

PRESS RELEASE

European Space Resources Innovation Centre (ESRIC) launches the world's first start-up support programme dedicated to Space Resources.

Dubai, 26 October 2021 – *The ESRIC Start up Support Programme (SSP) has been presented today by Mathias Link, ESRIC Director, in presence of the Luxembourg's Ministry for Economy, Franz Fayot and of representatives of the ESA, LSA and LIST. Located in Luxembourg, it is the first programme worldwide dedicated to commercial initiatives in the field of space resources utilization. The SSP will support the specific needs of early stage ventures/start-ups to prove their technological value proposals and enable the development of near-term sustainable business models targeting terrestrial/space applications and Space Resources utilization. The programme will be run together with ESA and Technoport, the leading technology incubator in Luxembourg. Two application calls will be implemented on a yearly basis, the first call is expected in November 2021.*

ESRIC, powered by the Luxembourg Space Agency (LSA) and the Luxembourg Institute of Science and Technology (LIST) with the European Space Agency (ESA) as a strategic partner, was established in Luxembourg in August 2020. Besides developing research activities along the value chain of space resources, the centre will support commercial initiatives from established players and start-ups, enable technology transfer between space and non-space industries and encourage public-private partnerships and new initiatives in the field of space resources.

The ESRIC Startup Support Programme is one of the four pillars of ESRIC and will support early-stage start-ups in the space resources sector to refine their business plan, attract their first customers and secure their first investments.

"The ESRIC Start-up support programme will play a key role in accelerating the next generation of space resources related business ideas of the most promising entrepreneurial teams. It will be developed in close interaction with the other pillars of ESRIC, in particular its research activities all along the value chain of space resources utilization." explains Mathias Link, Director of ESRIC

It will also pave the way to the consolidation of an ecosystem of technical and business players, and contribute to promoting effective collaboration models with early-stage ventures with the aim of investigating the new technology developments that are the most relevant for future Space Resources applications.

PRE-INCUBATION; INCUBATION AND RESIDENCY: TAILORED SUPPORT DURING UP TO 5 YEARS.

The ESRIC SSP programme will be organised in 3 phases building on each other.

The pre-Incubation phase, which lasts 3 months, will allow 5 selected start-ups to validate technical concepts and align them with market opportunities. They will benefit from in-kind support, both for the technical and business aspects of their project, provided by ESRIC and its partners.

Further to the pre-incubation phase, the best project will be selected for a 2 years incubation phase, during which the start-up will be able to confirm its technical value proposal and further develop the business model.

Further technical and business support will be provided during the incubation phase, and a 200K€ non-equity & non-refundable funding will be allocated to the start-up.

A third residency phase of maximum 36 months will be possible for the start-up, to ensure follow-up on technical developments and the further growth of the sales/customer pool.

Two application calls will be run on a yearly basis for the first phase of the programme, and open to all start-ups worldwide. A geographical presence in Luxembourg will be mandatory for the incubation phase.

“Luxembourg positions itself once again as a pioneer with the launch of the world’s first start up support programme dedicated to space resources. This initiative was, after the creation of ESRIC in 2020, the next logical step for the development of Space Resources in Luxembourg, in Europe and beyond.” says Franz Fayot, Minister of the Economy. He added: *“Close collaboration between national and international partners has been key and I would like to congratulate them on a project which will be instrumental for the Spaceresources.lu initiative.”*

“Space Resources will drive the future of space exploration”, reminds Marc Serres, CEO of the Luxembourg Space Agency. *“Today, technological breakthrough is needed to enable the use of space resources, and the SSP is an exceptional platform for entrepreneurs who have commercial ideas to develop in that field.”*

“It’s always a pleasure and an honour to work hand in hand with ESA”, says Thomas Kallstenius, CEO of LIST. *“At LIST, we believe that space resources research will have a positive effect on our life on earth. We are particularly interested in dual use technologies. The ones that can have both terrestrial and space applications. We see there many potential synergies with our other activities in the material or the environment sectors. Our mission is to create impact for the society. This Start up Support Programme is a win-win situation: start-ups will learn from us, and we will be challenged by their new fresh ideas to create a higher impact.”*



“The access to industry experts, the exposure to commercial operators and business mentors are the critical assets that startups and project holders can benefit from the ESRIC SSP” explains Olivier Zephir, business advisor at the Technoport.

About ESRIC

Based in Luxembourg, the European Space Resources Innovation Centre (ESRIC) fosters innovation and growth in the space resources industry by connecting leading academic, industrial and entrepreneurial talents. ESRIC's activities are based on four main pillars: space resources research and development, support for economic activities, knowledge management, and community management. Launched in November 2020, ESRIC is an initiative of the Luxembourg Space Agency (LSA) and the Luxembourg Institute of Science and Technology (LIST) in strategic partnership with the European Space Agency (ESA). www.esric.lu

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