



# DLR DESIGN CHALLENGE 2026

## X-Design: Demonstrator of the Future

The German Aerospace Center (DLR) invites students from German universities to participate in the DLR Design Challenge 2026: Take the next step, help shape tomorrow's aviation and **develop an innovative, realistic concept for an experimental aircraft** to demonstrate future aviation technologies!

### Background:

The generation of airliners after next is due to enter into service by 2050. Many of the technologies required for this are already being intensively researched or tested on the ground. However, integrating them into future aircraft in time requires previous testing under real flight conditions. This is precisely why test aircraft are needed.

We are not looking for a modified existing aircraft, instead we would like to see a completely new design that could realistically be built in the coming years. The basic framework conditions are based on regional aircraft with 9 seats and CS-23 certification.

### Your Task:

New types of propulsion, manufacturing technologies, material innovations, new aircraft concepts and aerodynamic solutions? It is on you to decide which (combination of) future technologies your demonstrator should be able to test. While the selection of technologies to be demonstrated by your design is important, its feasibility, operation and certification right from the start are crucial, too.

### What's in it for every participant:

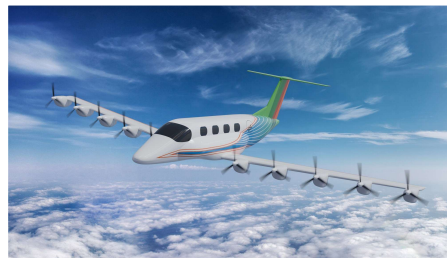
- Going through a design process from A to Z - under realistic conditions
- Deepening and applying the knowledge acquired during your studies
- Exchange with an experienced DLR mentor during the design process
- Build on your soft skills through teamwork
- Fun, challenges and recognition, including an official certificate of participation from DLR, with the opportunity to have academic achievements recognised at your university\*
- Invitation to DLR in Braunschweig and Hamburg for kick-off and closing events\*\* including networking opportunities
- Feedback on your concept from a DLR jury of experts headed by Dr. Markus Fischer, Divisional Board Member for Aeronautics
- Mention in DLR press release and other communication channels

### What's also in it for the finalists:

- First to third place: One-off opportunity to present the concept at the German Aerospace Congress (DLRK)\*\*.
- If you win: One-off opportunity to present the concept at an international conference\*\*

### Ready for the challenge?

Then contact the responsible supervisors at your university. They will officially register your team of four to six students for the competition.



More information  
soon here



\* to be clarified individually with the respective universities

\*\* incl. reimbursement of travel and accommodation costs as well as any conference fees incurred