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Three aviation giants are working together to create hybrid electric planes

Airbus, Rolls-Royce, and Siemens are collaborating to create the technology necessary for a hybrid electric plane, the [companies said Tuesday](#). Known as the "E-Fan X programme," the collaboration started in 2012 as a response to the European Union's desire to reduce carbon dioxide emissions and nitrogen oxide pollution.

While the companies want to test a hybrid electric plane by 2020 and have one flying commercial flights by 2025, their goals are more modest

in the short term. The first step is creating an electric engine that could be placed on a traditional aircraft, the BAe 146.

The most pressing obstacle the companies will have to overcome is the current weight of the batteries and cooling equipment necessary for electric flight. If they're able to do so, it could make life much easier for airlines, who devote a significant amount of their budgets to fuel costs. Electric motors would also reduce the amount of noise airplanes make, which could allow airlines to schedule more evening flights.