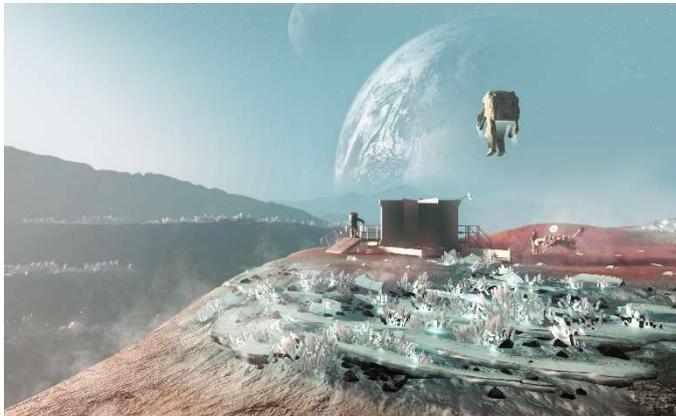


Press Release

Space Exploration Masters 2017: Brand-New Innovation Competition

Europe's first innovation competition on Space Exploration is looking for applications and services benefitting Earth until 8 September 2017

Gilching, 21 June 2017 – Challenging boundaries and exploring the spheres of our planet have always been crucial for the progress of humanity. The exploration of space and the huge exploitation potential it holds are stunning with their offer of unseen treasures and opportunities for innovation and commercialisation. This is the driving force of Europe's first innovation competition on space exploration: [The Space Exploration Masters](#).



Space exploration contains large potential for the creation of future-oriented applications, products and services, benefitting Earth. New topics and application areas create countless possibilities for technology transfer, novel ideas for solutions and their application in non-space industries, as well as new business opportunities and objectives.

Thorsten Rudolph, Managing Director AZO, emphasises: “I belong to the people who have the dream to live on the Moon. To take the next big step in that direction, I encourage all people with innovative applications to participate in our new innovation competition. The Space Exploration Masters provides forward-thinking entrepreneurs to become a substantial part of Europe's Space Exploration activities and collaborate with the most important international space stakeholders. Together we can shape our future in space with ground-breaking innovation and make life on Earth even better.”

Calling Innovators to Shape Our Future

The Space Exploration Masters is seeking innovative business ideas providing major benefits for our global society and economy. In this context, technology transfer plays a major role and functions as a fruitful propulsion component to achieve the ultimate goal of the exploration of low Earth orbit (LEO), the Moon, Mars and beyond. The Space Exploration Masters makes it possible for innovators, entrepreneurs and space geeks to boost space exploration with their forward-looking business idea. Participants with all kinds of backgrounds are highly welcome, including entrepreneurs, R&D as well as patent holders and many more.

The two different prize categories „Technology Transfer Success“ and „New Business Innovation“ look for submissions in the fields of human space and robotic missions, space resources and industry, discovery and space observation, spacecraft, rockets, propulsion, space tourism, deep space communication and navigation, space habitats, and life sciences – just to name a few.

Most Renowned Space Partners

The innovation competition has the most important space stakeholders on board, each featuring their own dedicated prize:

The European Space Agency (ESA) awards two prizes in both competition categories: The ESA Prize for the best Technology Transfer Success and an ESA Prize in the New Business Innovation category. Thereby, ESA is looking for innovative cases with a tangible business performance in matching at least one of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. This engagement displays the importance of the Space Exploration Masters within the overall ESA Space Exploration Strategy framework.

In addition, the Ministry of the Economy of Luxembourg with its SpaceResources.lu initiative, aiming to contribute to the peaceful exploration and sustainable utilisation of space resources for the benefit of humankind, hosts the “Luxembourg Prize” in the New Business Innovation category. In the same category, the Scottish company Stevenson Astrosat Ltd., driving the commercialisation of the space sector by helping end users meet their needs in a sustainable manner using space technology, and Huntsville Madison County Chamber together present the “Astrosat & Huntsville Prize”. Moreover, Airbus Defence and Space together with Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, a leading science and technology company in healthcare, life science, and performance materials, host the “Sustainable Exploration Prize” in the New Business Innovation Category. This cross-industry prize will be awarded to technological and business ideas closing the sustainability loop, enabling a sustainable space environment and human life in space.”.

Participants of the Space Exploration Masters benefit from five powerful prizes in these two categories awarded by the above mentioned competition partners. Submissions are welcome from 20 June till 8 September 2017 at: www.space-exploration-masters.com

About Space Exploration Masters

In 2017, AZO has launched the [Space Exploration Masters](http://www.space-exploration-masters.com) on behalf of the European Space Agency (ESA) and in line with the goals of the ESA Space Exploration Strategy, in cooperation with strong world-class partners. The Space Exploration Masters is an international competition to identify best technology transfer business successes, as well as to empower and foster business innovation around space exploration activities in Low Earth Orbit (LEO), on Moon, Mars, or beyond – for the benefit of society and Earth.

About AZO

AZO has established a global network for innovation and entrepreneurship. It supports product innovation and company foundations in the field of commercial space applications along the entire value chain – from the idea all the way to market entry. AZO has extensive experience in organising innovation competitions such as the European Satellite Navigation Competition, the Copernicus Masters (Earth observation), the Space Exploration Masters, the STARTUP WORLD Awards (laser photonics and robotics), as well as the INNOspace Masters (New Space Economy), app developer camps and conferences, and manages ESA BIC Bavaria. More information: www.space-of-innovation.com

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