



Autonomous ferry

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AUTONOMOUS ELECTRIC FERRY CAN BE CALLED LIKE AN ELEVATOR

 TRAVEL & TOURISM

The world's first electric, autonomous ferry is being tested in Norway in the hope it will end the need for expensive bridges over rivers and canals.

At Springwise, we have been covering a number of innovations in the field of autonomous vehicles. These include a self-driving [cargo ship](#) and a driverless, emissions-free [truck](#). Now engineers in Norway have developed an electric, driverless ferry, which they hope could end the need for building expensive bridges or manned ferries to carry people over the country's many rivers and canals.

The ferry was developed by the [Norwegian University of Science and Technology](#), and has been dubbed the 'autoferry'. A half-scale version is currently being tested, shuttling people and bicycles across the Trondheim channel between Ravnkloa and Vestre Kanalhavn.

The ferry's trial journey covers just 320 feet and takes a mere 60 seconds. But it saves pedestrians a 15-minute walk. Passengers can call for the ferry by pressing a button, just as they would call an elevator. The autonomous boat boasts four sensors, radar, an infrared camera, an optical camera, and LIDAR (Light Detection And Ranging) to help it avoid kayakers and other river traffic. The team also plan to have sensors on land to monitor any blind zones. The full-scale design will be able to carry around 12 passengers, along with bicycles and strollers. The electric ship charges its batteries at the dock, while passengers are embarking and disembarking.

The creators of the ferry hope that emissions-free, autonomous ferries like this could one day help to develop regions that lack connections to cities and towns due to a lack of infrastructure. They

also hope to make the technology scalable, so that the technology can function over longer distances and in more rural areas.

Researchers are also continuing to develop cyber security for the project, to prevent the possibility of hacking the ferry. The full-scale ferry could be in use sometime next year. Can autonomous ferries connect and revitalise isolated communities?

16th July 2018

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