



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

**VerdeGo Aero Receives TACFI Program Award,
Driving forward the VH-3 Piston Hybrid-Electric Powerplant**

DAYTONA BEACH, Fla., September 19th, 2024 – VerdeGo Aero™, Inc. has been awarded a \$1.9M Sequential Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) Phase II Tactical Funding Increase (TACFI) contract with the U.S. Air Force to build and test the first prototype VH-3 (185 kW) hybrid-electric powerplant that conforms to a production-intent configuration. This award was issued by the Air Force Life Cycle Management Center Mobility Directorate (AFLCMC/WLM) in cooperation with AFWERX, the innovation branch of the Department of the Air Force (DAF) and supported by the Air Force Research Laboratory (AFRL). AFWERX harnesses cutting edge American ingenuity from startups and small businesses to tackle the most critical challenges of the DAF. To address the challenge of bridging the gap between Phase II and Phase III, the Strategic Funding Increase (STRATFI) and TACFI programs were introduced. The 24-month TACFI effort builds upon the advanced risk-reduction work VerdeGo Aero performed under a previous AFWERX Direct to Phase II award.

This TACFI contract award will result in the completion and testing of the first production intent VH-3 hybrid powerplant that builds on refinements from full-scale prototypes that have been operational since 2020. Following the testing of this version of the VH-3, VerdeGo Aero will have the capability to deliver small volumes of hybrid powerplants to customers requiring power for their ground and flight test programs. The VH-3 has been under development for 2 years with substantial risk reduction already completed for many features and systems. Integrated hybrid powerplant testing will be conducted under this award, allowing confirmation of performance, efficiency, and initial durability. “Everyone at VerdeGo is excited to see the final pieces fall into place to launch the ultra-high-efficiency VH-3-185 piston hybrid product,” said Dave Spitzer, VP of Product Development. “The eVTOL world has been waiting for the incredible efficiency and hybrid power capability of this design, and completion is now clearly in sight.”

This effort will enable VerdeGo Aero to implement refinements that have been developed on the VH-3 program including the motor/generator, heat exchangers, driveline, cooling systems, and control systems. The fully integrated system will be capable of interfacing with on-board aircraft electronics and control systems and manage all functions of the VH-3. Operational and initial durability testing is to be performed on the adapted unit at VerdeGo Aero’s R&D facilities in Daytona Beach, Florida.

“VerdeGo Aero is excited to take the next step in refining the VH-3 hybrid-electric powerplant as we advance towards low-volume production” said Eric Bartsch, CEO. “This powerplant is a critical enabler of electrified drone and aircraft programs requiring an efficient source of power for missions requiring significant range, payload, and speed capabilities.” Both military and civilian aircraft programs have indicated interest in this dual-use powerplant that substantially increases the utility of electrified flight.

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ABOUT VERDEGO AERO

VerdeGo Aero, a frontrunner in the hybrid-electric aviation industry, is committed to revolutionizing aerospace technologies with cutting-edge propulsion solutions. Since its establishment in 2017, VerdeGo Aero has consistently led the field, specializing in advanced hybrid-electric propulsion technologies. VerdeGo's portfolio of powerplants spans from 150 kW to over 1 MW. Electric propulsion creates opportunities to design next-generation aircraft around arrays of electric propulsion motors; increasing efficiency, providing enhanced redundancy, and enabling convertible flight modes. VerdeGo Aero's hybrids allow these electric aircraft to achieve significant mission capabilities with range, payload, and speed that are not possible with conventional battery-electric approaches. VerdeGo Aero's collaborative approach with aircraft developers, coupled with proprietary analysis tools, accelerates the conceptual design phase, and positions the company as a key partner in the industry.

Since 2020 VerdeGo has been operating full-scale hybrids including the high efficiency 185 kW VH-3 and the high performance 400 kW VH-4T. VerdeGo Aero is based at the Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University Research Park in Daytona Beach, Fla. <https://www.verdegoaero.com>.

ABOUT AFRL

The Air Force Research Laboratory is the primary scientific research and development center for the Department of the Air Force. AFRL plays an integral role in leading the discovery, development, and integration of affordable warfighting technologies for our air, space and cyberspace force. With a workforce of more than 12,500 across nine technology areas and 40 other operations across the globe, AFRL provides a diverse portfolio of science and technology ranging from fundamental to advanced research and technology development. For more information, visit www.afresearchlab.com.

ABOUT AFWERX

AFWERX, a program office at the Air Force Research Laboratory (AFRL), connects innovators across government, industry and academia. Through innovation and collaboration with our nation's top subject matter experts and harnessing the power of ingenuity of internal talent, by expanding technology, talent, and transition partnerships for rapid and affordable commercial and military capability. Additional information is available at: <https://www.afwerx.com/>.

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