



DOTBots CHALLENGE

Informational Webinar

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Transportation Policy



- This webinar is being recorded. The recording and presentation materials will be made available on the *DOT Bots* website in the coming days:
www.transportation.gov/policy-initiatives/nett/robotics
- Participant cameras and microphones have been disabled. If you have questions, please submit them via the Q&A pod.
- If you are experiencing technical difficulties, please email robotics@dot.gov

I. ★ Challenge Overview and Objectives

II. ★ Structure and Timeline

III. ★ Project and Team Eligibility

IV. ★ Submission Requirements, How to Enter, Judging Criteria

OVERVIEW AND OBJECTIVES

U.S. DOT established the **Advanced Robotics Initiative** to leverage Departmental resources to expand awareness and implementation of robotics technologies that could solve transportation challenges. As part of this initiative, **the DOT Bots Challenge** seeks to identify and advance new use cases and support American innovators.

Enhance Safety



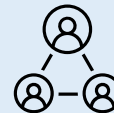
Advance robotics applications to improve traveler and worker safety, expand data collection, improve performance of existing tasks, and enable new capabilities.

Promote Innovation



Identify opportunities for deploying robotics to address challenges related to all modes of transportation and communities of every size and type.

Raise Awareness



Raise awareness of transportation-related robotics applications and use cases.

TIMELINE AND STRUCTURE

Stage I Open

Open for submissions now. Submissions are due on **08/10 at 5 PM ET**.



Stage I Selection

Up to five finalists will be announced in Fall 2026. Each finalist will receive \$100,000.



Stage II Open

Finalists will have ~12 months to develop a functional prototype of their idea.



Stage II Selection

One winner will receive \$1,000,000.

Stage I: Concept

Up to 5 finalists will be selected. Each will receive **\$100,000** to support Stage II prototype development.

Stage II: Demonstration

One team will receive **\$1,000,000** following the successful demonstration of their prototype.

PROJECT ELIGIBILITY

- Projects must focus on robotics technology as defined below:

“Electromechanical devices that are capable of locomotion, navigation, or movement and operate at a distance from one or more operators or supervisors based on commands or in response to sensor data, or through any combination thereof.”

- Concepts focused on automated vehicles/Automated Driving Systems are *not* eligible.

Examples of Robotics Technologies

- Unmanned aircraft systems and ground systems
- Uncrewed maritime surface vessels
- Embodied AI
- Humanoid and quadruped
- Climbing
- Rail-mounted
- Crawlers
- Articulated arms
- Swarm/insect-like
- Serpentine
- Wheeled mobile, fixed, modular, and gantry platforms
- Internal pipe crawler or soft internal-pipe platform
- Underwater (magnetic or free-swimming)

TEAM ELIGIBILITY

- Eligible entities may include, but are not limited to, **universities, research institutions, technology companies, entrepreneurs, and public sector agencies.** All applicant teams must include at least one private sector member such as a robotics developer or service provider, or a private sector organization that might incorporate robotics into their products or services.
- Private entities must be incorporated in and **maintain a primary place of business in the United States.** Individuals, whether participating singly or in a group, shall be a **citizen or permanent resident of the United States.**
- **U.S. Department of Transportation employees are not eligible** to win a prize, **nor are other Federal employees** acting within the scope of their employment.

SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Intake Form

- Includes basic information about your team and project
- Available here: [link](#)

Narrative Document

- Cover Page
- Executive Summary (1 page)
- Concept Paper (up to 10 pages)
- Stage II Work Plan/Schedule (1-4 pages)
- Appendices

Slide Deck

- 2 slides providing an overview of the project and its benefits
- Recommend using provided format: [link](#)

Narrative documents must use standard 12-point font with 1-inch margins



HOW TO ENTER

Step 1: Intake Form

Visit the [challenge website](#) to complete the official intake form. Provide contact details and brief project information.

Step 2: Create Materials

Develop your submission materials, ensuring strict adherence to page limits and required content.

Step 3: Prepare ZIP Package

Compile all files into a single ZIP folder. Name the file using the following format:
TeamName_ProjectTitle.zip.

Step 4: Submit

Email your ZIP file to robotics@dot.gov before the **5:00 ET deadline on Monday, August 10th**. Incomplete submissions will not be evaluated.

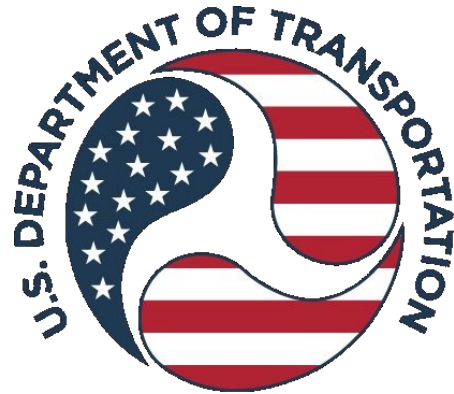
JUDGING CRITERIA

- ☒ **Team Composition, Qualifications, and Project Eligibility:** Does the submission demonstrate appropriate team skills, including private sector inclusion, to successfully develop the solution?
- ☒ **Technical Merit:** Is the problem understood? Is the proposed prototype clearly described, feasible, safe, and backed by a credible work plan?
- ☒ **Impact and Availability:** Does the solution meet a public-sector need, improve upon existing solutions, adapt to multiple modes, and offer benefits that are proportional to its costs?
- ☒ **Potential Market:** Is there a credible market? Does the team understand public sector constraints, the needs of different communities, and domestic sourcing requirements?
- ☒ **Innovation and Creativity:** Does the prototype explore highly novel applications, creatively leverage existing resources, or introduce a new robotics platform?

- DOT Bots Challenge Website: www.transportation.gov/policy-initiatives/nett/robotics
- DOT Bots Challenge Statement: www.transportation.gov/policy-initiatives/nett/dot-bots-challenge-statement-stage-i
- DOT Strategy Report on the State of Robotics in Transportation: www.transportation.gov/policy-initiatives/nett/strategy-report-state-robotics-transportation

Additional Questions? Reach out to robotics@dot.gov

Stage I Submission Deadline: Monday, August 10 at 5:00 PM Eastern



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Thank You
