VOICES
OF SUSTAINABILITY
BY THE ZAYED SUSTAINABILITY PRIZE

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THE FUTURE OF URBAN AIR MOBILITY

Voices of Sustainability Summary Report

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ABOUT VOICES OF SUSTAINABILITY

Voices of Sustainability is a thought leadership platform launched by the Zayed Sustainability Prize to explore the challenges and opportunities of the global transition to an inclusive and prosperous future. Each month, the series hosts the world's thought leaders to discuss the latest trends and themes in the sustainability agenda.

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INTRODUCTION

On 30 June 2025, the Zayed Sustainability Prize aired the 49th episode of its virtual fireside chat series, Voices of Sustainability. This episode explored the rise of electric vertical take-off and landing (eVTOL) aircraft and their potential to redefine mobility, urban infrastructure, and sustainable transportation.

The discussion featured Dr. Burt Guo, CEO and Chief Scientist of AEROFUGIA, a Chinese aviation innovator at the forefront of electric air mobility. Dr. Guo outlined the technological, economic, and societal shifts driving the evolution of eVTOL and shared how new aviation solutions can create cleaner, faster, and more inclusive urban transport systems.

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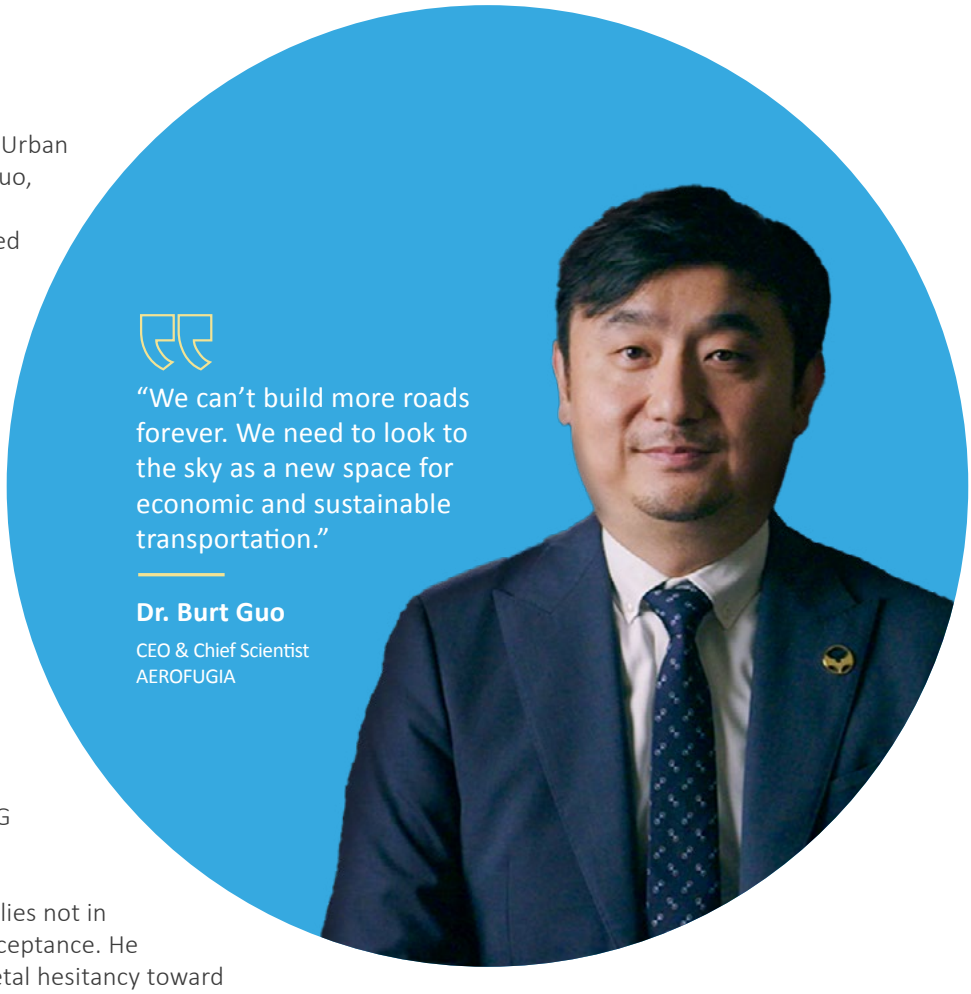
SUMMARY

The 49th episode, The Future of Urban Air Mobility, featured Dr. Burt Guo, who shared his vision of a near future where flying taxis powered by clean energy revolutionise the way people move through cities.

Dr. Guo began by previewing AEROFUGIA's goal to commercially launch its eVTOL service in the UAE as early as next year, with flights between Abu Dhabi and Dubai. He explained that the development of eVTOL aircraft is deeply linked to advances in electric vehicle (EV) infrastructure, allowing for shared systems like charging stations and communications networks powered by 5G and 6G technology.



A key challenge, Dr. Guo noted, lies not in the technology, but in public acceptance. He drew historical parallels to societal hesitancy toward electricity, automobiles, and commercial air travel—all of which are now commonplace.

Dr. Guo emphasised AEROFUGIA's role as an Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM) focused on delivering airworthy, safe, and cost-effective electric aircraft. The company was the first in China to complete full-scale flight tests with counter-rotor technology and is now advancing toward regulatory certification for commercial operation.

He highlighted how new energy aviation can overcome the limitations of traditional helicopters, such as excessive noise and cost, by offering quieter, greener, and more affordable solutions. He envisions a future where flying taxis offer time-saving convenience at only twice the price of a ground cab, eventually becoming a popular and efficient transportation option for the general public.

Beyond mobility, Dr. Guo also noted the broader societal benefits of eVTOL, including emergency response, medical transport, and public service delivery, helping cities become more adaptive, connected, and equitable.

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BIOGRAPHIES

Dr. Burt Guo

CEO & Chief Scientist, AEROFUGIA

Dr. Burt Guo is the CEO and Chief Scientist at AEROFUGIA, a leading Chinese OEM developing electric vertical take-off and landing (eVTOL) aircraft. Under his leadership, AEROFUGIA became the first company in China to complete full-profile eVTOL flight tests using counter-rotor technology. Dr. Guo is a pioneer in electric aviation and advocates for integrating eVTOLs into urban infrastructure to provide sustainable, high-efficiency, and accessible transport solutions.

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OUTCOMES

eVTOL technology has the potential to transform urban transport by offering faster, greener, and quieter mobility options.

Public acceptance and regulatory approval are key to scaling eVTOL adoption.

The eVTOL sector benefits from shared infrastructure with the electric vehicle industry, including charging stations and communication networks.

Mass production and energy efficiency can drive down costs, making aerial transport accessible to the wider public.

Urban air mobility solutions can enhance city resilience through applications like emergency response and medical transport.

Watch the full episode on the Zayed Sustainability Prize's YouTube channel

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