

NASA Flight Opportunities Program launches science payloads

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Members of the UP Aerospace ground crew roll back the moveable garage and payload integration facility to expose the launcher with the SL-8 sounding rocket mounted underneath. Credit: NASA / Paul De Leon

An enthusiastic group of suborbital space researchers arrived at Spaceport America in New Mexico in early November to prepare and load their experiments on an UP Aerospace rocket that would place their technologies in a space-like environment where they will eventually operate.

All of the payloads carried on the Nov. 12th launch of UP's SpaceLoft-8 [sounding rocket](#) were NASA-funded research technologies chosen by

NASA's Flight Opportunities Program, which is part of the agency's Space Technology Mission Directorate.

The [rocket](#) reached an altitude of approximately 73 miles – roughly 385,000 feet—and provided the technologies with nearly four minutes of microgravity. All payload teams indicated they were satisfied with the flight, and a couple of researchers were excited with the preliminary data received.

"The SL-8 launch was a complete success," said NASA campaign manager Paul De Leon at NASA's Ames Research Center, Moffett Field, Calif. "The UP Aerospace team provided an outstanding service, and the [launch](#) vehicle performed exceptionally well, just as planned. All of the payload teams were extremely happy with the flight and anxious to get their payloads back and analyze their data."



UP Aerospace technicians prepare the firm's SL-8 sounding rocket mounted on its launch rail for a 73-mile-high flight into sub-orbital space. Credit: NASA / Paul De Leon

The Flight Opportunities Program, which is managed at NASA's Dryden Flight Research Center at Edwards, Calif., released another Announcement of Flight Opportunities (AFO) Nov. 21 for proposals to test crosscutting technologies in space-like environments, using NASA contracted commercial suborbital companies. NASA will fund those proposals selected by paying the commercial vendor for the cost of the flight.

More information: For more information about the announcement,

visit: go.usa.gov/WdJY and click on Announcement of Flight Opportunities (AFO) - #8.

Provided by NASA

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