

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

2009 Northrop Grumman Lunar Lander Challenge Competition Winning Attempts Scheduled

Playa Vista, CA (August 25, 2009) – The X PRIZE Foundation announced today that three teams have registered to make attempts to win the \$1.65 million still available in the Northrop Grumman Lunar Lander Challenge. The prize program is managed by the X PRIZE Foundation as part of NASA's Centennial Challenges Program. The competition is designed to accelerate technological developments supporting the commercial creation of vertical take-off and landing rockets with enhanced safety and performance.

The Challenge is divided into two levels. Level 1, requires a rocket to take off from a designated launch area; climb to a low, fixed altitude; and fly for at least 90 seconds before landing precisely on a different landing pad. The flight must then be repeated in reverse. Both flights, along with all of the necessary preparation for each, must take place within a two and a half hour period. \$500,000 in prizes was initially allocated to Level 1. Last year, Armadillo Aerospace of Mesquite, Texas was awarded \$350,000 for successfully completing Level 1. There remains an unclaimed award of \$150,000 for second place.

The more difficult course, Level 2, requires the rocket to fly for 180 seconds before landing precisely on a simulated lunar surface constructed with craters and boulders. The minimum flight times are calculated so that the Level 2 mission closely simulates the power needed to perform a real descent from lunar orbit down to the surface of the Moon. A \$1 million First Place and a \$500,000 second place prize remain to be claimed by the winners of Level 2

In previous years, the Northrop Grumman Lunar Lander Challenge prize money had only been available to teams who performed the required missions at a specific, single location on a particular weekend. This year, however, teams are permitted to make their prize winning attempts at a date and location of their choosing during a window that stretches through the end of October. At the end of the window, any teams that have accomplished the mission will be ranked based on the landing accuracy achieved in each of their rocket powered flights, and the prize purses will be awarded accordingly.

Qualified teams are able to register for prize-winning attempts on a first-come, first-served basis, with a small crew of judges and observers traveling to meet the team at a venue of their choosing.

Teams may submit registration forms through September 15, 2009.

Currently registered teams include:

- Armadillo Aerospace will attempt to claim a Level 2 purse from Caddo Mills, TX, on September 12 and 13.

- Masten Space Systems will attempt to claim purses in both levels from Mojave, CA, on September 15-16 (Level One), October 7-8 (Level Two), and October 28-29 (Level Two).
- Unreasonable Rocket will attempt to claim purses in both levels from Cantil, CA, on Oct 30-31.

For more information about the Northrop Grumman Lunar Lander Challenge, please visit <http://space.xprize.org/lunar-lander-challenge>. High resolution photographs, video and other team materials are available upon request.

Northrop Grumman's history with lunar programs dates back to the 1960s, when the company designed and produced the Apollo lunar modules that landed U.S. astronauts on the moon. The company is looking forward to supporting NASA on its planned lunar lander, Altair, which will place four astronauts on the Moon in the 2020 timeframe and provide life support as well as a base for weeklong surface explorations.

Northrop Grumman Corporation is a leading global security company whose 120,000 employees provide innovative systems, products, and solutions in aerospace, electronics, information systems, shipbuilding and technical services to government and commercial customers worldwide.

ABOUT NASA'S CENTENNIAL CHALLENGES

The Innovative Partnership Program manages the Centennial Challenges, which is NASA's program to award cash prizes to independent inventors for significant advances in technologies of interest to NASA and the nation. You can read more about all of the competitions at www.ipp.nasa.gov.

ABOUT THE X PRIZE FOUNDATION

The X PRIZE Foundation is an educational nonprofit prize institute whose mission is to create radical breakthroughs for the benefit of humanity. In 2004, the Foundation captured the world's attention when the Burt Rutan-led team, backed by Microsoft co-founder Paul Allen, built and flew the world's first private spaceship to win the \$10 million Ansari X PRIZE for suborbital spaceflight. The Foundation has since launched the \$10 million Archon X PRIZE for Genomics, the \$30 million Google Lunar X PRIZE, and the \$10 million Progressive Insurance Automotive X PRIZE. The Foundation, with the support of its partner, BT Global Services, is creating prizes in Space and Ocean Exploration, Life Sciences, Energy and Environment, Education and Global Development. The Foundation is widely recognized as a leader in fostering innovation through competition. For more information, please visit www.xprize.org.