

**DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**  
**OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION**

**AGENCY:** U.S. Department of Transportation, Office of the Secretary of Transportation.

**Action:** Notice of the announcement of Requirements for the Secretary of Transportation's RAISE (Recognizing Aviation and Aerospace Innovation in Science and Engineering) Awards.

**AUTHORITY:** 15 U.S.C. 3719 (America COMPETES Act).

**AWARD APPROVING OFFICIAL:** Anthony Foxx, Secretary of Transportation.

**SUMMARY:** Pursuant to a recommendation by the Future of Aviation Advisory Committee, the Secretary of Transportation, through the Federal Aviation Administration, is announcing the fourth-annual competition to recognize students with the ability to demonstrate unique, innovative thinking in aerospace science and engineering. There are two divisions within the competition: a high school division and a university division (both undergraduate and graduate together). The Department of Transportation intends to use the competition to incentivize students at high schools and universities to think creatively in developing innovative solutions to aviation and aerospace issues, and to share those innovations with the broader community.

**DATES:** Effective on January 15, 2016 to April 8, 2016

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Patricia Watts, Ph.D., Federal Aviation Administration, (609) 485-5043, [patricia.watts@faa.gov](mailto:patricia.watts@faa.gov), or James Brough, Federal Aviation Administration, (202)725-5175, [james.brough@faa.gov](mailto:james.brough@faa.gov).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

**Subject of Challenge Competition:** The Secretary's RAISE Award competition will recognize innovative scientific and engineering achievements that will have a significant impact on the future of aerospace or aviation. On behalf of the Secretary, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) will accept student submissions and conduct an internal evaluation in April, 2016. The rules for this competition will be available at <http://www.challenge.gov>.

**Eligibility:**

To be eligible to participate in the Secretary's RAISE Award competition, students must be U.S. citizens or permanent residents. For the high school division, the students must have been enrolled in at least one semester (or quarterly equivalent) at a U.S. high school (or equivalent approved home school program) in 2015. For the University division, the student must have been enrolled in a U.S.-based college or university for at least one semester (or quarterly equivalent) in 2015. Students may participate and be recognized as individuals or in teams. Each member of a team must meet the eligibility criteria. An individual may join more than one team. There is no charge to enter the competition.

The following additional rules apply:

1. Candidates shall submit a project in the competition under the rules promulgated by the Department of Transportation (DOT);
2. Candidates shall agree to execute indemnifications and waivers of claims against the Federal government as provided in this Notice;
3. Candidates may not be a Federal entity or Federal employee acting within the scope of employment;
4. Candidates may not be an employee of the DOT, including but not limited to the FAA;
5. Candidates shall not be deemed ineligible because an individual used Federal facilities or consulted with Federal employees during a competition, if the facilities and employees are made available to all individuals participating in the competition on an equitable basis;
6. The competition is subject to all applicable Federal laws and regulations.  
  
Participation constitutes the Candidates' full and unconditional agreement to these rules and to the Secretary's decisions, which are final and binding in all matters related to this competition;
7. Submissions which in the Secretary's sole discretion are determined to be substantially similar to a prior submitted entry may be disqualified;
8. Submissions must be original, is the work of the Candidates, and must not violate the rights of other parties. All submissions remain the property of the applicants.  
  
Each Candidate represents and warrants that s/he, or the team, is the sole author and owner of the submission, that the submission is wholly original, that it does not

infringe any copyright or any other rights of any third party of which the Candidate is aware, and, if submitted in electronic form, is free of malware;

9. By submitting an entry, contestants and entrants agree to assume any and all risks and waive any claims against the Federal Government and its related entities (except in the case of willful misconduct) for any injury, death, damage, or loss of property, revenue or profits, whether direct, indirect, or consequential, arising from their participation in this contest, whether the injury, death, damage, or loss arises through negligence or otherwise. Provided, however, that by registering or submitting an entry, contestants and entrants do not waive claims against the DOT or the arising out of the unauthorized use or disclosure by the agency of the intellectual property, trade secrets, or confidential information of the entrant;
10. The Secretary and the Secretary's designees have the right to request access to supporting materials from the Candidates;
11. The submissions cannot have been submitted in the same or substantially similar form in any previous Federally-sponsored promotion or Federally-sponsored contest, of any kind;
12. Each Candidate grants to the FAA, the DOT, as well as other Federal agencies with which it partners, the right to use names, likeness, application materials, photographs, voices, opinions, and/or hometown and state for the Department's promotional purposes in any media, in perpetuity, worldwide, without further payment or consideration; and

13. The Administrator collects personal information from Candidates when they enter this competition. The information collected is subject to the Challenge Post privacy policy located at <http://www.challengepost.com/privacy>.

**Expression of Interest:**

While not required, students are strongly encouraged to send brief expressions of interest to the FAA to be considered for an award. The expressions of interest should be sent by February 15, 2016 to [Patricia.Watts@faa.gov](mailto:Patricia.Watts@faa.gov) and should include the following elements: 1) Name of Candidate(s); 2) Name of educational institution(s) with which Candidate(s) are affiliated; 3) Telephone and email addresses for Candidate(s); and 4) An abstract, limited to no more than one page, providing a high-level overview of the proposed project.

**Submission Requirements:**

Final submission packages shall consist of the following elements:

1. Nomination letter from at least one teacher, advisor, faculty member, and others as appropriate. The nomination letter(s) must communicate accomplishments in the following areas:

- a. **Technical Merit of the Concept**

- Evidence of technical merit based upon teacher (parent or legal guardian in the case of home schooled applicants), advisor, or faculty nomination and evaluation of the submitted proposal, written paper, and/or reports.

## **b. Professionalism and Leadership**

Evidence of professionalism and leadership may be in the form of, but not limited to:

- 1) Membership and offices held in various groups
  - 2) Presentations made to various groups, meetings, and at symposia
  - 3) Leadership in student professional activities
  - 4) Community outreach activities
2. An overall summary of the innovation, not to exceed one page, which includes a title of the project and statement of the potential impact that the innovation will have on the field of aviation or aerospace;
  3. A copy of the student's academic transcript or certified grade report (as applicable);
  4. A copy of the paper(s) and related materials describing the innovative concept written by the student(s) being nominated (no page limit).

Once submissions have been received, the FAA may request additional information, including supporting documentation, more detailed contact information, releases of liability, and statements of authenticity to guarantee the originality of the work. Failure to respond in a timely fashion may result in disqualification.

Electronic packages may be transmitted by email to [Patricia.Watts@FAA.gov](mailto:Patricia.Watts@FAA.gov). Hard copies are also encouraged and should be forwarded with a cover letter to the attention of:

**Patricia Watts, Ph.D.**

**Centers of Excellence Program Director**

**Federal Aviation Administration, L-28**

**FAA William J. Hughes Technical Center**

**Atlantic City International Airport, NJ 08405**

The submission period begins on March 28, 2016. Submissions must be sent by 11:59 pm Pacific daylight time on April 8, 2016. The timeliness of submissions will be determined by the postmark (if sent in hard copy) or time stamp of the recipient (if emailed). Competition administrators assume no responsibility for lost or untimely submissions for any reason.

**Award:**

The winner is expected to be announced in May, 2016. A trophy with the winner's name and date of award will be displayed at the Department of Transportation and a display copy of the trophy will be sent to the winner's school/college/university. An additional plaque or trophy will be awarded to the individual or team. At the option of the FAA Administrator, the FAA will pay for invitational travel expenses to Washington, DC for up to four representatives of the winning teams to present their project to FAA and DOT officials and receive the award.

**Basis Upon Which the Winners Will Be Selected:**

All submissions will be initially reviewed by the FAA Centers for Excellence Program Director upon receipt to determine if the submissions meet the eligibility requirements. Registration packages meeting the eligibility requirements will be judged by advisory panels, which may consist of academic experts, government officials including FAA, the DOT, and representatives of the private sector. The advisory panels will select the most highly qualified submissions and present them to the FAA Administrator, who will make recommendations to the Secretary of Transportation. The Secretary will make the final selections. The Department reserves the right to not award the prize in either or both the High School category or the University category if the selecting officials believe that no submission demonstrates sufficient innovative scientific and engineering potential and/or achievements in its category.

Submissions will be judged against other submissions from the same division on the following criteria:

**Technical Merit:**

- Has the submission presented a clear understanding of the associated problems?
- Has the submission developed a logical and workable solution and approach to solving the problem/s?
- What are the most significant aspects of this concept?
- Has the submission clearly described the breadth of impact of the innovation?



**Originality:**

- Is this concept new or a variation of an existing idea, and in what way(s)?
- How is this work unique?
- Was the concept developed independently or in cooperation with others?

**Impact:**

- To what extent does this project have the potential to make a significant impact and/or contribution to the future of the aviation and aerospace environment?

**Practicality:**

- Who directly benefits from this work?
- Can this program or activity be implemented in a practical fashion?
- What are the costs anticipated to be incurred and saved by executing this concept?

**Measurability:**

- How has this individual/group measured the impact on the aviation environment?
- To what extent does the innovation result in measurable improvements?

**Applicability:**

- Can this effort be scaled?
- Is this work specific to one region, various regions, or to the entire nation?

All factors are important and will be given consideration, but the advisory panel will give the “technical merit” factor the most weight in the screening process. The Secretary of Transportation retains sole discretion to select the winning entrant.

**Additional Information:**

Federal grantees may not use Federal funds to develop COMPETES Act challenge applications.

Federal contractors may not use Federal funds from a contract to develop COMPETES Act challenge applications or to fund efforts in support of a COMPETES Act challenge submission.

**Issued On: January 15, 2016**

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Shelley Yak, Acting Director

William J. Hughes Technical Center