

Rocket Propulsion Systems Awarded US Space Force \$3M Contract for Orbital Transfer Vehicle

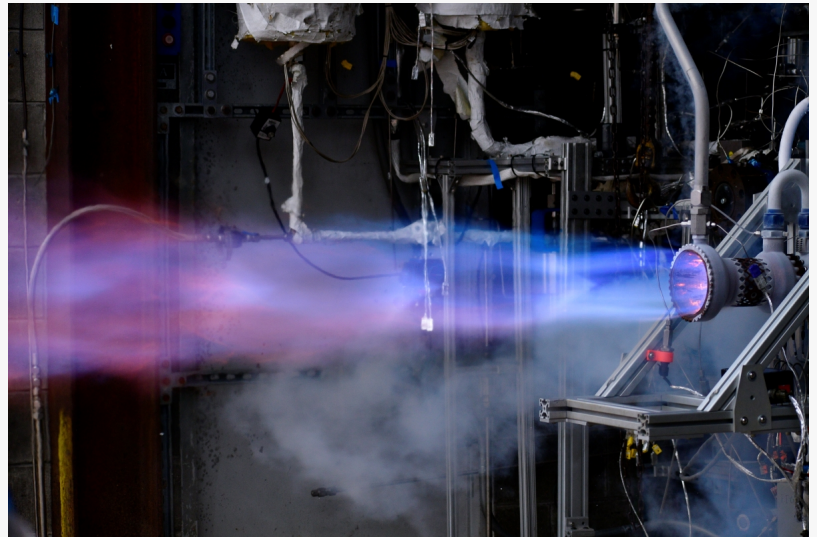
Transport solutions to address the Space Force's need to move critical payloads between orbits

KENT, WA, UNITED STATES, July 17, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Rocket Propulsion Systems (RPS) LLC announces it has been selected by SpaceWERX for a Direct-to-Phase II SBIR contract in the amount of \$3M focused on development of its Orbital Transfer Vehicle (OTV) to address the most pressing challenges in the Department of the Air Force (DAF). The Air Force Research Laboratory and

SpaceWERX, the innovation arm of the U.S. Space Force and a unique division within AFWERX, have partnered to streamline the Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) and Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) process by accelerating the small business experience through faster proposal to award timelines, changing the pool of potential applicants by expanding opportunities to small business and eliminating bureaucratic overhead by continually implementing process improvement changes in contract execution. The DAF began offering the Open Topic SBIR/STTR program in 2018 which expanded the range of innovations the DAF funded and now on July 17, 2025, RPS will start its journey to create and provide innovative capabilities that will strengthen the national defense of the United States of America.

"We look forward to providing the US Space Force with a truly low-cost option for rapid space transportation and missile interception capabilities needed to keep the US at the forefront of space-based defense innovation," said Max Ismailov, Founder and CEO of RPS.

"The views expressed are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of the Department of the Air Force, the Department of Defense, or the U.S. government."



Centurion undergoing hot fire testing

About Rocket Propulsion Systems LLC

Rocket Propulsion Systems (RPS) is building transport solutions to move defense and commercial payloads interorbitally. Its two key technologies include the OTV, intended for rapid space maneuvering operations, and a suborbital rocket, intended for use as a medium range missile or carrier for small drones. Both vehicles are powered by the in-house "Centurion" rocket engine, designed to be compact, reusable, and low-cost at \$150k each.

About SpaceWERX

As the innovation arm of the U.S. Space Force and a unique division within AFWERX, SpaceWERX inspires and empowers collaboration with innovators to accelerate capabilities and shape our future in space. Headquartered in Los Angeles, SpaceWERX employs 40 military, civilian and contractor personnel executing an annual \$457 million budget. Additionally, SpaceWERX partners with Space Systems Command's Commercial Space Office (COMSO) as a collaborative program. Since it was aligned under AFRL in Aug. 2021, SpaceWERX has awarded over 1,470 contracts worth more than \$1.46 billion to strengthen the U.S. defense industrial base and drive faster technology transition to operational capability. For more information, visit: spacewerx.us.

About AFWERX

As the innovation arm of the DAF and a directorate within the Air Force Research Laboratory, AFWERX brings cutting-edge American ingenuity from small businesses and start-ups to address the most pressing challenges of the DAF. AFWERX employs approximately 370 military, civilian and contractor personnel at four hubs and sites executing an annual \$1.4 billion budget. Since 2019, AFWERX has awarded over 10,400 contracts worth more than \$7.24 billion to strengthen the U.S. defense industrial base and drive faster technology transition to operational capability. For more information, visit: afwerx.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 afresearchlab.com.

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