

**Statement of Adam Bry
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**U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
Subcommittee on Aviation**

**“The Leading Edge: Innovation in U.S. Aerospace”
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Chairman Larsen, Ranking Member Graves, members of the Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. We meet at the dawn of a new era in flight. Electric propulsion and autonomy are transforming aviation as we know it. Small drones are at the forefront of both of these trends. The technologies, regulations, companies, and countries that lead the way with small drones will help to define this new era. Even though the drones are small, the stakes are large.

I am the co-founder and CEO of Skydio, an American company on the front lines of this transformation. Founded in 2014, Skydio is now the largest U.S. drone manufacturer by volume and a world leader in autonomous flight. Our customers include consumers creating amazing videos, construction companies tracking project progress, state departments of transportation inspecting infrastructure, energy utilities monitoring transmission lines, public safety agencies responding to emergencies, and U.S. and allied soldiers observing battlefield threats. In each of these applications, drones are helping to make our world more productive, creative, and safe.

My own aviation journey began 20 years ago when I began building and flying remote controlled (R/C) aircraft, eventually winning a national championship in R/C aerobatics. This hobby fueled a passion for engineering. I studied mechanical engineering at Olin College, and received my master’s in aerospace engineering at MIT. There, I helped to pioneer autonomous flight for drones, transferring my skills as an R/C pilot into software that enables drones to fly themselves. After graduating, I co-founded Google’s drone delivery program.

In 2014, my co-founders and I started Skydio. We saw the potential of drones to transform a wide range of industries and applications. We believed that autonomy--the ability for a drone to fly itself and perform complex tasks on its own--is essential to realizing the promise of drones. Skydio is a software and Artificial Intelligence (AI) company at heart. Skydio drones use advanced computer vision and AI to build a real-time, 3D map of the environment, plan collision-free paths around obstacles, and automate complex tasks. We build hardware that embodies and accentuates our software.

The drone industry has long been defined by manually controlled drones manufactured at low cost in China. But this is not the future. In the early 2000s, Nokia held a dominant position in the global cell phone market. In 2007, Apple released the iPhone, a software-centric device that made phones infinitely more useful by making them more intelligent. Apple not only captured market share, but dramatically grew the market for phones globally. We believe the drone industry is ripe for a similar transition, and there is an opportunity for U.S. companies to once again lead that revolution.

Today we consider how to capture the benefits of this transformation. This Committee will play a profoundly important role in setting the conditions for U.S. leadership in aviation and safety. To assist the Committee, I will outline my views on the strategic importance of the domestic drone industry, how to harness the full potential of drones to keep America's aging infrastructure safe and resilient, and how to shape a regulatory system designed to ensure U.S. competitiveness and safety.

I. Playing to America's Strengths: The Strategic Importance of the Domestic Drone Industry

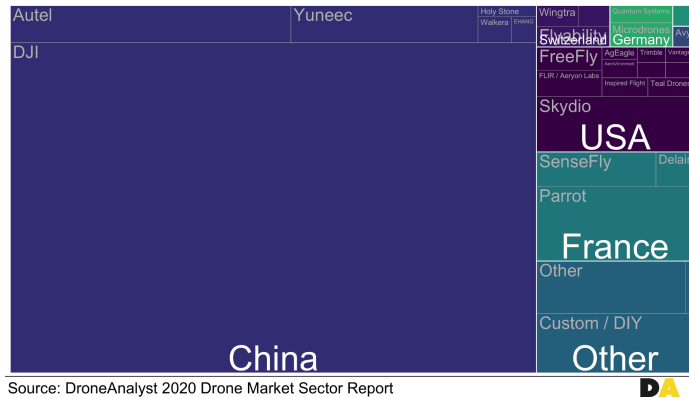
The story of the domestic drone industry has been defined by struggle. For example, GoPro, a multi-billion-dollar company, launched a consumer drone to great fanfare. Then their drones started falling out of the sky. GoPro soon shuttered their drone business. Sensational headlines followed. "The dream of an American drone may be dead," one [headline](#) speculated. Analysts suggested that when it came to "engineering [drones] in the US," we should "forget about it."

That advice appeared well-founded. Before GoPro exited the market, another U.S. company, 3D Robotics, launched a drone called the Solo that sold thousands of units with features similar to [Chinese drone company DJI](#). Then DJI began to "[turn the screw](#)," massively lowering the prices of its own products," and "dropping the bottom out of the market." 3D Robotics stopped making drones, deciding instead to design software for use on the very Chinese drones that pushed them out of the market. PrecisionHawk, another promising company that once testified before this committee, also left the hardware market to make software for use on DJI drones (and drones made by other companies).

Today, companies based in China dominate the U.S. market with more than 80% of the market share. DJI alone accounts for approximately 70% of the market. As the following [graphic](#) reveals, the domestic drone market is unlike almost any other.

2020 Drone Hardware Landscape

Brand market share, by country of origin



Source: DroneAnalyst 2020 Drone Market Sector Report



a. America's Advantage

However unhealthy the market may be, reports of the death of the domestic drone industry are greatly exaggerated.

The way to build a sustainable and secure domestic drone industry is to embrace areas of natural advantage. In the past, domestic drone companies sought to beat foreign competitors at their own game: producing commodity hardware devices, sometimes even making them in China and selling them here.

In today's crowded and competitive marketplace, dominated by foreign firms, homegrown companies will succeed when they focus on areas where the U.S. holds an advantage, such as AI. As graduate students, my co-founders and I studied at MIT's Computer Science and Artificial Intelligence Lab (CSAIL)--one of the world's leading centers for AI research. Our research in advanced navigation was funded, in part, by the Army Research Laboratory and the Office of Naval Research. CSAIL's roots trace back to the early days of the U.S. space program, where America led the way in sensor fusion software and navigation computers that enabled us to land on the moon. At MIT, we built a fixed-wing aircraft capable of [flying itself autonomously through a parking garage](#). Skydio's technology grew out of that early research and experimentation. We hope to be another success story in the tradition of our nation's commitment to basic research.

Today, Skydio has experienced incredible growth based on the demand for our AI-powered drones. From state departments of transportation, to fire departments, to federal agencies, we are fortunate to have hundreds of public sector customers that are excited to have an American drone alternative to DJI, and even more excited about getting more powerful products with the benefits of autonomy. Our customers are at the center of our success.

Skydio is also proud to support our service members. The Defense Innovation Unit and other forward-leaning government initiatives have helped us connect with military end users, in whose hands our products can save lives. The U.S. Army, for example, recognized that consumer and commercial drone products were racing ahead of traditional defense systems. Rather than acquire expensive and outdated technology from traditional defense contractors, the Army launched a new effort, the Short Range Reconnaissance Program, to equip soldiers with world-leading technology produced here at home.

On the strength of that demand, we have grown from employing three people to hundreds of people across the country. We design and assemble thousands of drones a month in the United States. And we are expanding rapidly around the world. With every drone we sell, and every new employee we hire, we disprove the myth that American companies cannot compete in the domestic drone market. American companies can compete--and win. The key is to focus on areas of asymmetric advantage--and no area provides more of an advantage than AI.

b. The Strategic Importance of the Domestic Drone Industry

Maintaining a viable domestic drone manufacturing base matters for three reasons.

Creating Good-Paying Jobs, Benefiting the Economy: The small drone market has a big economic impact. According to [Levitate Capital](#), “The global drone economy will grow from \$15B to \$90B by 2030.” The U.S. represents the [largest share](#) of that market, with an overall size of \$8B in 2020, growing to \$16B in 2025, and \$34B in 2030.

Right now, more than 70% of the true value of that market is held by foreign companies. *The more the market relies on American companies that produce their products at home, the more high-skill, good-paying domestic manufacturing jobs we can bring back to the United States.* That goal deserves bipartisan support.

In addition to hiring U.S. workers, U.S. drone manufacturers support domestic component suppliers. For example, the Skydio X2 uses a breakthrough carbon fiber component produced by [Arris](#), a U.S. startup based in California, that would have otherwise required 17 separate parts. Skydio is proud to be the first commercial customer of Arris, which manufactures its components in the U.S.

Protecting National Security: Once viewed as little more than consumer toys, drones have become essential tools for a wide range of applications, including national defense and inspecting critical infrastructure. Depending on a strategic competitor to meet the nation’s technology needs is neither healthy nor prudent.

To be clear, the Chinese government represents the central threat, not Chinese companies. The Chinese government has the legal ability to [demand data from Chinese companies](#) operating anywhere in the world—without due process and the rule of law. DJI officials have [acknowledged](#), under oath, the company’s obligation to comply with those requests. Basic cybersecurity standards cannot buy down that [risk](#).¹ That is why Congress [prohibited](#) DOD, in the Fiscal Year (FY) 2020 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), from procuring drones manufactured in China. We support legislation extending that common-sense approach to other federal agencies.

Ultimately, the only way to trust a digital device is to trust the company that developed it and the legal framework in which they operate. That is something Skydio takes seriously. We design, assemble, and support all of our products in the U.S. We develop our software in-house and source our processors from U.S. companies. The result is a homegrown aircraft that reflects the best of American innovation, trustworthiness, and craftsmanship.

As a result of Skydio’s commitment to supply chain and cyber security and high level of product performance, the U.S. Defense Department named Skydio one of a handful of “Blue sUAS” companies in 2020. DOD also determined that Skydio’s flagship enterprise product, the Skydio X2, complies with the rigorous supply chain security restrictions in the FY20 NDAA provision mentioned above.

Our Values: Most importantly, the stronger the domestic drone industry, the more this critical area of emerging technology will reflect democratic ideals and values.

The final report of the National Security Commission on AI recognizes that the U.S. finds itself in an “[AI competition](#)” with an emboldened China. According to the [Commission](#), “The AI competition is also a values competition. China’s domestic use of AI is a chilling precedent for anyone around the world who cherishes individual liberty. Its employment of AI as a tool of repression and surveillance . . . is a counterpart to how we believe AI should be used.”

¹ In characterizing the risks presented by DJI drones, the former Undersecretary of Defense for Acquisition, Ellen Lord, acknowledged that the Defense Department “know[s] that a lot of the information is sent back to China.” Billy Mitchell, *Pentagon plans drone event for new VC, startup matchmaker program*, Fedscope, Aug. 28, 2019, <https://www.fedscoop.com/dod-uas-drones-trusted-capital-marketplace-program-ellen-lord/>. See also Frank J. Cilluffo (Auburn University), Testimony to the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, Hearing on the Impacts of State-Owned Enterprises on Public Transit and Freight Rail Sectors, p. 3-4, May 16, 2019, <https://transportation.house.gov/imo/media/doc/Testimony%20-%20Cilluffo.pdf> (“Chinese [drone] companies, for example, may be legally required to help advance the mission and goals of China’s security and intelligence services. The use of UAS also raises the prospect of cyber/physical convergence, whereby cyber tools and operations may be invoked (particularly by an adversary with hostile intent) to generate kinetic or real-world consequences.”).

Months before the release of the Commission’s report, the U.S. Commerce Department placed DJI on the entity list for supporting China’s suppression of the Uighur people in Xinjiang. The [listing](#) noted the nexus to “widescale human rights abuses within China . . . or high-technology surveillance, and/or . . . the export of items by China that aid repressive regimes around the world.”

That underscores the importance of U.S. leadership in the drone industry. If we want this technology to align with our values, we must lead the way. At Skydio, we believe companies that make the world’s most advanced products have a responsibility to shape the norms and standards that govern their use. That is especially true with respect to AI. In 2020, Skydio became the world’s first drone company to issue a set of policy and ethical principles--[the Skydio Engagement and Responsible Use Principles](#)--to guide our work and move the industry forward. These principles capture our commitment to considering the holistic impact our products will have on communities and countries. They also convey Skydio’s core values of accountability, transparency, and the protection of privacy and civil liberties.

II. Harnessing the Power of Drones to Keep America’s Infrastructure Safe and Resilient

This Committee is considering a generational investment in America’s infrastructure. In addition to investing in the infrastructure itself, this Committee has a profound opportunity to reimagine the way to maintain it.

America’s infrastructure is aging. Although [examples](#) of crumbling infrastructure are not in short supply, the nation’s bridges have become the symbol of infrastructure decay. According to the [American Society of Civil Engineers](#), “Currently, 42% of all bridges are at least 50 years old.”

We cannot rebuild our way out of this crisis. The President’s American Jobs Plan is ambitious in scope, but it calls only to replace approximately 10,000 of the [46,154 bridges](#) that America’s civil engineers consider structurally deficient. A serious maintenance backlog makes the problem more pernicious.²

The way to reimagine our infrastructure is to make our existing infrastructure more **resilient**. As recommended by [ASCE](#), we must prioritize “existing deterioration” and “focus . . . on preventive maintenance.” Inspections are at the heart of preventive maintenance. The older the

² According to [ASCE](#), “A recent estimate for the nation’s backlog of bridge repair needs is \$125 billion. Estimates show that we need to increase spending on bridge rehabilitation from \$14.4 billion annually to \$22.7 billion annually, or by 58%, if we are to improve the condition. At the current rate of investment, it will take until 2017 to make all of the repairs that are necessary.”

infrastructure, the more it must be inspected, and the more accurate and efficient the inspections must become.

That is exactly why [49 of 50 states](#) have adopted drone programs primarily to inspect critical infrastructure. Drones offer three critical benefits in the journey to infrastructure resilience.

a. Drones Protect Workers, Drive Efficiency, and Slash Carbon Emissions

Protecting Workers: Inspecting infrastructure can be a dangerous job. To ensure the safety of America's infrastructure, inspectors “[put themselves in harm's way](#) by climbing towers, rappelling from bridges, and riding in bucket trucks” (which sometimes [tip over](#)).

By contrast, inspectors equipped with drones can examine every part of an infrastructure asset—including areas not visible to the naked eye—without exposing themselves to danger. Capitalizing on that capability, state departments of transportation have begun to equip their bridge inspectors with drone technology.

North Carolina Department of Transportation (DOT), a partner and customer of Skydio, has become a national leader in the employment of drone technology for bridge inspection and other purposes. Eric Boyette, North Carolina’s Secretary of Transportation, has stated that, “Drones are a fantastic new tool for our Bridge Inspection Units. Safety is our top priority at NCDOT, and this new system helps improve the safety of not only our bridges and other infrastructure, but of our inspectors as well.”

The American Society of Mechanical Engineers has [observed](#) that “drones can perform hazardous inspections and maintenance scans much more quickly and with greater ease, lessening the perils on the American worker.” To that end, [Sundt Construction](#) uses Skydio’s autonomous drones to inspect “very tight, claustrophobic, and dangerous areas where you wouldn’t want to put a human,” such as “high-pressure, high-temperature systems.” According to [Dean Miller](#), Sundt’s Virtual Construction Engineer,

When you use a drone for these inspections, you’re not reducing an injury, you’re reducing a death. With human inspections, the construction industry has been able to reduce the injury rate over the years, but the death rate has stayed the same—when something explodes in these environments, there is no coming out of that. Because the Skydio can fly into these areas that would be impossible with other drones and capture that data for us, we can effectively reduce that death rate. A drone is around \$1,000, but a human life is priceless.

Driving Efficiency: According to a 2019 [AASHTO](#) survey, 29 state departments of transportation have found that drones are “helping them save money.” Drones drive extraordinary levels of efficiency--empowering existing workers to be more productive while creating an entirely new career field of drone operators.

In the case of a freeway bridge inspection, AASHTO [estimates](#) that the average manual inspection costs \$4,600, takes 8 hours, and imposes \$14,600 in social costs while the bridge is closed. Drone inspections of the same bridge cost an average of \$1,200, take only 1 hour, and impose far lower social costs. Along those lines, Ohio [estimates](#) that its drone bridge inspection program could save almost \$1.7 million in state funds over four years.

Consider “as-built” inspection of construction sites, which is critical to ensuring that construction projects do not require rework. As Danielle Gagne recently discussed in *Commercial UAV News*, rework [can account for 4-9% of the cost of the average construction project](#).³ Drones--and especially autonomous drones--offer high levels of value, automating a process that can be time-consuming, complex, and costly. Accurate Drone Solutions, a drone service provider specializing in construction, has [found](#) that switching from manual drones to Skydio’s autonomous drones allowed them to perform as-built assessments 66% faster and increase the frequency of cost-saving inspections on their clients’ job sites.

As automation increases, it will become possible to create and maintain full “digital twins” of every piece of infrastructure, and update them frequently as drones autonomously capture imagery of entire structures. This will enable early detection and tracking of potential issues with preventative maintenance, further increasing efficiency.

Slashing Carbon Emissions: Reliant on electric propulsion, drones significantly reduce carbon emissions compared to traditional methods. [Helicopters](#) “burn more fuel and emit far more CO2 emissions than cars do over the same distance.” Under-bridge inspection vehicles fare only slightly better, achieving around [5 mpg](#). Drones shatter this paradigm. *If a state with 14,000 bridges could inspect 5,000 of them using drones, the carbon savings would be equivalent to removing 1,000 cars from the road*.⁴

The environmental benefits of drones will compound over time: as drone use becomes more common, the benefits for our air and environment will increase.

³ Gagne, Danielle, *Why America’s Infrastructure Needs the Drone Industry*, Commercial UAV News, April 21, 2021, <https://www.commercialuavnews.com/infrastructure/why-america-s-infrastructure-needs-the-drone-industry>. .

⁴ Internal analysis. Key factors: Snooper trucks achieve approximately 5 mpg fuel economy; average round trip inspection distance estimated at 225 miles; drones are fully electric.

b. Drone Infrastructure Inspection Grants (DIIG)

To capitalize on these benefits, Congress should enact a Drone Infrastructure Inspection Grants program. Administered by the Secretary of Transportation, the program would consist of two pillars:

- **Promoting Infrastructure Resilience:** The first pillar would provide grants to state and local agencies allowing them to capture these benefits by implementing advanced drone technology for infrastructure inspection. State DOTs could apply for funding necessary to scale the use of drones--purchasing equipment and standing up program management capability--to inspect America's highways and bridges, handing inspectors a powerful new tool to drive safety and efficiency.
 - With 49 of 50 state DOTs already using drones to inspect infrastructure, state DOTs understand the value of drone technology. But, in the face of budgetary shortfalls, state DOTs have had trouble scaling their programs. By enacting the DIIG program, Congress would ensure that state and local inspection personnel have access to the transformative technology and talent necessary to protect workers, our environment, and provide new levels of infrastructure safety and efficiency--while promoting U.S. leadership in emerging technology.
- **Education and Training:** The second pillar would offer grants to community colleges and other public educational institutions to educate workers on drone technology. The program would position a new generation of workers to capitalize on new economic opportunities created by drones.

This program could form the foundation of an approach to infrastructure that prioritizes long-term resilience by making inspection easier and more effective than ever.

III. Leading the Second Century of Aviation: Enabling U.S. Competitiveness, Ensuring Safety

When asked what is holding the drone industry back, the answer is often "regulations." There are elements of the regulatory framework that should be improved, some of which I will discuss today. But, overall, the arc of regulations bends in the direction of integration and progress, and is reasonable given the state of manual drone technology. Most encouragingly, we are seeing signs of regulators recognizing the benefits of autonomy for unlocking safe, reliable operations.

As an example, last year the FAA granted NCDOT a breakthrough waiver to fly Skydio drones beyond visual line of sight (BVLOS) to inspect bridges. Unlike past waivers, this one applies

statewide and does not require the use of visual observers. Skydio’s autonomy technology enables bridge inspectors to fly BVLOS more confidently than when piloting manual drones, which cannot avoid obstacles on their own. That waiver demonstrates the important role that industry plays in advancing regulations. If we want the FAA to permit drone operations beyond line of sight, we should build drones capable of navigating complex environments safely and efficiently.

As technology improves, we should ask how the regulatory system can improve alongside it. To answer that question, we need to understand that we have entered a new century of aviation. The first century of flight was defined by crewed aviation. From the windy hills of Kitty Hawk to the airliners that criss-cross our sky today, our aviation system has revolved around the notion of a pilot onboard and at the controls.

We have now entered the second century of aviation. This century will be defined by uncrewed, and increasingly autonomous operations. The nations that embrace this new paradigm will experience massive economic and societal benefits--from safer work environments to more efficient infrastructure. But other nations are not content to let the United States lead the second century of aviation in the same way we led the first.

There are two principles necessary for the U.S. to continue its historical leadership role and take our economy and society to new heights. Those principles are symbolized in the acronym, “UP.”

1. Unlocking the Airspace from the Ground Up: The vast majority of commercially valuable drone operations occur at very low altitudes in close proximity to infrastructure. When inspecting infrastructure, operators generally need to fly *just* beyond line of sight and *behind* the object under inspection. Recognizing that reality, the first principle calls for regulatory changes designed to unlock the airspace *from the ground up*--enabling the low risk, low altitude, high-value BVLOS operations necessary to inspect America’s infrastructure at scale.
 - a. *America risks falling behind*: When it comes to enabling BVLOS operations, the European Union has created a regulatory pathway, known as the “[specific category](#),” designed to enable routine commercial BVLOS operations. The “specific category” intends to fill the gap between the general regulation that allows flights within visual line of sight, on the low end, and the type certification of large drones for more complex operations, such as the transport of passengers, on the high end. In addition, Europe has proposed “[standard scenarios](#)” designed to permit BVLOS operations that fall within certain, low-risk parameters. Australia has also released “[standard scenarios](#)” to enable BVLOS operations, including low-altitude infrastructure inspection. However in the US, we have yet

to fill the “missing middle” between Part 107 (which allows flights only within visual line of sight) and type certification.

- b. *These operations are safe*: These operations can be safely conducted today, as demonstrated by NCDOT’s statewide bridge inspection waiver in the U.S. Along those lines, global regulators have recognized that drone operators are very unlikely to encounter crewed aircraft at low altitudes, such as the “atypical airspace” in the vicinity of natural or artificial obstacles (e.g. within 100 feet of structures or terrain).⁵ That is where we should start: enabling small, smart, low-weight, drones to fly BVLOS while remaining close to the ground and structures. After mastering those operations, we can begin to enable more complex operations with larger aircraft at higher altitudes and longer range.
2. Promoting pathways for increasing levels of autonomy while protecting safety: The second principle calls for regulators to provide pathways for drones to exercise increasing levels of autonomy.
 - a. *Why*: First, autonomy is critical to safety. Trustworthy autonomy enables drones to conduct complex operations while avoiding obstacles that even the most proficient pilots may miss. Second, autonomy is critical to scalability. The same trustworthy autonomy technology that today allows drones to fly inside bridge trusses and transmission towers will one day enable Advanced Air Mobility (AAM) vehicles to shuttle cargo and people safely between cities. Without autonomy, the AAM revolution risks becoming a tool for the wealthy few, rather than an enabling technology for the many.⁶
 - b. *How*: In order to maintain U.S. leadership in emerging technology and aviation, we must enable autonomous operations. We can start small--but we have to start somewhere. If we fail to act, autonomy pioneers will take their talent and investments overseas. Congress could begin by directing the FAA to enable limited autonomous operations within the context of a pilot program that would bring together public and private partners, much like the current FAA BEYOND program, but focused on autonomy. Operations could begin at low altitude in

⁵ See, e.g., Joint Authorities for Rulemaking of Unmanned Systems, *JARUS Guidelines on SORA* (Specific Operational Risk Assessment), Annex I: Glossary of Terms, p. 5, definition of “atypical airspace,” http://jarus-rpas.org/sites/jarus-rpas.org/files/jar_doc_06_jarus_sora_annex_i_v1.0.pdf#page=5. JARUS, a consortium of global regulators, recognizes that drone operations within “atypical airspace” in close proximity to structures and terrain generally do not require additional airspace risk mitigation measures.

⁶ Skip Descant, *Flying Taxis: Experts Balance Enthusiasm Against Reality*, Government Technology, Sept 11, 2020, <https://www.govtech.com/fs/Flying-Taxis-Experts-Balance-Enthusiasm-Against-Reality.html> (quoting Dan Dalton, VP of Global Partnerships, Wisk) (“In order for this industry to scale, we really believe that this has to be a self-piloted aircraft.”).

remote areas, and scale up from there. The most important thing is to get started--soon.

IV. Conclusion

I am grateful to the Committee for focusing on the future of U.S. leadership in aviation. This Committee deserves great credit for helping to cultivate a regulatory system that promotes both safety and innovation. Working together, we can ensure the United States leads the second century of aviation--providing extraordinary benefits for our economy, workers on the front lines of the infrastructure crisis, and all Americans.

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Adam Bry Biography

Adam Bry is co-founder and CEO at Skydio, the leading consumer and commercial U.S. drone company, and the world leader in autonomous flight. He has over two decades of experience with small UAS, starting at 16 when he was a national champion R/C airplane aerobatics pilot. As a grad student at MIT, he helped lead an award-winning research program that pioneered autonomous flight for drones, transferring much of what he learned as an R/C pilot into software that enables drones to fly themselves. After graduate school, Adam co-founded Google[x]'s Project Wing. He has co-authored numerous technical papers and patents, and was recognized on MIT's TR35 list for young innovators. In 2021, Adam was appointed to the FAA's Drone Advisory Committee.

Under Adam's leadership, Skydio grew from a small startup to become the largest U.S. drone manufacturer by volume. Skydio leverages breakthrough AI to create the world's most intelligent flying machines for use by consumer, enterprise, and government customers. Founded in 2014, Skydio is made up of leading experts in AI, robotics, cameras, and electric vehicles from top companies, research labs, and universities from around the world. Skydio is trusted by leading enterprises across a wide range of industry sectors and is backed by top investors and strategic partners including Andreessen Horowitz, Levitate Capital, Next47, IVP, Playground, and NVIDIA. In 2021, Skydio was named the North American commercial drone company of the year by Frost & Sullivan, and received the CES 2021 Best of Innovation Award for Drones and Unmanned Systems. Skydio was also named to Fast Company's 2021 list of the world's most innovative companies, coming in second on the list of the top ten robotics companies.

Adam holds a Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering from Olin College. He received his Master of Science degree in Aerospace Engineering from MIT.