dedicated to the first space explorers — i.e. all the outstanding people who have made spacefaring possible.

THE GOAL

Each player becomes the Head of a Research & Development Hub in the Space Research Center. You recruit best Specialists to your team and produce various space projects — from placing satellites and manned spaceships into orbit to launching automated interplanetary stations.

The game is over when the players complete all the available Projects or when one of the players recruits 12 Specialists to his/her team. The Specialists and Projects bring you Progress points. The most successful player who managed to gain the highest amount of Progress points wins.

Space Explorers is fully consistent with the spirit of the 'Golden Age' of astronautics. Concurrently, we have introduced a number of conventionalities to make the game more interesting.

As Yuri Gagarin said at the moment of his launch: *"Let's go!"*

COMPONENTS

60 Specialist cards



10 cardboard Project cards



4 composite Hub sheets



4 Reference cards



20 Research tokens



First Player token



INITIAL SETUP

1. **Shuffle the Specialist deck.** Put 6 cards on the table face-up. These Specialists are considered available in the Space Research Center.
2. **Shuffle the Projects.** Randomly choose as many Projects as many players are in the game plus two extra Projects. For example, if there are 3 players, take 5 Project cards. Return the rest of the Projects to the game box.

   The cardboard Project cards are double-sided. Choose in any manner what side of each Project to use in the game. A possible way to do this — toss each cardboard card up and, when it drops, see what side is up. Then put the Projects in a line behind the Specialist deck.
3. Each player puts in front of him/her:
   - **a Hub sheet** (connect the two parts together as shown on the picture);
   - **5 Research tokens** — one token of each color; and
   - **a Reference card.**

   With two or three players, some Research tokens, Hub sheets, and Reference cards are not necessary. Put them back to the game box.
4. Each player takes in hand one **Specialist card** from the deck. The players never show cards in their hands to each other.
5. The player who had visited the outer space most recently gets the **First Player token** and begins the game. If there is no such person among you, the one who was the last to watch or read something about space becomes the First Player.

   The **First Player token** is not passed to other players. It's important who has it in the end of the game.





Everything is ready. A game for three players is about to begin!

KEY TERMS

The Space Research Center (hereinafter — **Center**) consists of the Specialist cards lying on the table face up near the deck.

There must always be at least 6 Specialist cards in the Center. If at any time, the number of Specialist cards in the Center becomes 5, put the upper card from the deck on the vacant place.

The Research & Development Hub (hereinafter — **Hub**) is a structural element of the space industry, and each player is in charge of his/her own Hub. The Hub is represented by the composite sheet.

The Hub sheet has five sections called **Divisions**: Engineering Division (blue), Testing Division (green), Research Division (yellow), Construction Division (Red), and of course, Space Flight Division (purple).

The players can add Specialists whose cards are in the Center or in their hands to their Hubs. The Specialist cards are placed into respective Divisions of the Hub — i.e. sections of the sheet.

The Specialists are distinguished Engineers, Testers, Researchers, Builders, and Astronauts.

Of course, such a classification of Specialists is conditional in some way. For instance, Astronauts are not only the people actually flying to the space, but also a large number of personnel involved into the preparation of the flights.

The Projects involve the production and launch of spacecraft. Each of those had been sent to space in the past. During the game you recreate the achievements of that great epoch!

The Researches are actual studies carried out in the Hub in order to achieve ambitious results in the following areas: Engineering, Testing, Research Studies, Construction, and Flight Control.

The Research tokens are the main resource available to the players. Specialists employed with the Hub are not hired for money — the Government pays salaries to them. The Specialists are interested in research studies carried out in the Hub. The Research tokens represent these studies. In the course of the game, you recruit Specialists in accordance with the actual studies carried out in your Hub.

GAME PROCESS

The players make their turns one by one clockwise. During the turn, the player may take a Specialist card to hand *or* recruit a Specialist to his/her Hub.

The player must perform one and only one of these actions. Then the turn is passed to the next player clockwise.

TAKING A SPECIALIST CARD TO HAND

The player may take to hand one Specialist card from the Center or take the upper card from the deck.

If the player has taken a card from the Center and the number of Specialist cards in the Center becomes less than 6, the player must immediately put the upper card from the deck on the vacant place.

ADDING SPECIALIST TO THE HUB

The player may recruit a Specialist whose card is in the Center or in the player's hand. The player makes the following steps to recruit that Specialist.

Step One. Choose the Division

Each specialist possesses a skill in a certain field.

The skills are depicted by one, sometimes two, round pictograms in the upper left section of the card.

A Specialist may be assigned only to the Division matching the Specialist's skill. In other words, the Tester (green round pictogram on the card) should be assigned to the Testing Division (green section on the Hub sheet).

If the Specialist has skills in two different areas, it's the player's decision what Division to assign that Specialist to.



Specialist with 1 skill



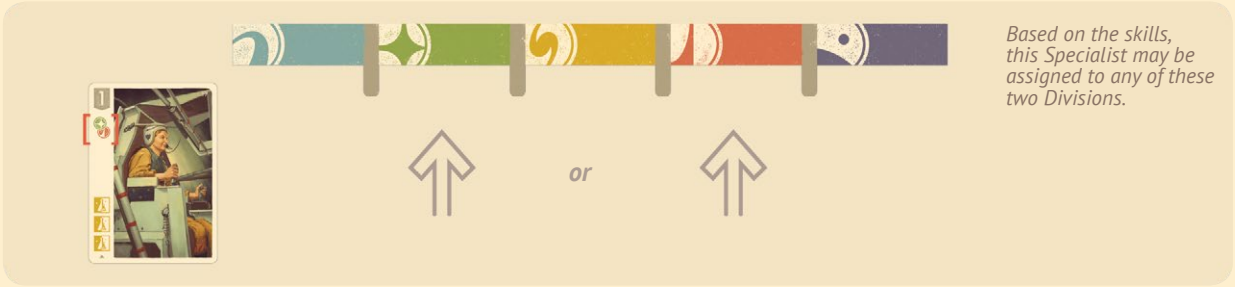
Specialist with 2 same skills



Specialist with 2 different skills



Specialist should be assigned to the Division matching the Specialist's skill.



Based on the skills, this Specialist may be assigned to any of these two Divisions.

Step Two. Determine the Recruitment Cost

On its left side, the Specialist card shows 2 to 6 Research symbols. This is the *basic* Recruitment Cost.

The first Specialist assigned to a yet-empty Division slot is recruited at the basic Recruitment Cost. In other words, you have to gain all the Research symbols shown on the left side of the Specialist card to assign him/her to the Division *(see step three)*.

Starting with the second Specialist assigned to the same Division, the Recruitment Cost is reduced.



The basic Recruitment Cost is 2 Research symbols



The basic Recruitment Cost is 6 Research symbols

The player has to obtain one Research symbol less per each skill of the Division color possessed by Specialists of that Division. This is called *Recruitment Cost Reduction*.

The following rules apply:

- The Recruitment Cost decreases from bottom to top — as the triangle arrow in the lower left corner of the card shows.
- The Recruitment Cost may be reduced to zero. This happens when the total amount of skills possessed by Specialists employed with the Division is equal to or higher than the number of required Research symbols shown on the card of the newly-recruited Specialist.
- Only the skills whose color matches the Division color do count.

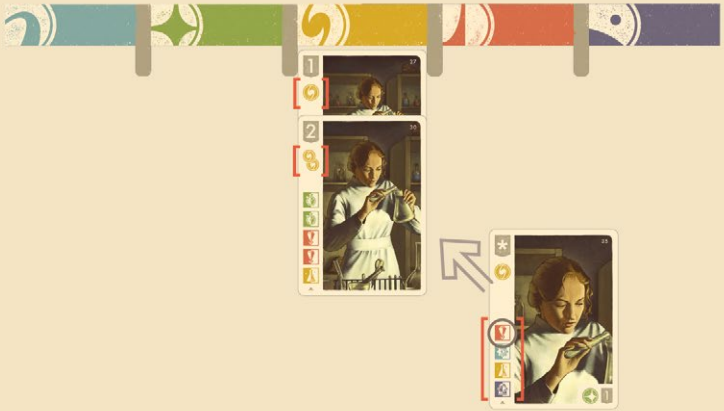
EXAMPLE 1.

This is the first Specialist recruited to the Space Flight Division. The player must obtain all the 3 required Research symbols (circled).



EXAMPLE 2.

Specialists already employed with the Division possess three skills of the Division color. Therefore, the player must obtain three Research symbols less than the basic Recruitment Cost. In this particular case, the only required symbol is the red Construction symbol.



EXAMPLE 3.

The Specialists in this Division have two skills of the Division color. The third — blue — skill does not match the Division color and, therefore, does not count. To recruit this Specialist, only the three upper Research symbols shown on the card are required.



Step three. Obtain the Research symbols and add the Specialist to the Division

The Division has been chosen and the Recruitment Cost determined. Now, in order to add the Specialist to the Division, you have to obtain all the Research symbols required for that. There are several methods to do this. **The players may combine these methods as they want.**

The order of Research symbols on the Specialist card is not important anymore. The required symbols can be obtained in any sequence.

The player can obtain Research symbols using the following methods:

1. **By giving respective Research tokens to the next player clockwise.** The next player would be able to use these tokens during his/her turn. *The other Hub may find some use for Researches carried out in your Hub.*

   Each given away token provides a player with one symbol shown on the token. This symbol may only be used before the end of the turn.

   Giving away the tokens is the 'primary' method. But pretty often the player does not have to part with a single token thanks to the Recruitment Cost Reduction and/or two other available methods.

2. **By moving a Specialist card from hand to the Center.** It is possible to move to the Center one or more Specialist cards at once. The player gets *any* two Research symbols for each card moved from hand to the Center. *The player uses assistance of Specialists not employed with his/her Hub.*

   Similarly to giving away Research tokens, these symbols may be used before the end of this turn only.

   Special situations. The player may move one card from hand to the Center to gain two Research symbols in order to recruit another Specialist whose card is also on hand (this results in more than 6 cards appearing in the Center). The player may NOT recruit a Specialist whose card was just moved from his/her hand to the Center during this turn.

3. **Many Specialists bring Research symbols to the player every turn** as long as their cards are on top of the card batches in the player's Hub — thus, making the recruitment of new Specialists easier. *Everybody contributes to the common cause!*

   Only after obtaining all the required Research symbols, the player puts the card of the newly-recruited Specialist on top of the card batch in the respective Division.

   If that Specialist has an ability that is active during the game, it comes into effect starting from *the next turn* of that player.

   The ability of the 'upper' Specialist in the Division — normally, the last recruited one — **is the only active ability in that Division**. All other Specialists in the Division (i.e. underlying cards in the batch) have already accomplished their tasks or will do this during the final count of Progress points.



Ultimately your Hub may look something like this. Remember that only the abilities of Specialists whose cards are on the top are active.

In this particular case, the abilities of the Engineer, Builder, and Astronaut are active. The Tester has no ability (but has two skills), while the Researcher's ability pertains to Progress points and will be used during the final count in the end of the game.

BREAKDOWN OF A SPECIALIST CARD



1. **Picture** reflects the primary (and often the sole) skill of the Specialist.
2. **Progress points** brought by the Specialist in the end of the game. Sometimes an asterisk is depicted instead of a number. This means that the number of Progress points brought by that Specialist depends on other Specialists employed with your Hub or the number of Projects you've completed.
3. **Skills** indicate:
   - what Divisions the Specialist may be assigned to;
   - how much this Specialist reduces the Recruitment Cost for further Specialists assigned to his/her Division; and
   - what Projects can be completed.
4. **Recruitment Cost** is measured in Research symbols.
5. **Triangle arrow** determines the Recruitment Cost Reduction order. The player needs one Research symbol less, from the bottom upwards, per each skill possessed by Specialists of the Division. Only the skills whose color matches the Division color do count.
6. **Ability** is in effect while the Specialist card is on top of the card batch in the Division; or, alternatively, it comes into effect during the final count in the end of the game.
7. **Card number.** The abilities are described in the final section of these rules. Search for the card whose properties you need to clarify by its number.

PROJECTS

Your goal is to implement large-scale space projects. To achieve this, you gather the best minds of the humanity. Thanks to your efforts, ships, satellites, and orbital stations are to be launched into outer space!

In the end of the turn, the player may complete a Project not implemented yet by other players. This does not require an action. Only one Project can be completed during a turn — even if a player has enough skills to complete two or more Projects.

The player simply takes the Project card from the line and puts it near him/her — provided that the Specialists of his/her Hub possess skills shown in the lower part of the Project card. It does not matter what Divisions are the Specialists employed with. It's just necessary to possess the required number of skills of respective colors.

The taken Project is considered completed. It will bring Progress points during the final count in the end of the game.

BREAKDOWN OF A PROJECT CARD



1. Each **illustration** shows a real satellite, spaceship, interplanetary station, or rover. The game features an American spacecraft on one side of each Project card and a Soviet spacecraft on the other.
2. **Progress points** brought by the Project in the end of the game.
3. **Skills** that must be possessed by Specialists of your Hub to complete the Project. In that particular case, 4 blue, 3 red, and 1 purple skills are required. It does not matter what Divisions are the Specialists employed with.

END OF GAME

The game is over as soon as one of the players recruits 12 Specialists to his/her Hub or when all the available Projects are completed. When this happens, the players take turns until it comes to the First Player token holder. That player does not take a turn.

Then Progress points are counted — these points reflect the input into the astronautics made by each Hub.

Each player calculates Progress points brought by his/her Specialists and completed Projects. Specialist cards remaining on hand do not count.

Specialists whose cards show an asterisk in the upper left corner bring Progress points in accordance with their abilities. These abilities are in effect even if their cards are not on top of the batches. It is easier to calculate the 'numerical' Progress points first and then add Progress points brought by Specialists with asterisks.

The player who has gained the highest amount of Progress points wins. In case of a tie, the player whose completed Projects bring more Progress points wins. If there is still a tie, both players are proclaimed the winners!

EXAMPLE OF A GAME

The game is ongoing. There are three players: Neil, Yuri, and Valentina.

The illustration on the right shows the Specialists in the Center (marked **A** to **F**) and the five available Projects.

Neil. Ambitions projects are the goal!

Neil makes his turn. He has all the three green Research tokens (3 tokens of each category are used if there are 3 players in the game) and two yellow tokens. In addition, Neil's Specialists bring him the following Research symbols each turn: 1 yellow, 2 red, and 1 purple symbols.

But Neil has no cards on hand. The ability of his Tester will bring him 1 Progress point for each 3 skills possessed by Specialists of his Hub — but only in the end of the game. Currently, this ability does not affect anything.

Neil may recruit either a Tester (**B**) of one of the Builders (**C**) from the Center. He picks the Tester (**B**). There are two different skills on the card — therefore, it may be put either to the green Testing Division (the Recruitment Cost is reduced to two symbols) or to the red Construction Division (the Recruitment Cost is not reduced and, thus, equals three Research symbols). Upon considering all pros and contras, Neil picks the Construction Division.



Now he must gain three yellow Research symbols. One yellow symbol is provided by an Engineer in the Neil's Hub. He obtains the two remaining symbols by giving two yellow Research tokens to the next player clockwise — i.e. to Yuri. Upon doing this, Neil adds the Tester card to the Construction Division and immediately puts a card from the top of the deck in its place (it's an Engineer card).

In the end of his turn, Neil checks whether he can complete any of the Projects. Yes, he can! Thanks to the recruitment of a Tester with green and red skills, two Projects become available for Neil: Voskhod 2 and Proton 1.

Specialists' skills in Neil's Hub





Only one Project may be completed per turn. Neil chooses Voskhod 2 and takes its card.



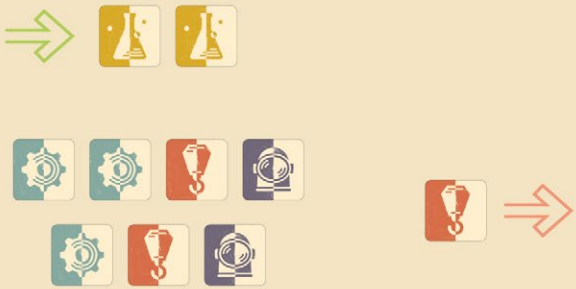


Yuri. Researches are the key to success!

Yuri's turn begins. An Engineer card has appeared in the Center. Four Projects are available. Taking the two yellow Research tokens just received from Neil, Yuri has two thirds of all the Research tokens in the game! In addition, he has two Specialist cards on hand (marked **H1** and **H2**)



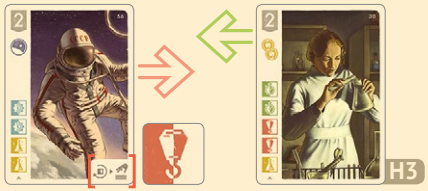
Yuri's Hub





Yuri can easily recruit any Specialist from the Center or his hand. Even the Engineer (**B**) who has appeared in the Center during the Neil's turn is available to him; however, the recruitment of this Engineer would be pretty expensive — both cards have to be moved from hand to the Center to obtain the missing green Research symbols.

But Yuri takes a different approach: keep the Research tokens to make a forced march in the following turns. Still, he decides to part with one token in order to use the Astronaut's ability. Yuri gives a red Research token (of his choice) to Valentina to take a new — the third — card. This is another Researcher card (**H3**).



Then Yuri moves the Builder card (**H2**) from hand to the Center to gain two Research symbols of his choice. He uses these symbols to recruit a Builder from the Center (**B**); this Builder will bring him a green Research symbol starting from the next turn.

Yuri does not put a new card instead of the recruited Builder because there are currently 6 cards in the Center. Then Yuri passes the turn. He still has 2 Researcher cards on hand.

Valentina. Good preparation is the best solution!

Valentina's turn begins. Valentina has no cards on hand, while the Specialists in her Hub do not bring Research symbols. Three Research tokens she has are not sufficient to recruit a single Specialist from the Center. The situation seems sad… but only at the first glance!

Valentina draws a card from the deck. Because of the Astronaut's ability, she draws not one, but two cards at once: a Tester (**H1**) and an Engineer (**H2**).

In the following turns, Valentina expects to use the ability of her Researcher by gaining 3 Research symbols instead of the two for moving a card from hand to the Center and the ability of her Engineer allowing to reduce the Recruitment Cost of new Specialists from hand by one symbol. Therefore, by moving a card to the Center, Valentina may gain not 2 but 4 Research symbols to recruit a Specialst from hand! For instance, move the Engineer (**H2**) to the Center in order to add the Tester (**H1**) to her Hub without giving away a single Research token!

But these are only plans so far… It's Neil's turn again. In the end of this turn, he is about to complete another Project — Proton 1.



SPECIALISTS. ABILITIES

Many Specialists have unique abilities. Some abilities are in effect during the game — while the Specialist card is on top of the batch in the respective Division. Other abilities come into effect in the end of the game, during the final count of Progress points (an asterisk is depicted instead of a number on such cards).

Each ability may be used no more than once during your turn (or at the end of the game if this is a card with asterisk). The effects caused by the abilities remain active until the end of the turn. It's the player's decision whether to use an ability or not. "Recruitment Cost X" means the number of Research symbols on the Specialist card.

Abilities that come into effect in the end of the game often bring Progress points based on skills possessed by the player's Specialists. In such cases, it does not matter what Division these Specialists are employed with.

Now we are going to address abilities of each Specialist in detail. Search for any specific card by its unique number. The Reference cards also provide descriptions of Specialists' abilities — but in a simplified form.

Engineers



"That's one small step for a man, one giant leap for mankind."

Neil Alden Armstrong

1—4. You have got the Research symbols shown on the card (as many as shown on the card).

5–6. The Specialist does not have a specific ability but possesses two skills.

7. You have got any one Research symbol to recruit a Specialist from hand.

8. To recruit a Specialist with basic Recruitment Cost 3, you don't have to obtain Research symbols (Recruitment Cost = 0). This is considered an action.

9. After recruiting a Specialist with basic Recruitment Cost 5 or 6, take one card from the deck.

10. You may pass two Research tokens to the next player clockwise and immediately recruit any Specialist from your hand. This is considered an action.

11. In the end of the game, you get 1 Progress point for each purple skill on your Specialist cards.

12. In the end of the game, you get 2 Progress points for each card lying above this Specialist card.

Testers



"Once you've been in space, you appreciate how small and fragile the Earth is."

Valentina V. Tereshkova

13—16. You have got the Research symbols shown on the card (as many as shown on the card).

17–18. The Specialist does not have a specific ability but possesses two skills.

19. Pass two Research tokens to the next player clockwise to temporarily get one skill of any color. It may be used for completion of Projects only. Similarly with other effects, this one is active until the end of your turn.

20. You have got any one Research symbol to recruit a Specialist with basic Recruitment Cost 5 or 6.

21. Every time you complete a Project, take two cards from the deck.

22. You have got any one Research symbol. Each turn you decide what color this symbol is.

23. In the end of the game, you get 1 Progress point for each red skill on your Specialist cards.

24. In the end of the game, you get 1 Progress point for every three skills possessed by your Specialists (including the skill on this card).

Researchers



"It is difficult to say what is impossible, for the dream of yesterday is the hope of today and the reality of tomorrow."

Robert H. Goddard

25—28. You have got the Research symbols shown on the card (as many as shown on the card).

29–30. The Specialist does not have a specific ability but possesses two skills.

31. You may return this card from the Division to the Center to obtain any three Research symbols. Note: if you recruit another Specialist to the same Division, the Recruitment Cost does not increase because it has been determined at the previous step.

32. When the card of a newly-recruited Specialist is placed above this card, take a card from the deck. Normally, this ability comes into effect once during the game.

33. You have got any one Research symbol. Each turn you decide what color this symbol is.

34. When you move this card from hand to the Center, you get any three Research symbols instead of two.

35. In the end of the game, you get 1 Progress point for each green skill on your Specialist cards.

36. In the end of the game, you get 2 Progress points for each card lying under this Specialist card.

Builders



"The time will come when a spacecraft carrying human beings will leave the earth and set out on a voyage to distant planets — to remote worlds. The launching of the first two Soviet satellites has already thrown a sturdy bridge from the earth into space, and the way to the stars is open."

Sergei P. Korolev

37—40. You have got the Research symbols shown on the card (as many as shown on the card).

41–42. The Specialist does not have a specific ability but possesses two skills.

43. Every time you have completed a Project, take one card from the deck.

44. In the beginning of your turn, you may add one card from the top of the deck to the Center. There may be more than 6 cards in the Center.

45. When the card of a newly-recruited Specialist is placed above this card, take 2 cards from the deck. Normally, this ability comes into effect once during the game.

46. You have got any two Research symbols to recruit Specialists with two skills.

47. In the end of the game, you get 1 Progress point for each blue skill on your Specialist cards.

48. In the end of the game, you get 3 Progress points for each combination of five different skills possessed by your Specialists (including the skill on this card).

Astronauts

"To be the first to enter the cosmos, to engage, single-handed, in an unprecedented duel with nature — could one dream of anything more?"

Yuri A. Gagarin



49—52. You have got the Research symbols shown on the card (as many as shown on the card).

53–54. The Specialist does not have a specific ability but possesses two skills.

55. To recruit a Specialist with basis Recruitment Cost 2, you don't have to obtain Research symbols (Recruitment Cost = 0). This is considered an action.

56. You may pass one Research token to the next player clockwise to take one card from the deck.

57. In the beginning of your turn, you may change the order of cards in the batch in any of your Divisions as you want. You may change the order of cards in the Space Flight Division as well — but then the effect from this ability would become inactive.

58. After taking a card from the deck to your hand, take one more card. Remember that abilities may be used no more than once per turn!

59. In the end of the game, you get 1 Progress point for each yellow skill on your Specialist cards.

60. In the end of the game, you get 2 Progress points for each Project you've completed.

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All portraits are based on composite characters. Any resemblance to real characters is purely coincidental.

PICTOGRAMS ON SPECIALIST CARDS

	Any Research symbol.
	Any Specialist card.
	Specialist card whose base Recruitment Cost is equal to the number of squares on the pictogram.
	Specialist card with two skills.
	Specialist recruited to a Division.
	This Specialist card.
	Batch of cards always represents a Division.
	Specialist card on hand.
	Take a Specialist card to hand from the top of the deck.
	Specialist cards in the Center.
	Any Project.
	Pass one Research token to the next player clockwise.
	Change the order of cards in the batch in any one of your Divisions as you want.
	This card's ability may be used only in the beginning of the turn.
	Any skill.
	Progress points you gain in the end of the game.

PLAYER'S TURN

1. Perform one of the two actions:
   - Take a Specialist card from the Center or from the top of the deck; or
   - Recruit a Specialist from the Center or from your hand to your Hub.
2. In the end of your turn, complete one Project if your Specialists possess the required set of skills. It does not matter what Divisions these Specialists are employed with.

RECRUITING A SPECIALIST

1. Select a Division in accordance with the Specialist's skill(s).
2. Reduce the Recruitment cost in accordance with the skills possessed by Specialists in the Division. Only the skills of the Division color do count. The Recruitment Cost decreases from bottom to top — as the triangle arrow shows.
3. Obtain the required Research symbols using these three methods:
   - Pass respective Research tokens to the next player clockwise;
   - Move one — or more — Specialist cards from hand to the Center to obtain any two Research symbols for each of these cards.
   - Use abilities of Specialists in your Hub whose cards are on top of their batches.

Then put the newly-recruited Specialist card on top of the batch in the respective Division.

END OF GAME

- 12 Specialists have been recruited by one of the players;

OR

- All the Projects have been completed.

The players take their turns until it comes to the First Player token holder (who does not take a new turn) and determine the winner.