



**Contact:**

Julie M. Gibbs  
Technical Programs Director  
pr@vtol.org  
1-703-684-6777 x103

Sept. 25, 2020

**The Vertical Flight Society Announces  
Design-Build-Vertical Flight Student Competition**

***\$5,000 in prizes for new VTOL drone competition***

FAIRFAX, VA — The Vertical Flight Society (VFS) today announces the details of the inaugural Design-Build-Vertical Flight (DBVF) Student Competition. This electric-powered remote-control vertical takeoff and landing (VTOL) competition seeks to encourage interest in unmanned aircraft technology, and small air vehicle design and fabrication. The competition is designed to develop hands-on skills and familiarization with electric VTOL and urban air mobility (UAM) technology at the university student level and prepare the next generation of engineers and leaders to push the limits of this exciting technology into the future.

The inaugural DBVF competition is the successor to the annual VFS Micro Air Vehicle (MAV) Student Competition. The highly successful MAV competition expanded over eight years from a 1.1 lb (500 g) gross weight to 3 lb (1.4 kg), with increasingly challenging levels of mission complexity.

The U.S. Army Combat Capabilities Development Command (CCDC) Army Research Laboratory (ARL) is the platinum sponsor and the host for the first DBVF competition. The flyoff competition will be held at ARL's Robotics Research Collaboration Campus (R2C2) at Graces Quarters in Maryland on April 16–17, 2021.

The general aircraft requirements are restricted to the unmanned aircraft system (UAS) Group 1, which limits the maximum take-off weight (MTOW) to no more than 20 lb (9.1 kg). Aircraft size and weight will factor into the competition. To participate, five-page proposals must be submitted by student teams no later than Oct. 15, 2020. Full details, including the request for proposal (RFP), frequently asked questions (FAQ), links and more are available on the competition website: [www.vtol.org/FLY](http://www.vtol.org/FLY).

A total of \$5,000 in cash awards will be given in two rounds: \$1,000 for submission of the three best preliminary design reports in December, and \$4,000 in awards for the top three teams during the flyoff competition in April. Additional sponsors are welcome.

The Vertical Flight Society encourages universities from around the world to form teams and take part in this exciting and challenging competition, which is conducted to promote student interest in VTOL engineering and technology, and to attract the best and brightest engineering students to the vertical flight industry.

VFS is the world's premier VTOL technical society and conducts extensive educational activities. In addition to the world's largest and longest running VTOL technology conference (this year's 76<sup>th</sup> Annual Forum & Technology Display will be held virtually on Oct. 5-8, 2020), VFS leads science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) outreach activities, conducts the annual collegiate VFS Student Design Competition and provides extensive educational resources for students and professional development.

Since it was founded as the American Helicopter Society in 1943, VFS has been a major force in the advancement of vertical flight. The Society is the global resource for information on VTOL technology. For more than 75 years, VFS has provided global leadership for scientific, technical, educational and legislative initiatives that advance the state of the art of vertical flight.

***The Vertical Flight Society***

2700 Prosperity Ave., Suite 275, Fairfax, Virginia 22031 USA

1-703-684-6777 | [staff@vtol.org](mailto:staff@vtol.org) | [www.vtol.org](http://www.vtol.org)