Astrobotic Awarded $199.5 Million Contract to Deliver NASA Moon Rover

Astrobotic’s Griffin lunar lander to carry the NASA VIPER mission to the south pole of the Moon in 2023, as a precursor to a human landing

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Pittsburgh, PA – Astrobotic, the world’s leading lunar logistics service provider, has been selected by NASA to deliver the Volatiles Investigating Polar Exploration Rover, or VIPER, to the south pole of the Moon in 2023.

Astrobotic will provide an end-to-end delivery for VIPER on board the company’s Griffin lunar lander through a $199.5 million contract awarded under the NASA Commercial Lunar Payload Services program, or CLPS. Griffin’s delivery of VIPER will be Astrobotic’s second CLPS delivery, following the company’s Peregrine lander
delivery in 2021. In addition, Astrobotic’s MoonRanger rover was previously selected by NASA for delivery to the Moon in 2022 on the lander of another CLPS partner.

The Griffin lunar lander is Astrobotic’s medium capacity lander product line, and is capable of delivering up to 500 kg of mass to the lunar surface. Griffin uses many of the same subsystems and approaches employed by the Peregrine lander, which will fly two years before VIPER. Both lander product lines put a heavy emphasis on safe and reliable delivery of customer payloads to the Moon.

When VIPER disembarks from Griffin’s ramps onto the Moon, it will survey the surface and subsurface for water ice, which could be used for breathable air and rocket propellant by future deep space explorers. VIPER’s mapping of lunar water ice could be the first step toward utilizing resources in the space environment – rather than carting them all from Earth – to enable more affordable and sustainable space exploration.

“It is an enormous honor and responsibility to be chosen by NASA to deliver this mission of national importance,” said Astrobotic CEO John Thornton. “Astrobotic’s lunar logistics services were created to open a new era on the Moon. Delivering VIPER to look for water and setting the stage for the first human crew since Apollo embodies our mission as a company.”

A press kit with photos and animations of Griffin and VIPER can be found here.

About Astrobotic
Astrobotic Technology, Inc. is a space robotics company that seeks to make space accessible to the world. Their lunar landers and rovers deliver payloads to the Moon for companies, governments, universities, non-profits, and individuals. They are also developing advanced space robotics capabilities such as terrain relative navigation, mobile robotics for lunar surface operations, and reliable computing systems for mission-critical applications. The company has more than 30 prior and ongoing NASA and commercial technology contracts and a corporate sponsorship with DHL. Astrobotic was founded in 2007 and is headquartered in Pittsburgh, PA.