How to become involved in ESA’s space programmes

On 6 March ESA published an invitation to space and non-space-based companies, from start-ups to large system integrators, to get involved in its space programmes.

ESA’s Industry portal is an important resource to guide those interested through this process.

Most business opportunities with ESA are published through the ‘EMITS’ system.

**How to register**
The ‘How to do’ section explains how to first register with ESA and what processes to follow. Here you may pick up tips and tricks on how to draft a sound proposal and deal with the financial side of things. Learn what dealing with an intergovernmental customer such as ESA involves.

The ‘Business Opportunities’ section leads you to specific programmes.

Readers are invited to follow the steps to register online through esa-star, and learn about ESA’s procurement process, the financial system called esa-p, and the costing software.

ESA’s dedicated Industrial Ombudsman ensures that all parties conform to the procurement rules and regulations as laid out in the Code of Best Practices.

**Hoorah for the SMEs**
Small & Medium-sized Enterprises (SME) are flexible and innovative and have much to offer Europe’s space industry.

In the period 2013–2017, an average 30% of the industry of ESA Member States, Associated States and Cooperating States which were involved in ESA activities and received commitments, were SMEs. ESA therefore actively supports such companies via training and technical assistance, and access to ESA facilities. Some opportunities, known as ‘Invitations To Tender’, are reserved for SMEs only.

ESA’s SME Office promotes the capabilities of its 2700 SMEs currently registered and organises networking opportunities such as the Industry Space Days and other related events.
Bringing together communities of innovators in space and non-space-based arenas is achieved through the Global Space Economic Forum (GSEF) and associated workshops which aim to grow the economy through fostering industrial collaborations.

Opportunities to join the ESA Grand Challenge are also found on the Industry portal. It is a contest aimed at creating a new European ecosystem of entrepreneurs and start-up companies competing to develop solutions that address complex problems.

**Space and life**

Space has become an integrated part of our daily lives. From smartphones to agricultural monitoring, the socio-economic benefits of space activities are so diverse that they are not always so obvious to the general public. ESA focuses this week on what space is doing for the economy, in particular, highlighting the flourishing applications domain and business opportunities.

**See also:** [http://www.esa.int/About_Us/Business_with_ESA](http://www.esa.int/About_Us/Business_with_ESA)

*Illustrations ESA ©*