



GAMA 2027 Aviation Design Challenge: Preliminary Schedule & FAQs

Schedule for the 2027 Aviation Design Challenge:

September 1 – December 18, 2026: Registration Open

Week of January 11, 2027: Curriculum and software codes sent out

January – March 12, 2027: Classes complete the Fly to Learn curriculum, using the X-Plane 12 software.

Optional Fly to Learn webinars scheduled throughout this period. Timing will be finalized when curriculum and software are sent out.

March 15, 2027: GAMA will e-mail participants competition instructions.

April 23, 2027: Deadline for teams to submit completed entries. *Each team that submits completed entries will receive a commemorative challenge coin for each student.*

Week of May 10, 2027: GAMA will announce the winners and notify entrants about the competition results.

- **First Place:** The winning team receives an all-expenses-paid CubCrafters Manufacturing Experience, in Yakima, Washington. The experience will take place mid-late June, exact dates will be finalized when curriculum and software are sent out
- **Second Place:** The second-place team receives a two-day Redbird Flight STEM Lab Camp at their high school, courtesy of. The team's teacher will be responsible for working with Redbird Flight to find dates that work for all involved parties.
- **Third Place:** The third-place team receives one-year ForeFlight Premium subscriptions.

***prizes subject to change*

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FAQs

1. How much time should I expect to spend in the classroom or in after-school activities on the Challenge?

Participants should plan to spend about an hour on each lesson in the Fly to Learn curriculum. There are 15 total lessons.

2. Can I have more than three students on my team?

Yes, more than three students may be on a competing team. All participating students must be in high school and at least one team member must be of a different gender (excluding non-coed schools). If your team does not meet these criteria, you are ineligible to win.

***Note that only four students can participate in the first-place experience.*

3. Will GAMA provide any equipment beyond the software?

No, GAMA does not provide any equipment beyond the software. The software can be used with a computer, computer mouse, and keyboard. Fly to Learn provides computing requirements and installation instructions for the software.

IADA Foundation Technology Grant Program: The IADA Foundation has established a grant program to provide computers and/or flight controls to participating schools in need for the 2027 GAMA Aviation Design Challenge. Applications for technology assistance can be found on website and are due December 18, 2026.

Jay Velocity Simulator Offer: Redbird Flight, one of the Challenge sponsors, is offering discounted leases of X-Plane versions of the Jay Velocity Simulator to schools participating in the Challenge for the duration of the competition. Contact Redbird at info@redbirdflight.com or 512.301.0718 for more information.

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4. Can I fly a sample challenge from a previous year?

GAMA will not supply previous year's challenges, however, there are instructions on how to use the X-Plane software and run sample challenges in the curriculum.

5. Will any kind of training or assistance be available during the Aviation Design Challenge?

Yes. Fly to Learn's Tom Dubick is offering webinars focused on using X-Plane and Plane-Maker with the curriculum. Information about these webinars will be finalized when curriculum and software are sent out. Please also note that any information conveyed during the webinars does not affect the rules of the competition.

6. Are there any materials I can show my students about careers in the general aviation industry?

Yes. GAMA has created a video series to show what it is like having a career in the exciting, high-tech, innovative industry of general aviation manufacturing. You can watch the short videos on our [YouTube Channel playlist](#). We have also included additional documents about careers in general aviation. Additional information about internship and career opportunities, learning to fly, and scholarships is available on GAMA's website – gama.aero.

7. What if I have other questions?

Please e-mail any competition questions to STEMcompetition@gama.aero. For curricula questions, contact Tom Dubick at tom.flytolearn@gmail.com.

Participants in the Aviation Design Challenge grant permission to GAMA and its assigns to use competition submissions, including but not limited to photographs, videos, and written descriptions, without notifying participants, for any lawful purpose including promoting GAMA and competition sponsors.