

British launch firm starts talks with leading satellite companies

AN EDINBURGH-BASED space company has opened discussions with some of the world's leading small satellite technology companies to ensure its rocket designs and timelines can match client requirements.

In order to future-proof the designs of its satellite launcher's payload section, Skyrora is in discussion with the firms to determine their specific needs and to find out what new spacecraft will be ready for launch in the next three to five years.

The company already has six Letters of Intent (LOI) with major European and UK based satellite tech companies, including AAC Clyde Space, QinetiQ Space, Astrofein and EnduroSat, with more signatures expected soon following positive discussions during the recent International Astronautical Congress in Bremen.

Although an LOI is not a binding contract, it does move the Scottish space firm closer to Launch Service Agreements (the final green light to begin preparing for a launch) and means that it'll be working with these companies should plans from each party work out as planned.

Daniel Smith, Director of Business Development at Skyrora, said: "It's a crucial time for our company just now, so it's particularly gratifying to have the backing of these international satellite firms.

"We want to make certain that the designs of our launcher take into account the needs of future clients and therefore establishing an open dialogue early in the onboarding process is vital.

“With these LOIs we can plan ahead and ensure that our timelines for launch fit with those of the clients’.

“Scotland is more than ready for space flight and we want to be at the forefront of that. These conversations allow us to stay ahead in what is a fast-moving industry!”

Skyrora was established in Scotland during the summer of 2017 and aims to create orbital launch vehicles capable of taking satellites with a combined or individual weight of around 320 kilograms to 500 kilometres altitude.

It is aligned with the UK Government and UK Space Agency plans to launch rockets from a new spaceport in Scotland – bidding to become the adaptable and responsive UK-based provider.

Craig Clark, Founder of AAC Clyde Space stated, “The space industry has significant momentum in Scotland and is arguably the fastest growing region for space in the World at the moment. In particular, Scotland is fast establishing itself as the go to place for small satellites, from design and build, through to launch and applications.

Skyrora’s ambition to be a leading, global small satellite launch provider epitomises the spirit of the industrial revolution that is currently transforming the space industry and I expect Skyrora to be a leading player in the small satellite launch market for years to come. A

AC Clyde Space would be delighted to utilise the Skyrora launch services from Scotland and we wish them every success.”

The Skyrora XL vehicle is on track to become the first British rocket to launch into orbit – and draws parallels with the original UK orbital rocket, Black Arrow, through the proven combination of kero-sene and hydrogen peroxide as a fuel source.

The rapidly growing Edinburgh based team, aims to capture its

share of the fast-growing small sat-ellite launch market and has already created two separate engines for testing at other locations this year.

Skyrora is developing launch vehicle technology that builds on previous rocket systems with the aim of reducing the cost of launches thanks to proven technology and advanced engineering methods.

The firm draws on Britain's launch heritage and aims to build a robust supply chain while creating new employment opportunities to inspire the next generation of talent.