



# PURDUE, FLEXJET PARTNER TO LAUNCH AEROSPHERE FOR BUSINESS AVIATION

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**Flexjet and Purdue University' Center for Research and Education in Advanced Technology Ecosystems signed an exclusive agreement to develop AeroSphere for Business Aviation – a living ecosystem where learning, working, and innovation converge. It is a state-of-the-art hub, combining an innovative aviation education facility with one of the largest private aviation operators in the world. The key philosophy behind AeroSphere for Business Aviation is symbiosis: Purdue's education program feeds into Flexjet's business operations. In turn, Flexjet provides hands-on experiences that will inform and guide Purdue's education program. It is an environment where students and professionals alike learn not just from textbooks and simulators, but from real-world experiences and challenges faced by global aviation companies like Flexjet.**

AeroSphere will serve as a career accelerator with Purdue assisting Flexjet in redesigning the company's professional development and educational programs for both its apprenticeship program (pre-professional training) as well as advanced continuing education for its licensed technicians (post-professional training). A first in the industry, the Flexjet apprentice program takes candidates, who have been vetted for aptitude and company culture, from zero experience to

licensed aviation technician (A&P as well as advanced avionics training) in just over 2 years. The apprentices earn full-time wages while training and graduate with a job offer from Flexjet.

Kevin Dillon, a senior executive overseeing Flexjet' global maintenance facilities, commented: "Our goal in partnering with Purdue University was simple: We wanted to align the best academic university in the world for aviation and aerospace technology with the best global business jet operator and create a new approach to professional development that is unlike anything we have seen in our industry."

Flexjet Senior Executive for Global Maintenance and Product Support, Jay Heublein, said: "The support from Purdue will further enhance our ongoing efforts to invest in the more than 1,300 people employed in Flexjet's Global Maintenance and Product Support division. This partnership will radically change the world of technician education which will in turn provide our team members with an incredible level of professional fulfillment while also providing Flexjet with an enormous competitive advantage as we look to continue expanding our overall support infrastructure."



Manoj Patankar, director of CREATE at Purdue University, stated: "There are three distinguishing features of AeroSphere. It is built on the new Part 147 requirements, it matches the best of on-the-job training and online learning, and it is competency-based." Mike Suckow, associate director of CREATE, also noted: "This 'lab-to-life' experience ensures students can immediately apply what they have learned. Reciprocally, it also brings life back into labs, to ensure that the academic side stays current and relevant. This constant feedback loop ensures a vibrant, dynamic learning environment."

Brian Dillman, acting head of the School of Aviation and Transportation Technology, commented on the broader significance of this alliance: "By bringing these global brands together, we are

taking ownership of the workforce challenge and committing to develop a globally competitive technician workforce. This has never been done before.”

Daniel Castro, dean of Purdue Polytechnic applauded AeroSphere: “this is the perfect example of the next generation of applied research and program development for a land-grant, research-intensive institution like Purdue. We hope that AeroSphere grows and serves as a model of international collaboration between the various segments of the aviation industry, academic institutions, government agencies, and non-government organizations.”

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