

NASA opens new seed money COTS competition

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The U.S. National Aeronautics and Space Administration launched a new funding competition for its Commercial Orbital Transportation Services Project.

The competition for the project, known as COTS, follows NASA's decision to terminate its funded agreement with aerospace firm Rocketplane Kistler of Oklahoma City. NASA said the company failed to meet agreed-upon milestones in its effort to develop and demonstrate commercial transportation capabilities to low Earth orbit.

"NASA remains fully committed to the COTS Project," said Alan Lindenmoyer, manager of the Commercial Crew and Cargo Program Office.

COTS provides seed money to companies when they reach performance milestones to help them design and develop space transportation capabilities that could pave the way for private cargo deliveries to the International Space Station.

Of the \$206.8 million NASA agreed to invest in Rocketplane Kistler, the company received \$32.1 million. The remaining \$174.7 million will be offered to aerospace firms in a new competition.

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