HEART AEROSPACE UNVEILS ES-36, ANNOUNCES JSX PURCHASE AGREEMENT FOR UP TO 100 AIRCRAFT

News / Manufacturer

Heart Aerospace has unveiled the ES-36, its new 36-seat hybrid-electric regional airliner and planned production aircraft. Concurrently, award-winning air carrier JSX announced a deposit-backed agreement to acquire 50 ES-36 aircraft, with options for an additional 50, further strengthening the long-standing partnership between the two companies. The deal supports JSX's vision for a next-generation regional fleet aimed at expanding efficient, nonstop air service from community airports.

Building on the previously announced ES-30 programme, the ES-36 features a refined two-engine nacelle configuration and a series-hybrid electric propulsion system. The updated design is intended to enhance operational efficiency while further improving the aircraft's cost competitiveness compared with conventional regional airliners.

Compared with the earlier ES-30 design, the ES-36 increases capacity by adding six additional passenger seats and 1,415 pounds of payload, representing a 20% improvement in both categories while maintaining the same maximum take-off weight and battery capacity. Thanks to a more aerodynamically efficient airframe, the aircraft can dedicate a greater share of its capacity to passengers and cargo, enhancing revenue-generating potential. In addition, the transition from a four-nacelle, four-propeller configuration to a two-nacelle layout reduces the number of propulsion

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system components, helping to lower maintenance requirements and operating costs.

Replacing the ES-30's four-engine independent-hybrid architecture, the ES-36 features twin series-hybrid powertrains, each powered by a 1.65 MW electric motor driving a propeller. The aircraft's ground-charged battery system enables an all-electric range of up to 125 miles (200 km), including reserves, allowing airlines to operate short-haul routes without fuel consumption while significantly reducing emissions.

For longer regional missions, the ES-36 offers a hybrid-electric range of up to 745 miles (1,200 km), including reserves. This capability is enabled by a megawatt-class turbogenerator integrated into each of the aircraft's two powertrains. Powered by compact, commercially available gas turbines, the turbogenerators generate electricity during flight to complement the onboard batteries and supply energy to the electric propulsion system.

By combining electric propulsion with in-flight power generation, the ES-36 is designed to deliver the operational flexibility and range expected of a conventional regional airliner while retaining the significant cost and efficiency advantages associated with electrified flight.

Ben Stabler, Chief Technology Officer at Heart commented: “The ES-36 design is a direct result of what Heart learned designing, building, testing and flying our X1 demonstrator aircraft. Those learnings have helped us make the production aircraft more capable in the air and more productive for operators. The ES-36 carries more passengers and payload, creating greater revenue-generating potential for operators like JSX, while targeting operating costs at least 40 percent lower than legacy regional aircraft.”

Alex Wilcox, JSX CEO stated: “JSX is proud to back the development of the next-generation aircraft that will deliver the best travel experience for our Customers, expand the destinations available to them, and strengthen our business. The hybrid-electric ES-36 will enable more nonstop routes from more convenient airports while further elevating the award-winning, no-middle-seat onboard experience that JSX Customers love. We’re excited to work with Heart to tailor the ES-36 to JSX’s operations.”

Anders Forslund, Founder and CEO of Heart Aerospace said: “With the ES-36, Heart is bringing to market a more capable aircraft with an even stronger value proposition for air carriers, and JSX’s partnership underscores that opportunity. We’re grateful to Alex for believing in Heart early and championing electric aviation as he builds JSX’s fleet of the future. We look forward to working side by side with the JSX team to bring the ES-36 into service in order to deliver exceptional economics for JSX and an unparalleled travel experience for its Customers.”

JSX’s latest agreement transforms the letter of intent signed with Heart Aerospace in 2023 into a deposit-backed purchase commitment, securing early delivery slots for the carrier and marking a significant step from aircraft development toward future fleet deployment. The deal further strengthens the strategic partnership between the two companies as they prepare for the introduction of next-generation hybrid-electric regional aircraft.

The ES-36 is particularly well aligned with JSX’s operating model, supporting growth across community airports such as Santa Monica, Westchester County, Naples, and Napa Valley. Its strong short-field performance enables operations from airports with infrastructure constraints, while its compact dimensions allow more efficient use of limited gate, ramp, and hangar space. With a wingspan of 95 feet, around 11 feet shorter than that of the ES-30, the aircraft is designed to support higher utilisation rates and increased service frequency at regional airports.

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The new aircraft also expands the number of communities JSX can potentially serve. Its all-electric operating capability on shorter routes delivers zero in-flight emissions and significantly reduced noise levels, helping address environmental and community concerns that can limit airport operations. Combined with substantially lower operating costs, the ES-36 has the potential to make more nonstop routes economically viable, supporting competitive fares while enhancing connectivity. Together, these benefits could enable JSX to offer more destinations, increased flight frequencies, and greater travel convenience, while maintaining its commitment to being a responsible partner within the communities it serves.

The agreement also creates a collaborative framework between Heart Aerospace and JSX to tailor the ES-36 to JSX's unique operating model, with a strong focus on elevating the passenger experience and reducing travel time. The two companies will work closely on cabin design, combining the aircraft's exceptionally quiet electric operation with the spacious, comfortable, and connected environment that JSX customers have come to expect.

In addition, Heart and JSX will collaborate on key operational aspects, including charging infrastructure, aircraft turnaround processes, route development, and airport readiness. The goal is to seamlessly integrate the ES-36 into JSX's network while preserving the carrier's hallmark convenience and efficiency, delivering a smooth and time-saving travel experience from check-in to arrival.

The launch of the ES-36 marks another major milestone in Heart Aerospace's strong progress throughout 2026, following the successful first flight of the X1 demonstrator in mid-August. The aircraft became the largest battery-electric aircraft ever to fly and the world's first electric airliner prototype to take to the skies.

Heart is now advancing toward commercialisation with the construction of its first pre-production ES-36 at the company's pilot manufacturing facility in Los Angeles. The programme remains on track for a maiden flight in the second half of 2028, with entry into service targeted for 2031, subject to FAA Part 25 certification.

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