

Request for Proposals (RFP) – October 2026:

Demonstration of novel zero and low emission VTOL aircraft

Background

Avinor and the Civil Aviation Authority of Norway (CAA Norway) have jointly established the International Test Arena for zero- and low-emission aircraft in Norway (the “Test Arena”), supported by the Norwegian Department of Transport. **The overall objective of the Test Arena is to prepare the aviation ecosystem for zero- and low-emission aviation and establish the basis for scaling.** The Test Arena aims to accelerate the transition towards zero- and low-emission aviation by generating and sharing knowledge from operational testing and demonstration of new zero and low emission aviation technologies. The Test Arena is paving the way for knowledge generation by reducing barriers for operational testing and demonstration.

The Test Arena provides market actors with a common point of contact in Avinor and CAA Norway, as well as a joint process from concept development to testing and flight demonstrations. This includes infrastructure, airspace, energy supply, and regulatory guidance for national and international stakeholders who wish to test and demonstrate zero- and low-emission aircraft in Norway. Avinor will provide relevant infrastructure, airspace, and access to energy, while CAA Norway will offer regulatory guidance, including a regulatory sandbox.

The Test Arena will, in principle, cover the entire Norwegian airport network and airspace. Specific geographical locations for the establishment of test operations will be decided in dialogue with market participants, based on their needs, as well as assessments of technological maturity and the availability of relevant energy and aviation safety.

Test Arena Projects

The Test Arena will, over its lifetime, host multiple projects to test and demonstrate operations of different aircraft concepts and technologies. The first project demonstrated a battery-electric aircraft in a cargo configuration and the second project is set up to demonstrate an ultra-short (uSTOL) hybrid-electric aircraft prototype.

This RFP is a call for project proposals within the Test Arena, scheduled to start in 2027 with a duration of 12-24 months

Request for Proposals

Avinor and CAA Norway hereby invite interested stakeholders such as Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs), airlines / air operators, or consortiums of such

actors, to apply for testing and demonstrations of novel zero and low emission VTOL aircraft within the Test Arena.

The RFP aims to follow a structured and predictable process leading to a firm agreement between the parties on the preparations and test activities to be carried out.

This RFP focuses on the overarching topic: “Demonstration of novel zero- or low-emission VTOL aircraft in Norway”.

“Demonstration” typically implies solutions of higher level of technological readiness (TRL) that can be demonstrated in an operational airport/airspace environment. Learning generated from the demonstrations will provide valuable input for airlines, OEMs, government, regulators, equipment and subsystem suppliers, policy makers, airports, Air Navigation Service Providers (ANSP), and the wider aviation ecosystem and society to enable and accelerate the transition towards zero- and low-emission aviation. Learning objectives should be outlined as part of the project preparations and should be jointly documented by the parties behind this RFP and the selected project partners before the closing of the project.

“Testing” typically involves aircraft concepts or technologies that require further validation before they are ready for operational demonstration. Testing activities should be conducted in a relevant airport or airspace environment and have clearly defined learning objectives related to, for example, aircraft performance, flight operations, infrastructure, airspace management, safety or regulatory requirements. Both testing and demonstration activities are within the scope of this RFP, although demonstration projects with a higher level of technological and operational maturity are preferred.

We refer to “Zero- and low-emission” as aircraft solutions of which the propulsion system is based on battery-electric, hydrogen-electric, hydrogen combustion, or any hybrid solution that will contribute significantly to emission reductions compared to aircraft with conventional propulsion systems.

“Novel VTOL aircraft” is here understood as an electrical piloted multirotor (eVTOL) aircraft in a vectored thrust, lift+cruise, multicopter, or any other configuration. Uncrewed aircraft are not in the scope of this call. Payload can be passengers and/or cargo.

Project proposals that are outside the scope of this request will not be considered for this call. However, in parallel to the test and demonstration projects, the Test Arena team is eager to have an open dialogue with the broader zero- and low-emission aviation market.

Response to the RFP

We welcome interested parties or consortiums to submit a response to the RFP that contains at least the following information:

- Information about the company/consortium partners, visions and plans
- Aircraft concept: intended payload (pax/cargo), energy carrier, range, and any other relevant information.
- Proposed scope and operational cases with suggested learning objectives as well as outputs of the demonstrations (e.g. how the project will contribute to modelling future demand, operational concepts, business cases and/or decision support for manufacturers, operators, regulators, airports and (public and private) procurers.

Initial high-level plan with an indicative timeline and milestones, including preparations, testing and demonstration activities in the Test Arena. Interested stakeholders or consortiums are encouraged to submit relevant documentation demonstrating how their proposed testing and demonstration activities contribute to the overall objective of the Test Arena.

The international test arena's overall objective is structured around the following five key thematic areas and will be assessed accordingly:

- Climate and environment
 - Expected emission reduction in future commercial operations
 - Energy efficiency
- Innovation
 - Degree of innovation in technology
 - Degree of innovation in operations
- Maturity
 - Technical maturity
 - Maturity in operations and safety
 - Regulatory maturity
- Execution of demonstrations
 - Operational concept for testing and demonstration activities
 - Preparations for testing and demonstrations
 - Resources (e.g. organisational, human, capital)
 - Financial viability
- Scalability
 - Value (learning) of testing/demonstration activities within the Test Arena
 - Value creation of aircraft/operating concept in future commercial operations (e.g. delivery of relevant and valuable air mobility services)
 - Expected market introduction (entry into service) and scalability of commercial operations

Please use the attached template when submitting the RFP response. The template can also be downloaded from the Test Arena web page or forwarded by contacting the Test Arena e-mail address (see *Further information* below).

Additional information may be submitted as attachments.

Timeline; information and questions

Interested parties are welcome to submit questions regarding the RFP, and if of interest, individual meetings for clarification can be arranged. Please note that Q&A's will be shared anonymously with all parties that have expressed interest in the RFP.

An estimated timeline for the RFP is as follows:

- RFP opening. October 27th 2026
- RFP closing: proposals must be received by **November 30th**, 2026, at 16:00 CET
- Project agreement: aims to be signed by the end of Q1 2027
- Project period: startup in 2027, for a duration of 12-24 months including any preparatory activities and applications

Assessment and selection of proposals

Selection of proposals will be conducted through a holistic assessment of the anticipated impact of Test Arena's overall objective. The five key thematic areas will serve as the foundation for evaluating all proposals.

One or more proposals can be selected, depending on available resources within the Test Arena, such as funding and the capacity to accommodate simultaneous project activities that the Test Arena.

For the selected proposals, the candidates will be invited to a final negotiation with the objective of entering into a firm project agreement.

Project agreement

The project agreement for work to be done at the Test Arena will be based on [the Norwegian Government's Standard Agreement for Research and Investigation Assignments \(SSA-F\)](#). The scope of the project agreement is to outline the parties' duties, responsibilities and rights during project execution, as well as any necessary administrative provisions. This agreement template can be downloaded from the Test Arena web page or forwarded by contacting the Test Arena e-mail address (see *Further information* below).

Please note that this RFP is part of a non-binding market dialogue aimed at engaging with relevant stakeholders for the Test Arena project. Based on the responses to the RFP, an assessment will be made if further dialogue with individual stakeholders can be pursued in the current shape and form, and whether the above-mentioned standard

Government research and investigation agreement is fit for the purpose. If necessary, potential contracts will be announced in accordance with public procurement regulations.

Responsibilities and funding

Within the Test Arena, all parties will in general fund their own activities.

Responsibilities and contribution from the Test Arena partners will typically be:

CAA Norway will:

- Provide advice, support, and processing of relevant applications needed for the demonstrations to take place at no fee for the selected applicant(s).
- Provide guidance for stakeholders interested in exploring funding opportunities and support schemes.
- Collaborate with EASA on regulatory assessment and development.
- Approve operations to be performed within the Regulatory Sandbox

Avinor will:

- Facilitate relevant airport/vertiport infrastructure and provide relevant services at no cost, including provision of relevant fuel (electricity, hydrogen, SAF) and infrastructure to provide relevant fuel (i.e. chargers).
- Adaption of airspace services and the use of these services at no cost.
- Other relevant and necessary services to perform tests and demonstrations, like risk analysis, technical measurements and evaluation, or market surveys.

OEMs and operators will be responsible for funding necessary aircraft, equipment or other items to be tested and demonstrated, as well as the operations and all preparatory and supporting activities. OEMs and operators may apply for support schemes to fund their project cost. Please note that CAA Norway offers dedicated advisory services to help aviation stakeholders to identify and pursue relevant funding and support schemes.

Further information

Contact: testarena@avinor.no

Further information: please visit <https://om.avinor.no/barekraft-i-avinor/testarena2/>

Information about the procuring parties behind this RFP

Avinor is a wholly owned state limited company under the Norwegian Ministry of Transport and is responsible for 43 state-owned airports and national air navigation services. Avinor has taken a leading role in reducing climate gas emissions from the

aviation industry, been a frontrunner in the promotion of electric aviation and the supply of sustainable aviation fuel. Avinor provides safe and efficient travels for around 50 million passengers annually, half of which travel to and from Oslo Airport. Approximately 2800 employees are responsible for planning, developing, and operating efficient airport and air navigation services. Avinor is financed via aviation charges and commercial revenue. The air navigation service provider is organized as a subsidiary, wholly owned by Avinor. Avinor has headquarters in Oslo.

Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) Norway is an independent administrative body under the Ministry of Transport. CAA Norway is responsible for ensuring safe, societally beneficial, and sustainable operation of civil aviation in Norway. This includes overseeing and regulating all aspects of civil aviation in Norway, implementing, and customizing national and international legislation and regulations, issuing approvals and certificates to organizations and individuals, safety promotion, as well as providing guidance and advise to different stakeholders. In the transition to a greener aviation sector, CAA Norway will contribute to the safe development and integration of new technology and other measures that can reduce emissions. As Norway is a member state of the EU Aviation Safety Agency (EASA), close collaboration with EASA for regulatory learning and development is instrumental. Through facilitation and a systemic approach CAA Norway works to include all relevant parts of the aviation ecosystem when new solutions are introduced. CAA Norway's main office is in Bodø.