

Wearable power competition announced

Calling all engineers and designers -- the U.S. Defense Department is sponsoring a competition to develop a wearable electric power system for war fighters.

Contestants will design a prototype of a battery pack weighing less than 8.8 pounds and capable of powering a standard service member's equipment for 96 hours, the department said in a news release Thursday. The standard, battery-operated equipment military personnel carry includes radios, night vision goggles and a global positioning system.

Prizes will be awarded to the top three teams in a demonstration under realistic conditions scheduled for fall 2008. Prizes are \$1 million for first place, \$500,000 for second and \$250,000 for third.

A public information forum will be held in the Washington area in September to brief potential competitors on the technical specs, competition rules and qualification requirements. Competitors must register to participate in program by Nov. 30, 2007.

The competition is open for international participation, but the individual or team leader must provide proof of U.S. citizenship.

Details on the forum, contest registration and rules are posted on the Defense Research and Engineering Prize Web site at <http://www.dod.mil/ddre/prize>.

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