

# Rural Transportation Networks

## Kick-start Competitive Call for Proposals – Webinar

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**Maria Zaretskaya**  
**Business Applications and Space Solutions (BASS)**  
**European Space Agency**

## EUROPE'S GATEWAY TO SPACE

WHAT

23 Member States, 5000 employees

WHY

Exploration and use of space

WHERE

HQ in Paris, 7 sites across Europe and a spaceport in French Guiana

HOW MUCH

€8.26 billion = €12 per European per year



# European Space Agency's Four Main Pillars

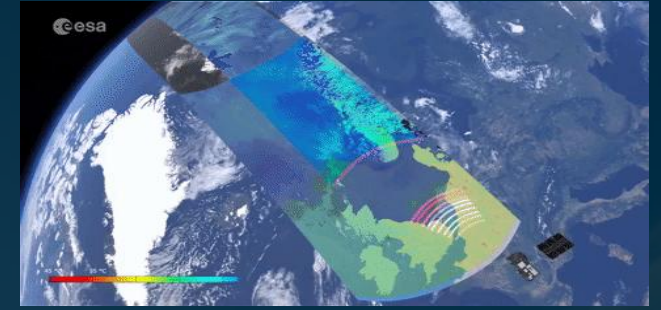
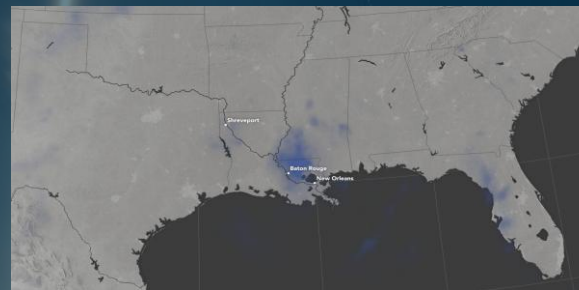
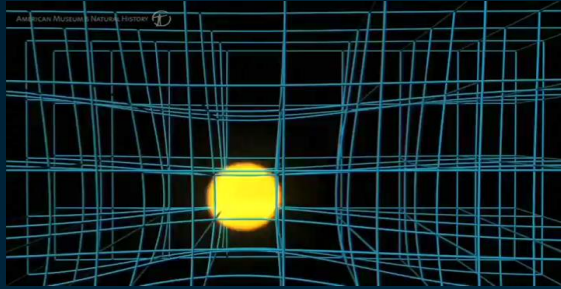


## Science and Exploration

## Enabling and Support

## Safety and Security

## Applications





# Space Improves Life on Earth



# Business Applications and Space Solutions (BASS)

Using any space asset(s) and integrating them with terrestrial assets for the benefit of life on Earth



# What ESA Space Solutions offer



Our aim is to work together to make your idea commercially viable, with:



Zero-Equity Funding  
(€50K-€2M+)



Tailored Project Management Support



Access to our Network and Partners



Use of ESA Brand for Credibility



## Socio-economic

Social, green value and economic sustainability



## Space Use

Utilisation of space in new markets and user communities



## Industry Competitiveness

European Industry competitiveness on global space and non-space markets



6 months duration

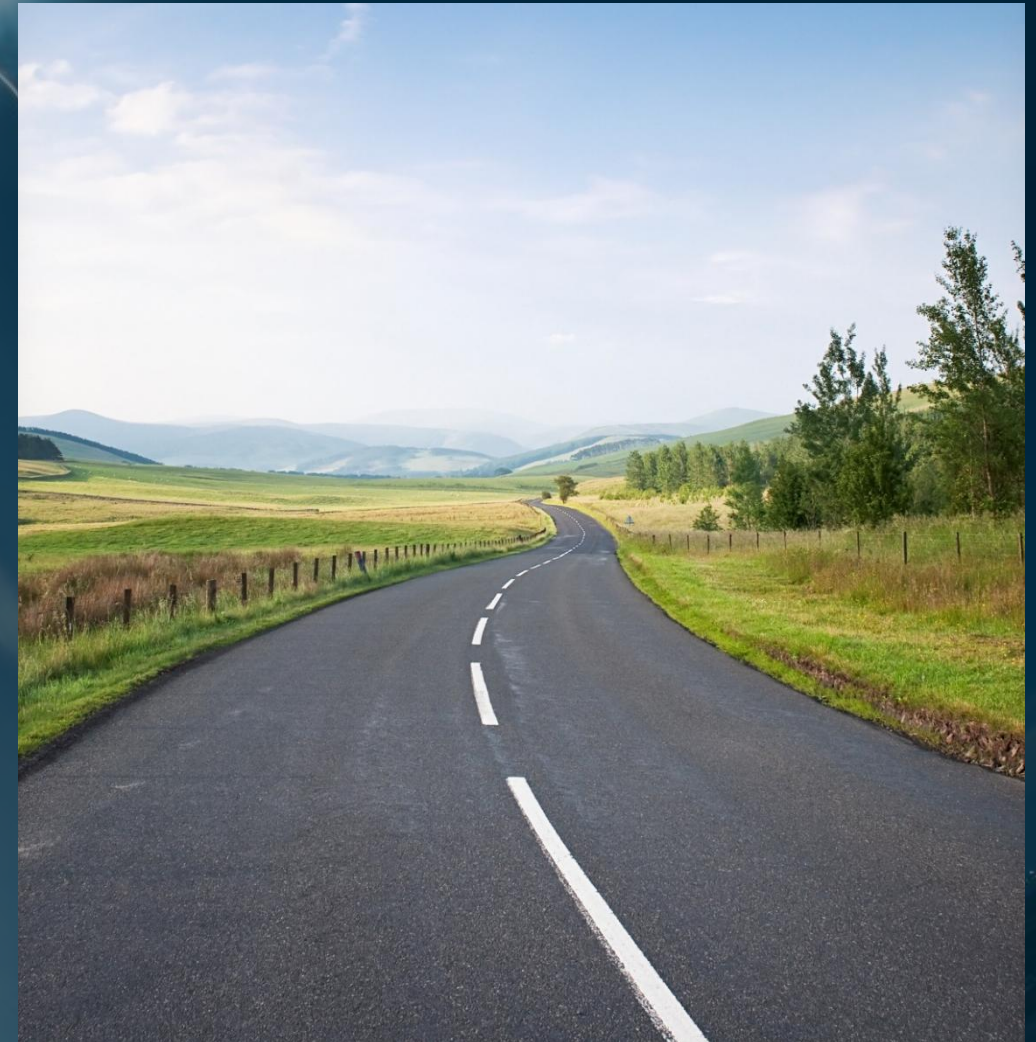
75% funding from the European Space Agency to a maximum of €75,000 for each selected study

Kick-starts are a type of feasibility study. The aim of a Kick-start is to determine whether a service is **technically feasible and commercially viable**.

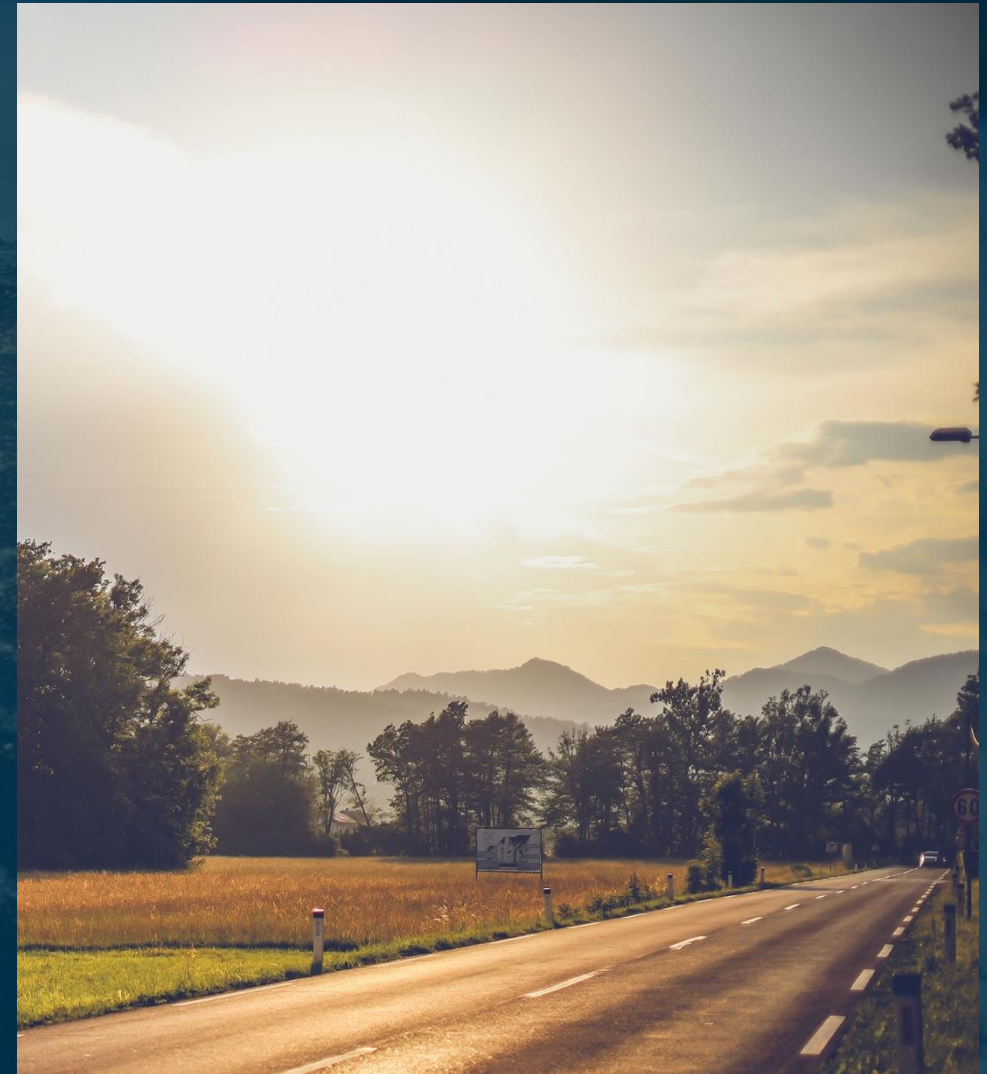
During a Kick-start, the business will:

- Verify the technical service architecture,
- Engage with potential customers,
- Improve the business plan,
- Establish next steps in developing the service.

[Rural Transportation Networks Kick-Start website](#)



- Rural transportation networks play a crucial role in connecting remote areas to urban centres, facilitating the movement of people and goods, and supporting economic development.
- Rural networks often face challenges such as limited infrastructure, low population density, and geographical obstacles.
- In Europe, there is significant market potential for improving rural transportation networks. The European Union (EU) has been investing in rural development and transportation infrastructure to reduce the gap between urban and rural areas.



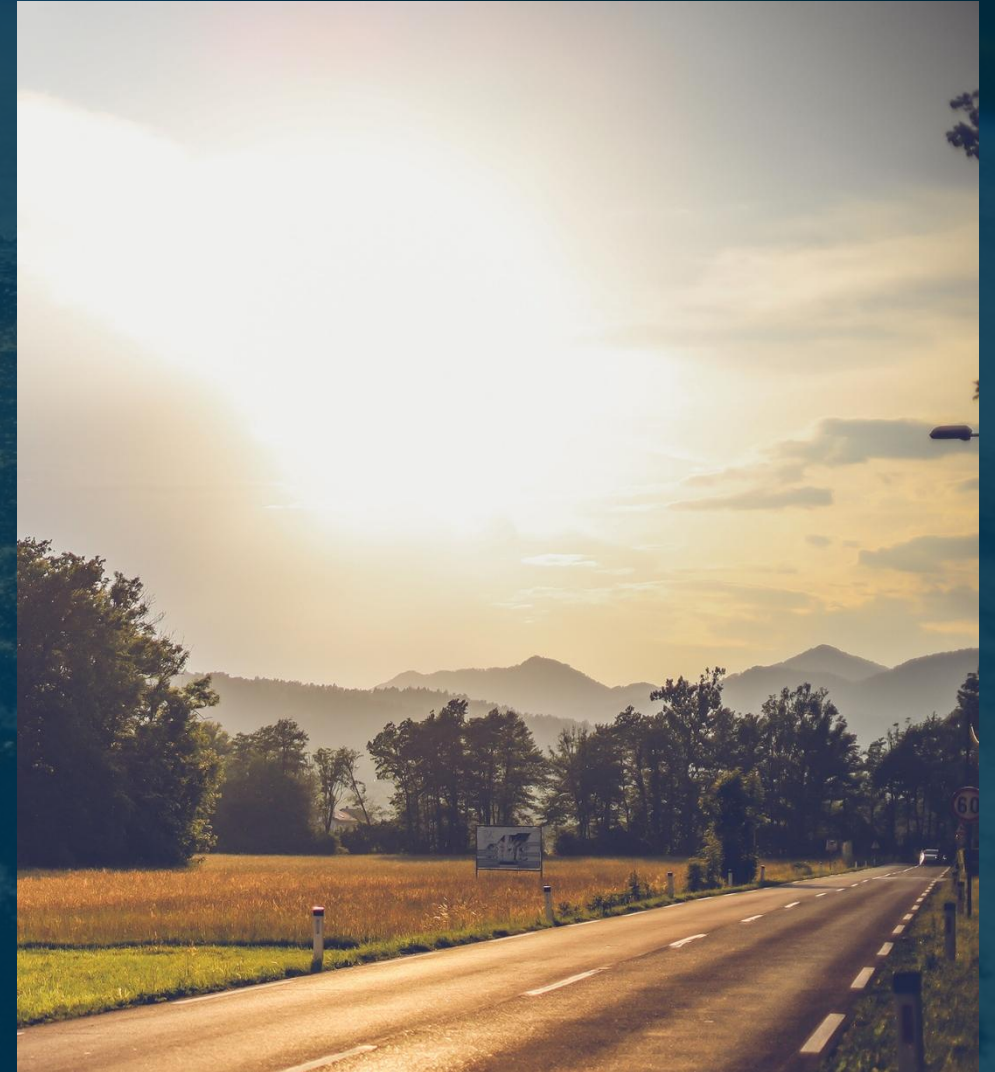
## What we look for?

We invite submissions of early-stage service concepts that:

- Address customer needs,
- Show commercial potential and technical feasibility,
- Leverage satellite data or space technology.

Kick-starts should be led by experienced, motivated teams, with a clear ambition and a credible pathway to developing commercially viable services.

\*Companies can use space data from any provider.



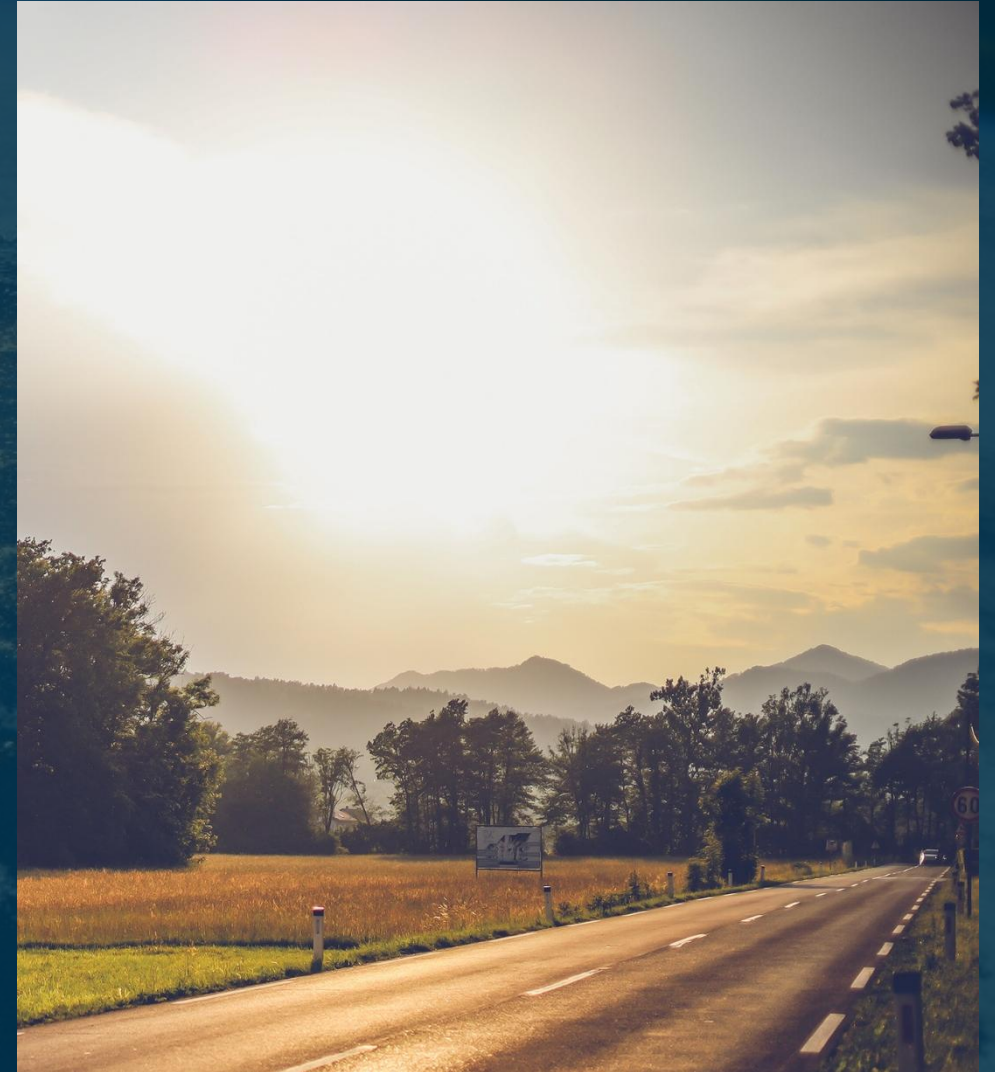
## What do we offer?

During Kick-start activity teams develop their business case, work on technical aspects, and engage actively with users and customers.

We offer:

- **75% funding** from the European Space Agency to a maximum of €75,000 for each selected study, provided on a zero-equity basis. The total cost per study is up to €100,000
- Tailored **Project Management support** from an ESA TO
- Access to **our network and partners**
- **Use of the ESA brand** for credibility

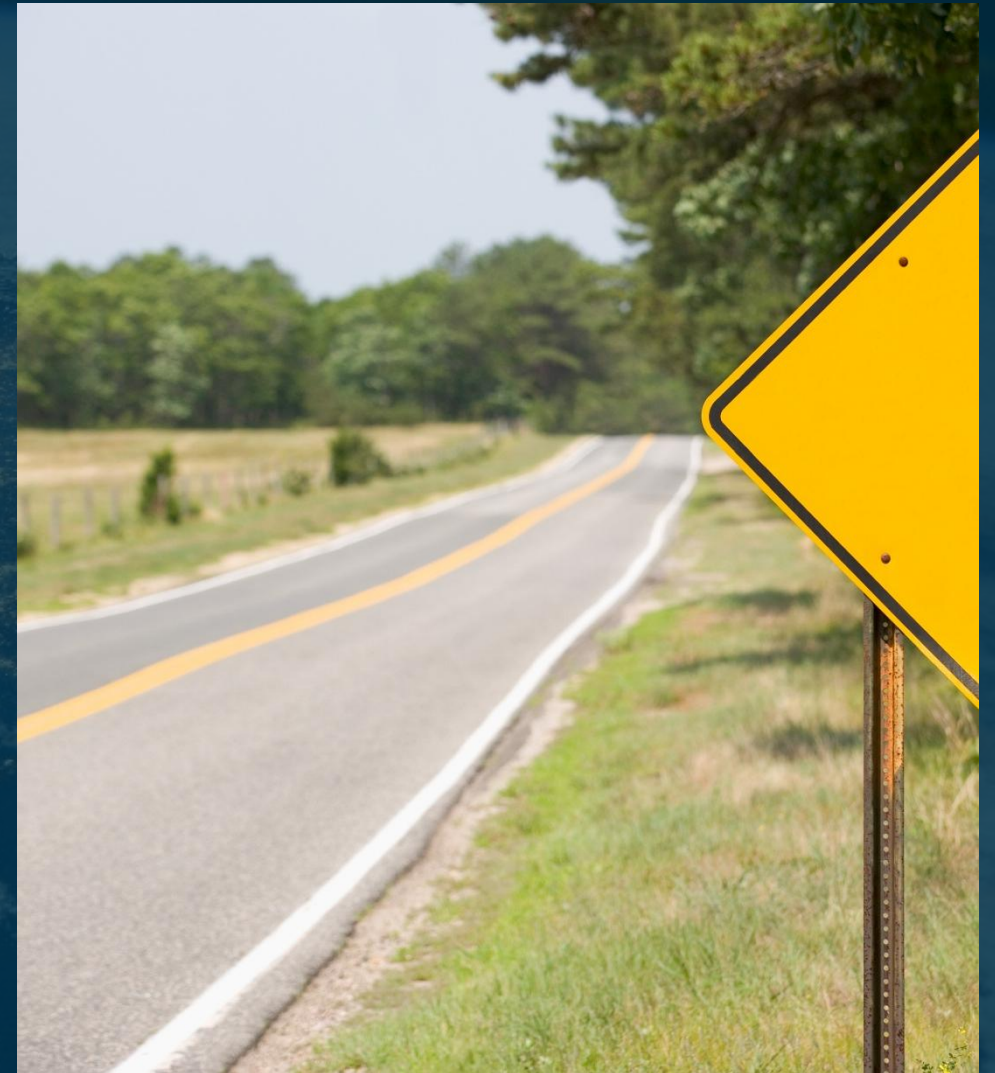
Please note that we do not provide direct access to space data, nor are we responsible for the space segment of service development.



Proposed services should enhance rural transport systems by **improving safety, resilience, accessibility, and sustainability** through the integration of advanced smart technologies and satellite data.

Environmental Impact Assessment: Support sustainable planning and development.

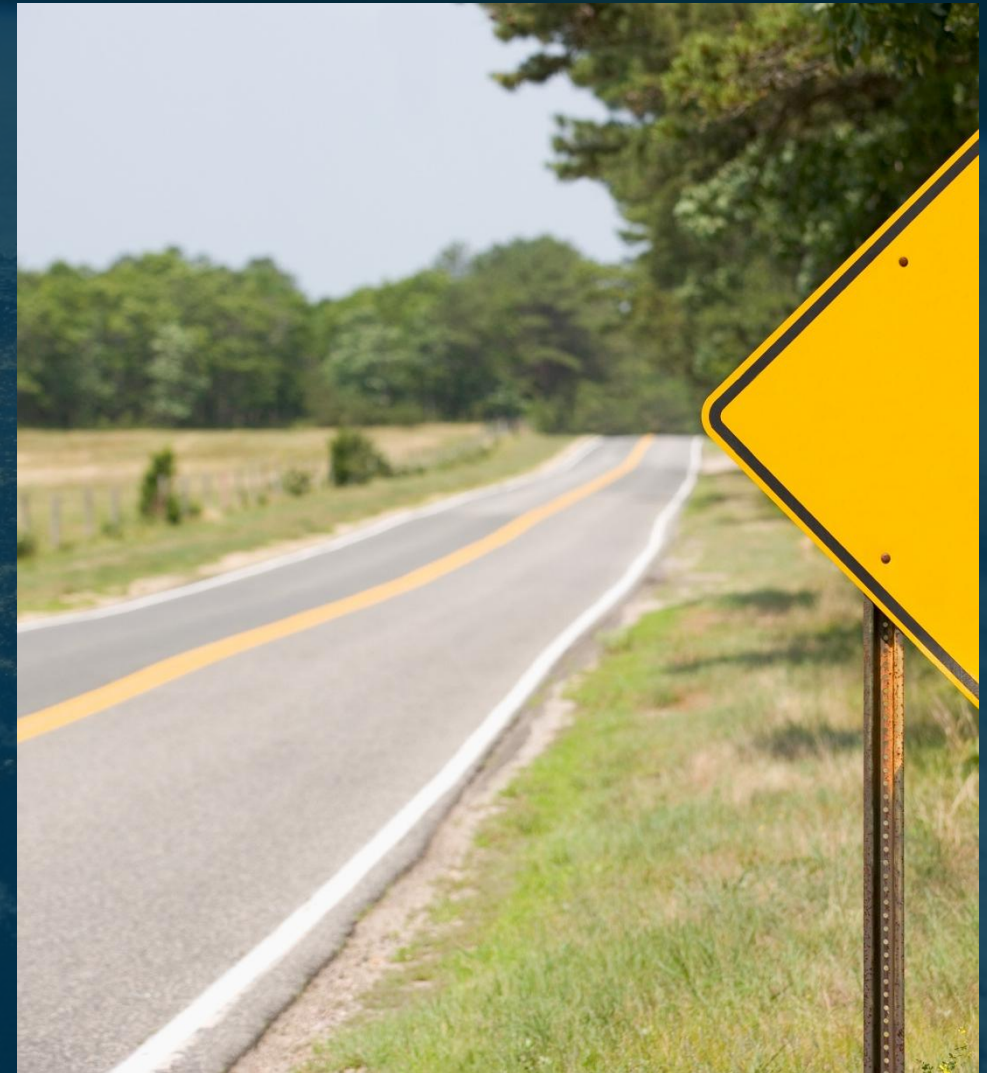
Logistics, Supply Chain & Fleet Management: Space-enabled tracking and monitoring services can improve logistics, streamline fleet operations, and ensure timely vehicle maintenance across rural supply chains. Additionally, these technologies bolster the resilience of logistics and transport infrastructure by providing real-time data for rapid response to disruptions and enabling more robust planning against unforeseen challenges.



**Public Transport Enhancement:** Services that increase the frequency, coverage, and reliability of rural public transport - such as dynamic scheduling based on real-time demand - can provide essential support for rural communities.

**Autonomous Vehicle Integration:** Services that enable autonomous vehicles to operate in rural areas, supported by infrastructure such as Vehicle-to-Infrastructure (V2I) communications, dedicated lanes, and smart sensors, hold promise for improving safety.

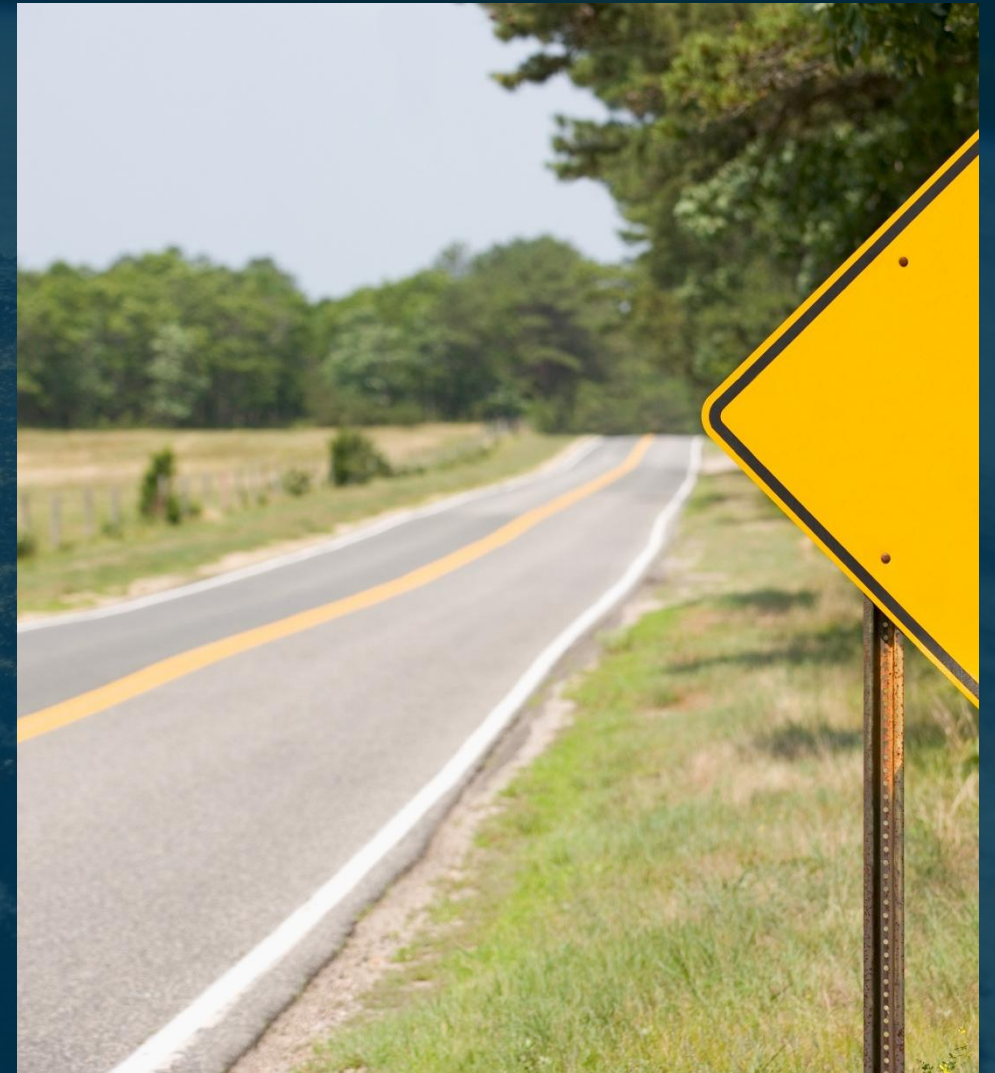
**Charging Points Expansion:** Services for installing and managing accessible EV charging stations in remote regions, overcoming grid limitations, and providing intelligent routing to charging locations are vital for broad electric vehicle adoption in rural settings.



**Road Condition Monitoring:** Satellite-enabled services can monitor road quality, facilitate maintenance planning, and deliver real-time updates to drivers, improving safety and efficiency.

**Route Optimisation:** AI-driven services using real-time data can shorten journey times, reduce fuel consumption, and promote eco-friendly travel.

**Emergency Response:** Satellite-supported services can enhance the speed and coordination of emergency responses in rural areas, strengthening situational awareness and potentially saving lives.

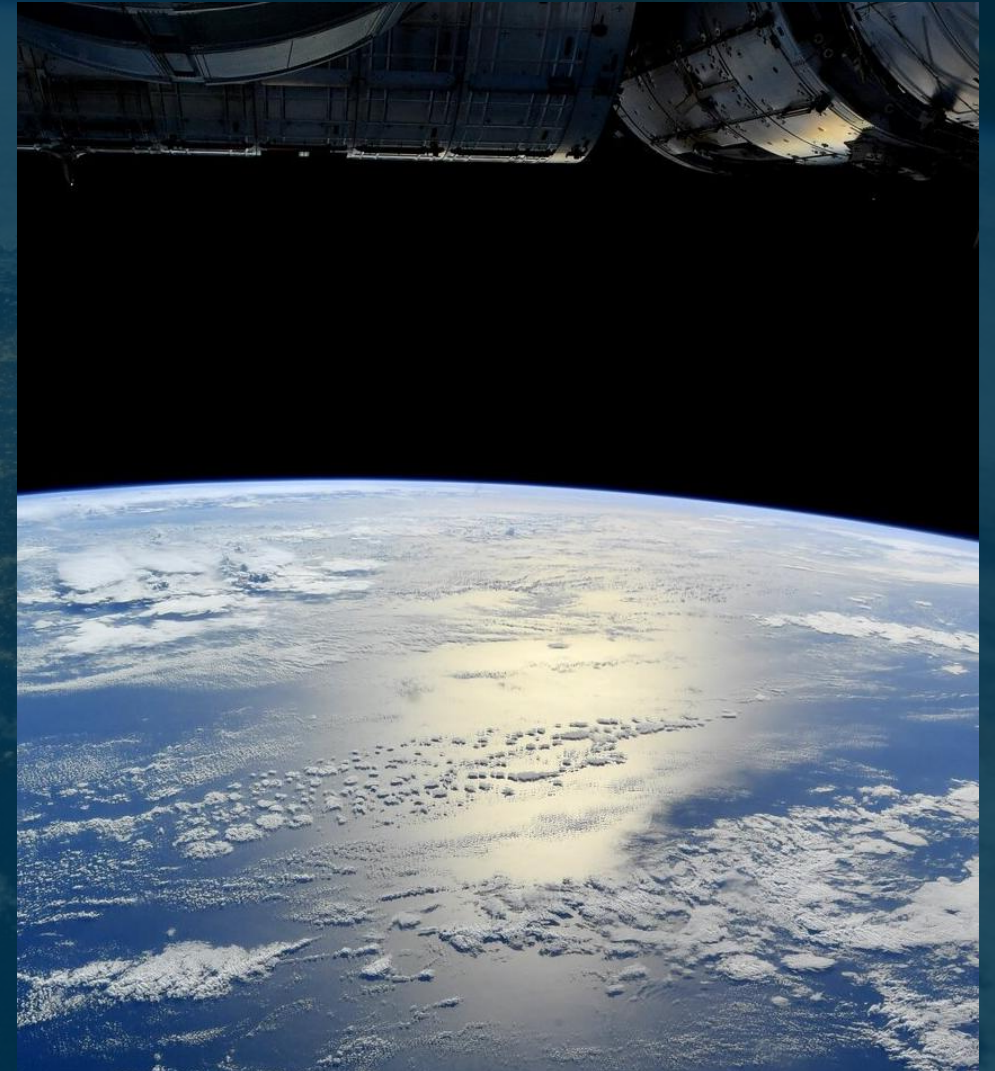


To be eligible for this Kick-Start, proposed service concepts must make essential and justified **use of space assets**.

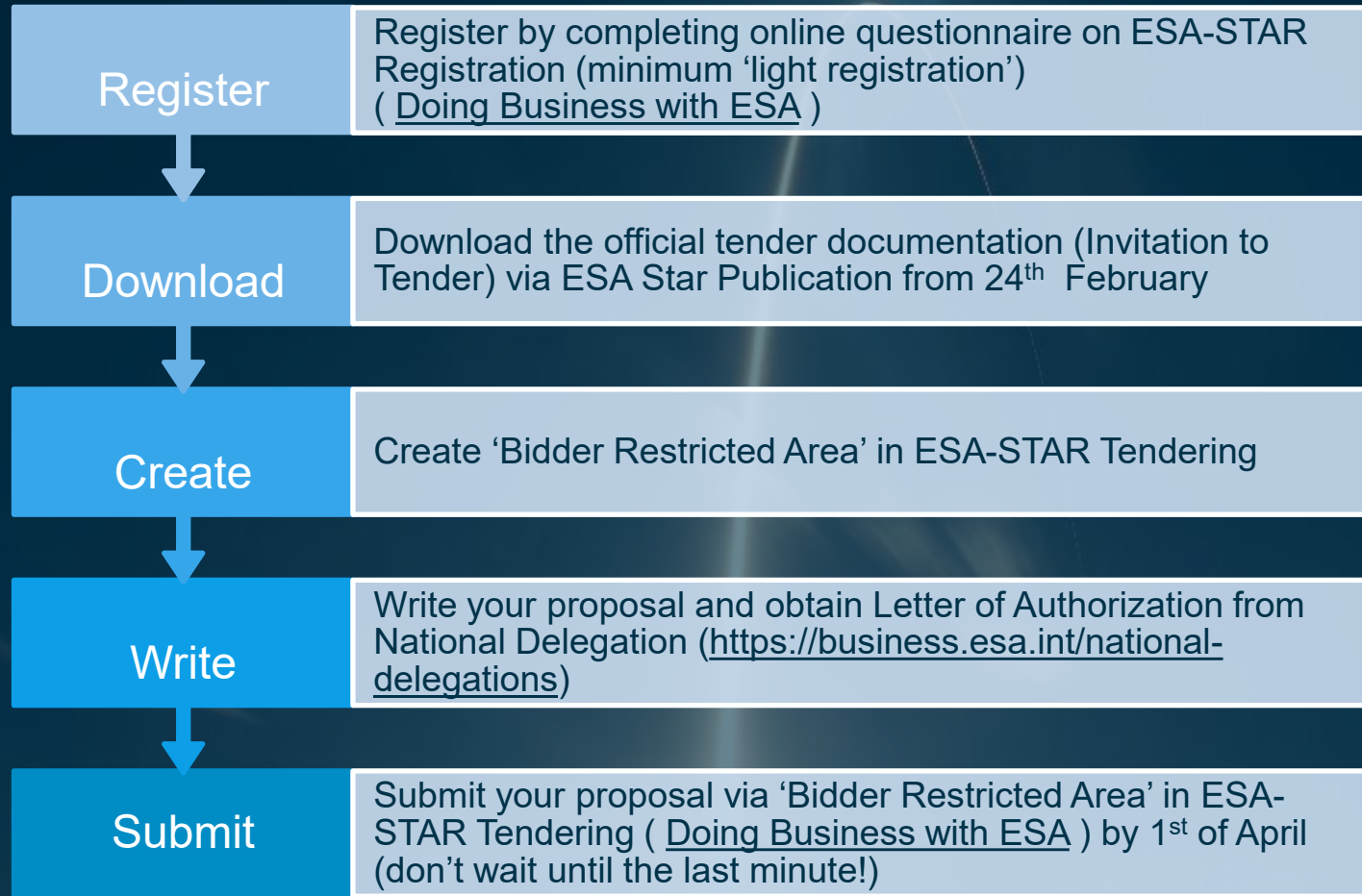
**Satellite Earth Observation (SatEO):** SatEO delivers essential data for monitoring road conditions, environmental impacts, and planning infrastructure. It helps detect surface deformation, flooding, vegetation encroachment, and road wear for improved road maintenance and situational awareness.

**Satellite Communications (Satcom):** Satcom enables reliable communication networks in rural areas, supporting data sharing, vehicle-to-infrastructure (V2I), and vehicle-to everything (V2X) connectivity to enhance safety and transportation management.

**Global Navigation Satellite System (GNSS):** GNSS improves route planning, optimises travel and fuel use, and supports emergency response and autonomous vehicle navigation in rural areas.



# How to apply?



## → Proposal template from ESA-STAR

Your Proposal shall include the following information:

1. Executive Summary (max 1 pages)
2. Business Potential (max 5 pages)
3. Technical Concept (max 5 pages)
4. Team and Resources (max 3 pages)
5. Management (max 4 pages)
6. Financials (max 2 pages)



ESA UNCLASSIFIED



European Space Agency

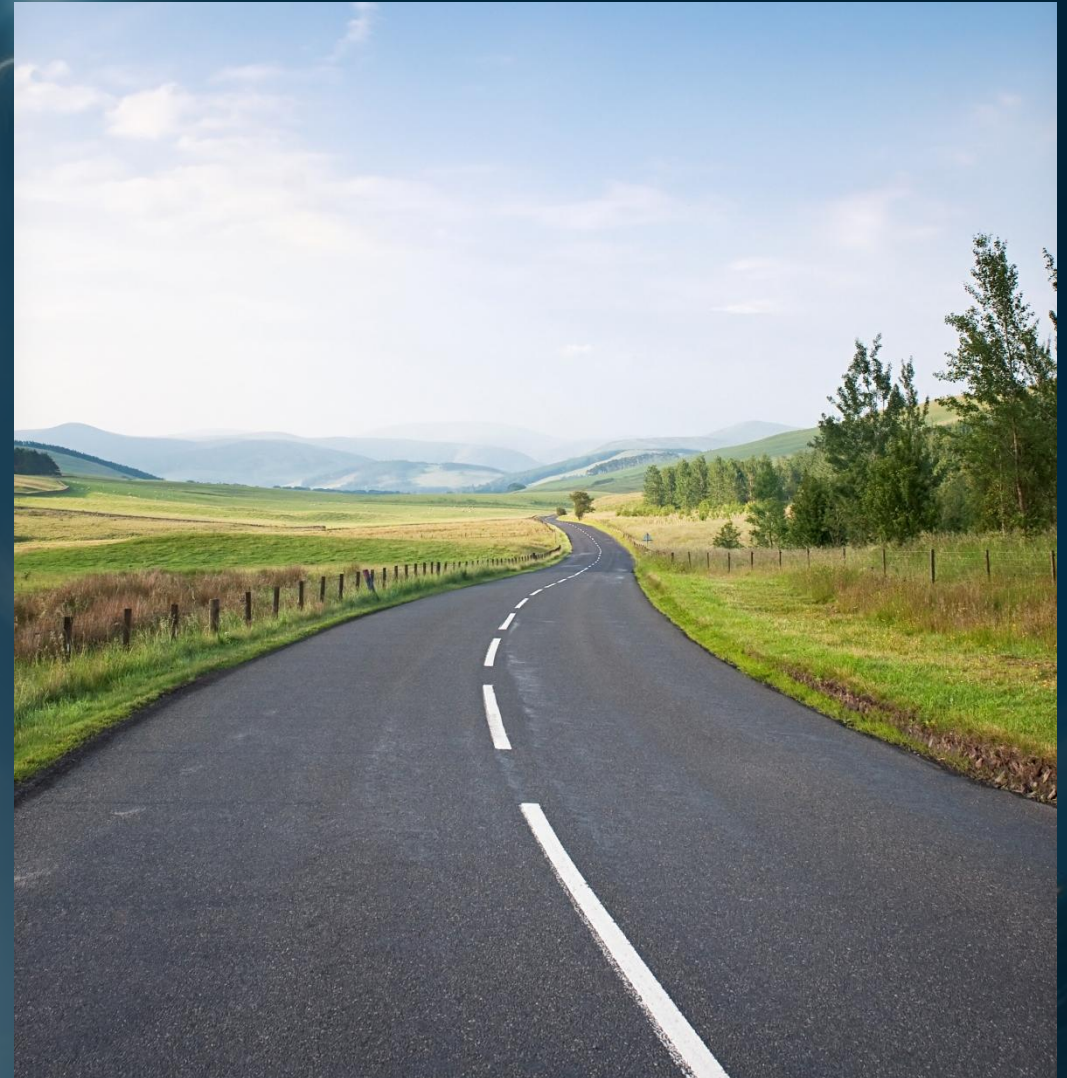
This opportunity is open to companies that intend to develop space-enabled services and products related, but not restricted, to the topics of relevance outlined previously.

To be eligible for funding, your team must be based in one of the following countries: Belgium, Canada, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom.

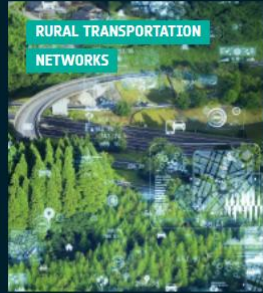
Norway and The Netherlands are not supporting this call.

Authorisation of Funding letters from the corresponding National Delegations are required as part of the application:

<https://business.esa.int/national-delegations>



## FEATURED OPPORTUNITIES



## RURAL TRANSPORTATION NETWORKS

[Home](#) » [Funding](#) » Rural Transportation Networks



**OPPORTUNITY** Call for Proposals (Competitive)

**ACTIVITY** Kick-start Activity

**OPENING DATE** 24-02-2026

**CLOSING DATE** 01-04-2026

**WEBINAR** 23 February 2026 - 11:00 CET

[REGISTER](#)

<https://business.esa.int/funding/call-for-proposals-competitive/rural-transportation-networks>

# Thank you!

For more information: [ESA Space Solutions](#)

Maria Zaretskaya [Maria.Zaretskaya@esa.int](mailto:Maria.Zaretskaya@esa.int)

After the call goes live on 24<sup>th</sup> of February  
Please submit Questions through ESA-Star