To Interested University Students & Faculty:

The Request for Proposal for the 41st Annual (2023-2024) Vertical Flight Society’s (VFS) Student Design Competition, sponsored by DEVCOM Army Research Laboratory (ARL), is now posted at www/vtol.org/sdc. ARL and VFS encourages universities from around the world – except for countries or persons prohibited by the United States Government - to form teams and take part in this exciting vertical flight endeavor.

The design competition sponsorship rotates between Airbus Helicopters, Leonardo Helicopters, The Boeing Company, Bell, Sikorsky a Lockheed Martin Co., and DEVCOM Army Research Laboratory.

This year’s Student Design Competition is “Multi-Mission Modular UAS for Disaster Relief”. In the immediate time after a disaster, traditional means of ingress and egress for ground vehicles and fixed-wing air vehicles might be disrupted: roads may be damaged, airports may be flooded, runways might be destroyed or inoperable. Teams are challenged with designing a multi-mission, modular, VTOL UAS which can take off and land vertically from the deck of a ship in high-winds and gusty conditions; cruise to and from the site of a disaster; and serve as a long-endurance communications relay, OR land vertically to deliver relief supplies.

ARL will provide the funds for the awards through the Society and final submissions are judged in three (3) categories:

Undergraduate category:
- 1st place: $2,000
- 2nd place: $1,200
- 3rd place: $750

Graduate category:
- 1st place: $2,500
- 2nd place: $1,800
- 3rd place: $1,000

Best first time entrant for eligible university teams (refer to the RFP):
- $500 (Undergraduate)
- $750 (Graduate)

Important deadline dates:
- Letter of Intent to participate no later than February 1, 2024
- Requests for Information no later than February 23, 2024
- Responses will be circulated by March 26, 2024, to all participating teams
- Final Proposals May 31, 2024

The Society recommends that you read the white paper Student Design Competition on Judging. Please address all correspondence to jmgibbs@vtol.org or through my contact information below.

Good Luck,

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