

#stratosphere

X721 at the Bordeaux UAV Show: The Heliblade takes to the skies.

From October 7 to 9, 2026, x721 will be exhibiting at the UAV Show in Bordeaux, with a goal that goes far beyond the usual scope of drones: to bring Very High Altitude (VHA) and the stratosphere into the discussion.

An ambitious path that positions x721 at the intersection of the worlds of aeronautics, drones, and stratospheric and VLEO platforms.

A look back at the success of Mission M001 on July 24, 2026, in Nouvelle-Aquitaine, and what lies ahead.

X721 has recognized expertise in the design of ultralight aircraft as well as in conducting tests; its new aircraft is called the **Heliblade**.

The Heliblade's first test flight, designated M001, took place in Nouvelle-Aquitaine on Friday, July 24, 2026, at 7:45 a.m. (CET). The flight consisted of two phases: an initial level flight at 15 meters, followed by a second flight at an altitude of 35 meters.

During this mission, the Heliblade demonstrator officially completed its outdoor test flight, following a preliminary series of successful tests. This major milestone, as designated by the Ministry of the Armed Forces, confirms the maturity of the design and is part of an ambitious development program aimed at reaching the stratosphere by the end of 2028.

Classified as an experimental drone, the Heliblade demonstrator falls under the HALE (High Altitude Long Endurance) and HAPS (High Altitude Pseudo-Satellite) categories.

Heliblade M001: A Decisive First Test Flight.

The M001 mission marks a major milestone for the Heliblade program: the concept has now been validated through its first fully autonomous free flight in an outdoor environment.

Despite weather conditions that proved more challenging than expected, the demonstrator successfully completed all planned flight sequences. This test campaign confirmed the feasibility of the Heliblade concept (two wings stiffened by centrifugal force) and validated the key technologies that will underpin future generations of the system.

Equally important, this flight provided a wealth of experimental data, forming an essential foundation for the next phase of development.

X721 will now consolidate, archive, and analyze flight data from the M001 mission, comparing actual results with numerical models. The findings will be used to refine these models, identify areas for improvement, and guide both the design and the next series of flight test campaigns.

X721 is establishing its French subsidiary, x721 France, in Bordeaux Technowest - Mérignac.

By choosing the Nouvelle-Aquitaine region, renowned for the excellence of its aerospace and defense industries, x721 intends to develop a center of expertise dedicated to Very High Altitude (VHA) flights and missions to the **stratosphere**.

X721 France is preparing its team to take on the challenge of flying the Heliblade into the stratosphere by the end of 2028.

Céline Burger has been appointed CEO of x721 France.

Céline Burger holds a degree in engineering from INSA Lyon and has more than twenty years of experience in managing industrial sites, structuring industrial organizations, and overseeing operational performance.

She has built her career at major corporations such as Saint-Gobain, Vicat, Consolis, and Pigeon.



X721 France's mission will be to develop a high-performance unit dedicated to the design, testing, and production of the new Heliblade models. The subsidiary will aim to optimize industrial processes, strengthen computing, artificial intelligence, and data analysis capabilities, while accelerating the automation of production and support functions.

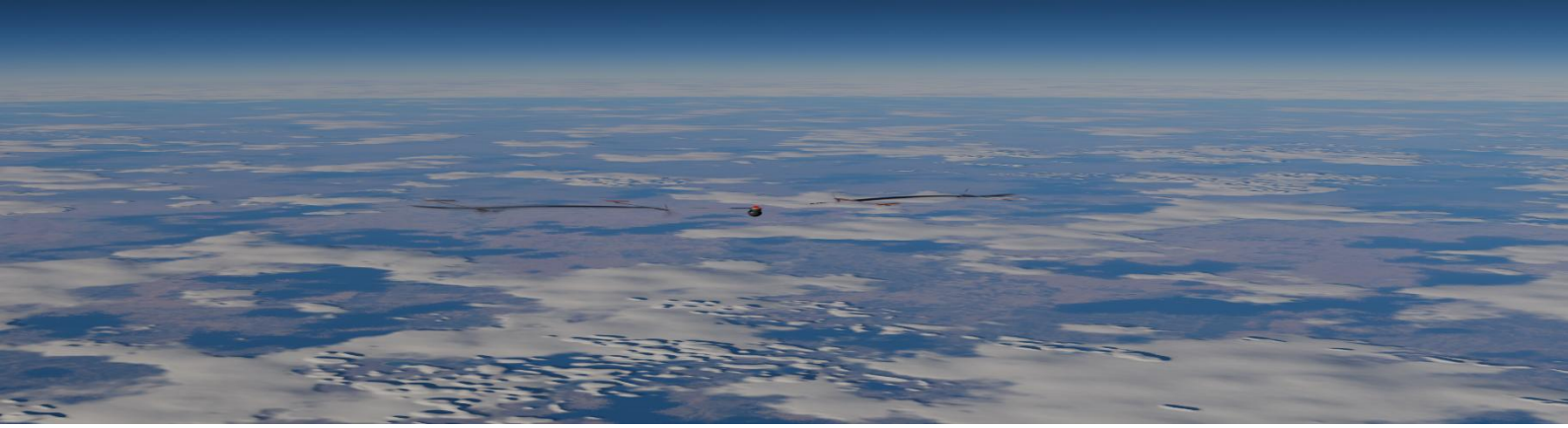
Startups like x721 know how to take the initiative and scale up quickly, relying on robust, agile, and collaborative supply chains.

X721 France is recruiting its technical team to guide the Heliblade into the stratosphere.

Between October 2026 and September 2027, our teams will carry out two key phases:

- PDR (Preliminary Design Review) Approval: Finalization of the design for the stratospheric Heliblade, including aerodynamics, wing design, flight control, onboard software architecture, and electrical systems (batteries and solar panels).
- Validation of the autopilot, incorporating all failure modes and fail-safe procedures.

By the end of 2027, the X721 France team will conduct test flights at altitudes between 1,000 and 3,000 meters.



According to Eric Poulliat, Vice President of Bordeaux Métropole, in charge of aeronautics, space, and defense.

“Bordeaux Métropole is pleased to welcome x721 to its region, a company that is breaking new ground in the stratosphere and represents the missing link between traditional aeronautics and the space industry—sectors that are already well-established in our region.”

According to Jean-Jacques Dordain, Chairman of the Board of x721:

"By combining experience and ingenuity, technology and practical application, x721 has every chance of bridging the gap between the upper atmosphere and very low Earth orbit, wherever and whenever there is a need to understand reality."

Operating at very high altitudes (THA) offers many advantages:

On-demand coverage, stable observation conditions, superior image quality, and rapid response capability. A multi-mission platform (**for observing, listening, or communicating**) that complements existing solutions by offering greater flexibility, faster access to data, and more precise context when every minute counts.

X721 aims to develop, by 2030, **a line of Heliblade devices** capable of reaching the upper atmosphere and the stratosphere, and to manufacture and market them globally.

The commercial launch is scheduled for late 2028, enabling users to observe, listen, and communicate quickly anywhere in the world.

X721 seeks to establish international business partnerships with organizations that can host the Heliblade at their facilities and assist with its operational and commercial development.

X721 aims to connect the air and ground platforms of modern companies through a solution that can be deployed quickly and is easily transportable.

In the long term, we can also consider applications in space exploration, particularly for missions in the Martian atmosphere.

About x721 and x721 France.

Founded in Dubai by Pierre-Eric Lys, x721 is an international company specializing in the design and development of a line of ultralight aircraft called Heliblade. X721 has recognized expertise in the design of ultralight aircraft and the conduct of high-altitude tests. The name X721 refers to the record set in March 2025 on a simulator by an Heliblade prototype, which simulated a flight up to 72,100 feet in altitude.

The company aims to make the Heliblade, by 2028, an ultralight aircraft capable of operating at very high altitudes (THA) worldwide. This program is being developed in France with the support of the French Air and Space Force and the DGA. To further its development, x721 established its French subsidiary, x721 France, in April 2026 to leverage the expertise of the French aerospace ecosystem and the infrastructure of the Nouvelle-Aquitaine region.

A test flight (Heliblade-M001) was successfully conducted in Nouvelle-Aquitaine and certified on July 24, 2026, by the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

The vision of Company x721 :

Deploy rapidly across the globe to **observe, listen, and communicate.**



Pour plus d'information

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