

ASPIRE WITH ESA Call for Proposals - Commercially-driven Services and “Sustainable Development Goals” Summary

1. Introduction - ESA S2 and ASPIRE WITH ESA

ESA Space Solutions program (ESA S2), ESA's business innovation program, supports businesses willing to bring new Space-related products and services to market. Specifically, ESA S2 aims at:

- advancing the growth and global competitiveness of the **Space Downstream**¹ and **NewSpace** industries of the Participant States;
- multiplying the Space-dependent range of products and services (i.e. **services**) delivered to customers (i.e. **innovation**) sustained through private / customer investment or funding sources; and
- attracting a wider range of actors into the end-to-end Space value chain, especially in **sectors of major economic importance**.
- Generate direct [social and commercial benefits](#) to Participant States economies and citizens worldwide

ASPIRE WITH ESA is the name of a series of ESA S2 Calls for Innovation targeting mission-led innovation. The Calls rely on a new, more agile and responsive way to access ESA programmes named *EISI* (*ESA Initial Support for Innovation*), providing innovators (i.e., economic operators requesting funds through the Call):

- a streamlined funding request process with [short and guaranteed response times](#);
- funding **up to €200,000**, linked to the conditions of the present Call; these include satisfactory progress and compliance with ESA S2 programmatic element;
- a light implementation process requiring [minimum formal reporting](#); and
- a [package of benefits](#) from ESA S2 to innovators, including amongst others, technical expertise, business know-how and access to ESA S2 business networks.

2. ASPIRE WITH ESA Call for Proposals

The present Call invites eligible innovators to submit their funding request for Innovation to the ESA S2 Programme. Successful innovators (i.e. Applicants) will enter in contract (i.e. **Agreement**) with ESA S2.

2.1. Call for Proposals scope

ASPIRE WITH ESA supports *Innovators* in bringing Space-enhanced mission-led innovations closer to market. Main goals are to:

- evidence customer engagement and market traction (**Proof of Market**);

¹ Space Downstream refers to the exploitation of Space technology (e.g. satellite telecomms, imagery, GPS positioning)



- consolidate service elements (**Proof of Concept**); and
- demonstrate social impact and business sustainability, i.e., Socio-Economic Impact (**Proof of Sustainability**);

Innovators shall be commercially-driven businesses with a clear case for [business benefit and social impact](#). They shall demonstrate relevant utilisation of Space assets & technologies within their proposed innovations.

ASPIRE WITH ESA is mission-led: the Proposal shall demonstrate social impact through the [UN's Sustainable Development Goals Framework \(SDG\)](#) together with immediate and long-lasting [Socio-Economic Impact](#). Both are linked: without economic impact, there will not be any social or sustainable ones. ASPIRE WITH ESA will use both sets (SDG and SEI) to measure the success of the proposed innovations.

2.2. Eligibility

Below are the eligibility criteria for the present Call for Innovation:

- Nationality: innovators shall be based in any of the **participating States** supporting both ESA S2 and ASPIRE WITH ESA²;
- Commercial drive: innovators shall be **commercially-driven businesses**, with a clear case for [business benefit and social impact](#);
- Use of Space: innovators shall demonstrate **relevant utilisation** of Space assets & technologies within their proposed services.
- Co-financing: innovators shall have the capability to **co-finance** at least 50 %³ of the acceptable costs; public grants or ESA contracts are not acceptable as co-financing. Innovators shall not have benefitted from any other public financial support which together with the current EISI application would exceed €200,000 over a period of 3 years, considered on a rolling basis.
- Validity of the funding requests from call closing: minimum of 3 months.
- Others: full acceptance of the General Clauses for ASPIRE EISI Agreements and compliance with the specific conditions of the EISI draft agreement. Agreements will last for a maximum of 9 months.

2.3. Funding request submission and selection

Application process:

The application progress has two steps, as requested by the Member States supporting ASPIRE WITH ESA:

1. Pitching Stage: Any Innovator with legal offices in any of the Member States supporting ASPIRE WITH ESA and meeting the eligibility criteria can submit a pitch. The pitch shall be [submitted electronically](#) and must comply with the [provided guidelines](#) (pitching slides + pitching video).
2. Proposal Stage: Should the pitch be considered for ASPIRE WITH ESA, the Innovator will be invited to submit a funding request (proposal) through the [electronic submission tool](#), attaching to it the activity costs breakdown form, letter of authorisation from the relevant [National Delegation\(s\)](#), support letters from the customer community and the Draft Agreement prefilled, but not signed.

² Currently CZ, DK, EE, FI, FR, HU, IE, IT, LU, PL, RO, SE, UK

³ This funding can go up to 80 % upon explicit authorisation from the corresponding National Delegation (see section 2.3)



Pre-requisites:

- **ESA-STAR Registration:** innovators, at the time of submission, shall at least have completed “Light Registration” as described in the [ESA-STAR Registration User Manual](#).
- **National Delegation Support:** innovators need written authorisation from their [National Delegations](#) at the time of submission, and are requested to get in touch with them as soon as possible.

Calendar:

Below are the dates relevant to the present ASPIRE WITH ESA Call:

1. 01/12/2021: Call opening
2. 22/01/2022: Deadline for pitch submission
3. 05/02/2022: Notification on the selected pitches to submit a proposal
4. 26/02/2022: Deadline for Proposal submission
5. 22/04/2022: Notification of results and dispatch of the ASPIRE EISI Agreement signed by the Agency
6. 02/05/2022: Kick-off

Submission:

Application process is online through the [Funding request form](#) attaching to it:

- [Activity costs breakdown form](#)
- **Letter of authorisation** from National Delegation
- **Draft Agreement:** Innovators shall fill details and sign it upon submission

Selection:

Funding requests received will be assessed by scoring each eligible question by a dedicated independent evaluation committee using a scale from 0 (lowest score) to 5 (highest score). The final score will be the average of all evaluator scores and normalised to 100 using the criteria below. Award mark is 65 or above, limited to the budget made available by National Delegations.

| Criteria | Weight |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|
| Team and co-financing capability. | 25 % |
| Credibility of business idea & market potential, incl. utilisation of space technology. | 25 % |
| Credibility of implementation plan. | 20 % |
| Socio-Economic Impact to deliver during and after the Agreement. | 30 % |

Confidentiality:

ESA will treat all funding requested received in strict confidence.

2.4. Notifications and Feedback

Upon evaluation completion, innovators will be notified on the success of their funding requests. Innovators will receive the final scoring achieved during the selection as official feedback. ESA S2 reserves the right to request clarification and/or additional information before sending any official notification..

2.5. Kick-off

Successful innovators will receive the Final ASPIRE WITH ESA Agreement signed. Should they wish to withdraw from the Agreement, he/she should write to aspirewithesa@esa.int before the Agreement's Kick-Off date.

2.6. Complaints

Any complaints should be addressed in writing to aspirewithesa@esa.int. ASPIRE WITH ESA aims to respond within 10 days after carefully assessing any complaint received.

3. Implementation

This section provides guidance on [how to report](#) as well as the [ESA S2 benefits](#) provided as part of the Agreement.

3.1. Duration, reporting and payments

Duration:

Agreements will last up to 9 months.

Quarterly reporting and monitoring:

Reporting informs ESA S2 on the good evolution of Agreement. Requirement is to report on every first Monday of the quarter (e.g. 6 April 2020 for Agreements starting on 1st January. 2020) Reporting is mandatory for the eligibility of any financial claims. Quarterly reporting is done online through the [Reporting tool](#), reflecting on:

- Technical, schedule, financial status and deviations.
- Socio-Economic Impact achieved.

Not reporting over two consecutive terms, not delivering in the agreed terms or not participating in the quarterly meetings will cause immediate cease of the Agreement.

Quarterly meetings will take place on the second Monday of the quarter collectively with other beneficiaries. Meetings will have a plenary session for all participants to show progress, and individual sessions with each innovator for specific details.

Final quarter report:

On top of the usual quarterly reporting, the [Reporting tool](#) will ask the beneficiary for the following deliverables to close the Agreement:

- A business plan, related to the activity developed under the ASPIRE WITH ESA Agreement. ESA S2 will keep the business plan confidential.
- An innovation pitch deck, describing the activity undertaken and the long-term sustainability impact (Optional, Investment pitch deck, for those beneficiaries looking to raise private investment and / or access to ESA's investment network).
- A Final Report, summarising the activities performed during the Agreement and the Socio-Economic Impact achieved. This deliverable will be published.

Payments:

Innovators shall submit their invoices with each quarterly report using [ESA-P](#). The Agreement foresees the following 4 payments:

| | Advance payment | Q1 payment | Q2 payment | Q3 (final) payment |
|-----|-----------------|------------|------------|--------------------|
| SME | 35 % | 20 % | 20 % | 25 % |



| | | | | |
|---------|------|------|------|------|
| Non-SME | 25 % | 25 % | 25 % | 25 % |
|---------|------|------|------|------|

Agreement withdrawal

The Beneficiary can withdraw from the agreement at any time by writing a letter to aspirewithesa@esa.int indicating his/her reasons for withdrawing and refunding to ESA S2 any outstanding credit.

3.2. ESA S2 additional benefits

Beneficiaries of an ASPIRE WITH ESA Agreement can access the following additional benefits on top of the funding:

- Up to 10 hours technical expert support.
- Up to 10 hours business & marketing support.
- Access to scheduled ESA masterclasses on space technology and business.
- Access to ESA Space Solutions network of companies and mentors.

Technical and business support shall be requested in writing through aspirewithesa@esa.int.

3.3. Post-Agreement Commitments

ASPIRE WITH ESA Agreements entail additional commitments to further understand any impact achieved. Not meeting them implies rejection from any further ESA S2 funding.

Socio-Economic Impact reporting post-agreement

ESA S2 will request yearly updates on the Socio-Economic Impact achieved. This commitment lasts for 5 years after finalising the Agreement.

ESA S2 events

ESA S2 organises different events aiming at promoting industry and their activities. Participation in one of them is mandatory and will be agreed with ESA S2. This commitment lasts up to 5 years after finalisation of the Agreement.

4. Socio-Economic Impact (SEI)

ESA S2 activities success is their capability to deliver long-lasting Socio-Economic Impact (SEI), measured through a set of indicators. Innovators will report and evidence the SEI achieved during the Agreement and afterwards (See section 3).

4.1. ESA S2 SEI Indicators

Below are the 10 indicators used to measure SEI:

| KPI # | Description | Data Type | Measure |
|-------|--------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) impact – See below | Quantitative and Qualitative | SDG Goal and indicators within SDG Goals targeted, including a plan to measure / evidence of achieved impact |
| 2 | Revenue | Quantitative (M€) | Cumulative income to date, and 5 year projection, in M€ |
| 3 | Exports | Quantitative (%) | % of Revenue obtained through Exports & countries of export |
| 4 | Jobs | Quantitative (FTE) | Number of Jobs created and sustained as a result of the Agreement (FTE and part-time) |
| 5 | Investment Leverage | Quantitative (M€) | In M€, includes total 3rd party investment in terms of equity, debt, grant, public funds or Mergers & Acquisitions (M&A) as a result of the project, excluding ESA or Agreement co-financing |
| 6 | Addressable Market | Quantitative (M€) | Annual potential revenue should the company have a 100% market share |
| 7 | Market & Innovation | Quantitative (Ansoff Matrix) | Statement on the services or markets developed thanks to the agreement (service development / diversification; markets: increase penetration / develop new ones) |
| 8 | Patents & Record of Invention | Quantitative (#) | Patents related to the services developed as a result of the Agreement. |
| 9 | Extent of Value Chain | Quantitative (#) | Number of new relationships across the value chain established thanks to the Agreement (new paying customers, new contracts with suppliers) |
| 10 | Value Creation | Quantitative (#) and qualitative | The estimated value to the customer/industry/society given by the goods or services developed under the Agreement |

4.2. United Nations' "Sustainable Development Goals" Framework

ASPIRE WITH ESA endorses United Nations' [Sustainable Development Goals \(SDG\) Framework](#). It is a way to justify the societal purpose of supported innovations and to measure Societal Benefits (SEI KPI 10). SDGs are a call for action by all countries - poor, rich and middle-income - to promote prosperity while protecting the environment.



[SDG is a full framework with goals, targets and indicators](#). ASPIRE WITH ESA activities require a link to (a) SDG indicator(s) and define procedures to track and report quantifiable impact during and after finalising the Agreement.

5. Pitching guidelines

Any innovator willing to submit a pitch for consideration under ASPIRE WITH ESA shall provide a pitching slides deck and a pre-recorded video.

5.1. Pitching Slides Deck

The Innovator will provide a slides deck showing an **overview of his/her proposed innovation**. The slides deck will cover the following topics in no more than **12 slides**:

1. Presentation of the Innovator / Innovator consortium.
2. Problem statement.
3. Proposed solution, highlighting the roles of Space in the Innovation.
4. Value proposition and quantified benefits
5. Market opportunity, market size and risks.
6. Competition.
7. Commercialisation & marketing strategy.
8. Financial projections.
9. Team.
10. Socio-Economic Impact
11. Sustainable Development Goals addressed and initial plan to meet relevant indicators.
12. Your ask, your co-financing means and how will you spend ASPIRE WITH ESA funding

5.2. Pitching Slides Deck

The Innovator will record himself / herself pitching using the pitching slides as reference. Pitching videos shall not exceed **5 minutes** and shall be in **English**. They shall cover the most relevant aspects of the pitching deck and be convincing regarding the socio-economic impact to deliver.

The innovator will post the video on a website or streaming service and provide ASPIRE WITH ESA with the URL to visualise it. It is the responsibility of the Innovator to ensure ASPIRE WITH ESA can stream the video properly from the provided URL. If ASPIRE WITH ESA cannot access to the video, the pitch will be discarded.

Annex: Glossary

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|-----------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| ASPIRE EISI Agreement | The written agreement between the Agency and the Beneficiary which formalises the particular EISI terms and conditions and awarding a fixed amount to the Beneficiary. |
| Applicant | Economic Operators submitting an ASPIRE WITH ESA Proposal, also referred to as “Innovators”. |
| Beneficiary | The economic operator who has entered into an ASPIRE EISI Agreement with the Agency. |
| Customer | Entity paying in exchange of services provided. |
| EISI | <i>ESA Initial Support for Innovation</i> , ESA’s new scheme |
| ESA | European Space Agency |
| ESA S2 | ESA Space Solutions |
| Innovation | Bringing services to market |
| Innovator | Individual or company willing to do innovation in the setting of the ASPIRE WITH ESA initiative |
| New Space | Private development of Space Economy |
| Service | In the scope of this call, generic name to group both products (one-time sale offering) and services (recurrent sales offering) |
| Space asset | Any space technology, data or capability allowing innovators to develop new services. Examples of Space Assets are Earth Observation Data, GNSS tracking / timing data, Satellite Telecommunications, Human Spaceflight technologies or ESA Patents. |
| Space Downstream | Exploitation of Space Assets as services on ground on any economic sector |