News and Events #23, November 2026

Welcome to our Space sector news, events and funding opportunities update.

Contents

1. Midlands Space News
2. Wider Space News
2. Events and Networking - Midlands
3. Events and Networking - UK and Global
4. Funding and Support Opportunities with Deadlines
5. Ongoing Funding and Support Opportunities

1. Midlands Space News

a. UK Earth Observation Conference 2026 Highlights Innovation, Collaboration and Industry Opportunities

The UK Earth Observation Conference 2026 (UKEO 2026) brought together researchers, industry leaders, policymakers and innovators at the University of Warwick from 15th – 17th September. Organised by the National Centre for Earth Observation (NCEO), the Centre for Earth Observation Instrumentation (CEOI) and the Remote Sensing and Photogrammetry Society (RSPSoc), the event attracted 354 delegates from 125 organisations, showcasing the breadth of UK expertise in satellite technologies, Earth observation research and commercial applications. Key themes included artificial intelligence, data innovation, environmental monitoring and the importance of translating scientific research into operational services and commercial solutions.

The conference highlighted opportunities for closer collaboration between academia and industry, particularly in satellite instrumentation, AI-enabled data analysis, cloud computing and digital infrastructure. The event also celebrated emerging talent through the UK Space Agency's Skills for Space Internship Showcase and recognised outstanding achievements through the UKEO Awards.

Read the full conference review

b. **Space Park Leicester Annual Review Highlights £73 Million Economic Contribution**

Space Park Leicester has published its latest Annual Review, highlighting its growing contribution to the regional and national space economy. Released on 29th October 2026, the report estimates that the campus generates £73 million in goods and services annually, demonstrating the economic impact of its research, innovation and commercial activities. The Space Park Leicester community also secured £19.7 million in space research funding during the year and now brings together more than 25 organisations supporting over 400 jobs, combining academic expertise with commercial space businesses and specialist facilities.

The review also highlights continued growth in international engagement, including new UK and overseas investors and the establishment of the US-based Universities Space Research Association's first European base at Space Park Leicester. As a key partner in the Midlands Space Cluster, Space Park Leicester plays an important role in connecting businesses with research expertise, facilities and commercial opportunities. The findings demonstrate the contribution that space investment, research collaboration and industry partnerships are making to the Midlands economy, while strengthening the region's position within the UK and international space sector.

Read the full report.

c. **UKRI Announces £12.8 Million to Strengthen UK Materials Innovation and Industry Collaboration with major Midlands projects included**

UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) has announced £12.8 million of investment to strengthen connections between materials research and industry, supporting the development and commercialisation of advanced materials technologies. Delivered through the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC), the funding will establish four national research networks and nine Materials Innovation Partnerships under the National Materials Innovation Programme. The initiative aims to connect businesses with research expertise, specialist facilities and collaborative opportunities, helping to accelerate the translation of scientific discoveries into commercially viable products and technologies. The nine partnerships will also benefit from more than £11 million of additional industry contributions, including cash and in-kind support.

The funded activities cover a wide range of technologies relevant to space, aerospace and advanced manufacturing businesses, including advanced metals and composites, surface engineering, electronics, telecommunications, sensors and energy materials. Two projects are led by Midlands universities: Coventry University will investigate data-driven approaches to recovering and reusing scrap steel and aluminium in high-value manufacturing, while the University of Nottingham will lead research into next-generation sustainable composites for protective packaging. Other projects include materials for positioning, navigation and timing (PNT) radio-frequency systems, potentially relevant to future satellite

technologies. The new networks and partnerships could offer opportunities for regional companies to engage with research programmes, access expertise and develop new industrial collaborations.

Read the full UKRI announcement

d. **West Midlands Launches Reindustrialisation Blueprint to Drive Manufacturing Growth**

The West Midlands has launched a new Reindustrialisation Blueprint, setting out plans to strengthen the region's manufacturing base and ensure that innovations developed locally are translated into products, businesses and jobs within the region. Announced by West Midlands Mayor Richard Parker at the West Midlands Growth Summit in Coventry, the Blueprint builds on the regional Growth Plan and identifies seven priority markets and five areas for action to improve industrial productivity and competitiveness. The region already supports around 273,000 manufacturing jobs and £22 billion in annual manufacturing output, with recognised strengths across all eight sectors of the Government's Modern Industrial Strategy.

The Blueprint is accompanied by several practical initiatives, including £18.4 million of additional support for business energy efficiency, a Talent Transition Pilot to help growing SMEs recruit experienced industrial workers, a new Battery Manufacturing Taskforce and more than £13 million of public and private investment through DRIVE35.

Read the Blueprint here.

e. **Opportunity for Midlands Space Companies to Feature in NASA's Small Spacecraft Technology Catalogue**

NASA's Small Spacecraft Systems Virtual Institute (S3VI), based at NASA Ames Research Center, publishes an annual State-of-the-Art Small Spacecraft Technology Report, providing a comprehensive overview of spacecraft technologies, components and subsystems available across the international space industry. The report serves as a valuable reference for organisations seeking to identify suppliers, assess technology options and explore potential solutions for small spacecraft missions.

Midlands Space Cluster members are invited to explore opportunities to have their technologies considered for inclusion in future editions of the report. This could be particularly relevant to regional companies developing spacecraft components, sensors, electronics, propulsion systems, communications equipment, structures, materials and other specialist technologies.

Companies interested in exploring this opportunity are encouraged to contact Craig directly to discuss their technologies and the process for consideration in future editions. Craig D. Burkhard, Deputy Director, Small Spacecraft Systems Virtual Institute, NASA Ames Research Center craig.d.burkhard@nasa.gov

View NASA's 2026 State-of-the-Art Small Spacecraft Technology Report

2. Wider Space News

a. ESA Launches Interactive Map of the Commercial Low Earth Orbit Ecosystem

The European Space Agency's Business in Space Growth Network (BSGN) has introduced a new online overview of the rapidly developing commercial Low Earth Orbit (LEO) ecosystem. As space-based research, technology demonstration and manufacturing move towards more commercially operated services, the interactive map helps businesses identify the organisations, platforms and infrastructure ovemberavailable to support activities in microgravity. It covers crewed and automated orbital platforms, suborbital and reusable vehicles, space logistics providers, and payload-hosting and in-orbit facilities.

The resource provides a useful starting point for companies and research organisations exploring opportunities in in-orbit manufacturing, advanced materials, life sciences, payload development and enabling technologies. It can help identify potential customers, collaborators and service providers across the emerging LEO supply chain. The map is intended to evolve as new commercial capabilities become available, and BSGN welcomes submissions from organisations wishing to propose their own services or identify missing capabilities.

Explore the LEO Ecosystem Map

b. UK and Germany Agree to Strengthen Space Cooperation

The UK and Germany have announced plans to deepen their strategic cooperation in space, following bilateral talks in Berlin on 8th October 2026. The agreement covers civil, commercial, security and defence activities, with an immediate focus on launch capabilities and assured access to space. The two governments have identified Scotland's SaxaVord Spaceport as an important element in developing more resilient and responsive European launch capabilities. A formal Memorandum of Understanding is expected to be signed during UK–German government consultations in early 2027.

The joint statement also outlines wider cooperation in advanced technologies, including a new Industrial Tech Corridor to connect AI and critical technology businesses with industrial customers, and increased bilateral quantum technology research funding to €19.5 million, supporting ten projects in total.

Read the full UK–Germany Joint Statement

c. UK Space Agency Publishes Review of UK Space Resource Technologies

The UK Space Agency has published a new review of UK capabilities in In-Situ Resource Utilisation (ISRU) – technologies that enable resources found on the Moon, Mars and other celestial bodies to be used directly in space, rather than transporting everything from Earth. Commissioned from Frazer-Nash Consultancy,

the independent review examines UK strengths, international developments and opportunities for future research and collaboration. ISRU technologies could enable the production of oxygen, water, rocket propellant and construction materials from locally available resources, supporting longer-duration exploration missions and the development of a future space economy.

The report examines the full ISRU value chain, from resource prospecting and excavation through to processing and production, and includes technology mapping and roadmapping tools. It also highlights the importance of enabling technologies such as robotics, autonomy, power systems, thermal management and advanced materials.

Read the UK ISRU Technology Review

d. **US Space Force Awards Contract for UK-Based Space Surveillance Radar**

US aerospace and defence company Fisica has secured a contract supporting the next phase of the US Space Force's Deep Space Advanced Radar Capability (DARC) programme, which will see a new ground-based radar facility developed in the United Kingdom. DARC is a joint initiative involving the United States, United Kingdom and Australia, designed to improve Space Domain Awareness (SDA) by providing advanced detection and tracking of objects in deep space. Construction of the first DARC site in Australia is now complete, with the programme progressing to its second site in the UK.

Fisica's contract covers the design, assembly, testing and installation of advanced radar antenna systems, building on its work at the Australian facility. The programme highlights growing investment in space surveillance and the infrastructure needed to protect satellite operations and support national security. It also demonstrates the potential market for specialist capabilities in radar engineering, precision manufacturing, electronics, RF technologies, systems integration and testing.

Read the full announcement

e. **UK Space Agency Launches Unlocking Space for Defence and National Security Programme**

The UK Space Agency has published details of its Unlocking Space Defence and National Security (USD) programme, designed to help UK businesses access opportunities across civil, defence and national security space markets. The programme addresses barriers identified through industry engagement, including complex procurement processes, unclear customer requirements, security clearances, export controls and limited routes to market. Working alongside UK Space Command, the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory (Dstl) and other government stakeholders, it aims to improve access to information, strengthen alignment between civil and defence requirements, and support technology development through targeted funding and procurement opportunities.

The programme focuses on three areas: Education and Awareness, Strategic Alignment, and Funding and Procurement. Support includes the *Unlocking Space One Stop Shop* information service, guidance on selling to government, and innovation competitions such as Space to Innovate, which addresses challenges in Space Domain Awareness, intelligence and surveillance, satellite protection and resilience. Companies interested in exploring these markets are encouraged to review the guidance and sign up for the UK Space Agency's quarterly Unlocking Space newsletter to receive updates on future opportunities.

Find out more about Unlocking Space Defence and National Security

f. **UK Space Agency Backs Seven New Satellite Projects to Grow Climate Services Sector**

The UK Space Agency has announced funding for seven new projects using satellite data to help organisations understand, monitor and respond to climate-related risks. Announced on 12th October 2026, the projects aim to support the growth of the UK's climate services sector by developing practical applications of Earth observation technology. The investment demonstrates how satellite-derived information can be translated into commercially useful services, helping organisations make better-informed decisions and improve their resilience to changing environmental conditions.

The announcement highlights opportunities for businesses developing Earth observation applications, satellite data analytics, AI and digital services, as well as organisations with expertise in environmental monitoring and risk assessment. The projects provide examples of how collaboration between space technology providers and end users can help create new commercial markets for satellite-enabled services.

Read the full UK Space Agency announcement

g. **UK's First Microgravity Biopharma Accelerator Funds Innovative Research Projects**

The Satellite Applications Catapult and Industrial Biotechnology Innovation Catalyst (IBIC) have announced funding for two projects through the UK's first Microgravity Biopharma Accelerator, exploring how research in microgravity could deliver benefits for industries on Earth. Each project has received approximately £50,000 in proof-of-concept funding, alongside specialist technical and commercial support. The SPACE AGE project, led by the University of Liverpool, will investigate whether microgravity can accelerate skin-ageing research and the development of treatments. Meanwhile, Co-Crystals, led by the University of Salford, will explore how microgravity-grown protein crystals could improve the recovery of valuable metals from ores and waste, potentially reducing energy consumption and chemical use.

The accelerator brings together biotechnology businesses, academic researchers and space specialists to identify commercially viable applications for microgravity

research. Part of the Catapult's Beyond Earth mission, the programme aims to progress promising concepts towards demonstration, investment and potentially experiments in orbit.

Read the full announcement

h. **UK Space Agency Announces £60m Mission to Remove Space Debris**

The UK Space Agency has announced more than £60 million of government investment in a pioneering Active Debris Removal (ADR) mission, designed to remove two defunct satellites from orbit and help protect vital space infrastructure. Working with ClearSpace UK as its industry delivery partner, the programme will develop a spacecraft equipped with robotic capture technology capable of approaching, securing and safely de-orbiting satellites that were not originally designed for retrieval. The spacecraft is planned to launch from SaxaVord Spaceport in Scotland in 2029, with the removal of both satellites targeted by 2032. The mission is intended to demonstrate the world's first removal of multiple satellites by a single spacecraft.

The mission represents a significant step in developing the UK's capabilities in In-Orbit Servicing, Assembly and Manufacturing (ISAM), one of the four priority technology areas identified in the new UK Space Strategy. Beyond debris removal, the programme will develop technologies relevant to future satellite servicing, repair and refuelling, while creating opportunities for the UK supply chain. These include robotics, autonomous systems, guidance, navigation and control, precision engineering, sensors and spacecraft manufacturing. ClearSpace UK has indicated that it intends to work with partners across the UK supply chain as the programme progresses.

Read the full UK Space Agency announcement

i. **UK Space Agency Evaluation Highlights Impact of Early-Stage Space Innovation Funding**

The UK Space Agency has published an independent evaluation of its National Space Innovation Programme (NSIP) Pilot and Emerging Technologies Programme (ETP), highlighting the benefits of investment in early-stage space technologies. Conducted by know.space, the study examines 83 projects funded between 2020 and 2025 and identifies substantial progress in technology development, commercialisation and attracting further investment. Both programmes exceeded their target of increasing Technology Readiness Levels (TRLs) by an average of two levels per project. To date, 11 project teams have brought technologies to market, generating approximately £2.6 million in attributable revenues, while funded organisations have secured significant follow-on investment, including £81 million of attributable private investment associated with six NSIP Pilot organisations.

The evaluation estimates that the programmes have generated at least £131 million in economic benefits to the UK, although the report cautions that it is still too early to draw firm conclusions on overall value for money, with many technologies yet to

reach commercial maturity. It also identifies benefits from academic–industry collaboration, international partnerships, skills development and job creation. The findings reinforce the importance of early-stage R&D funding, followed by continued support for commercialisation and market access. The report provides useful evidence of how public investment can help reduce technical risk, attract private capital and strengthen the UK space supply chain.

A particularly noteworthy case study is the University of Birmingham-led STAR sub-terahertz radar project. It has engaged DSTL, Airbus and BAE Systems Digital Intelligence, underpinned £1.6 million of EPSRC funding and a £610,000 NSIP follow-on project, and is exploring commercialisation or a spinout.

Read the full NSIP and ETP Evaluation Report

j. **Ofcom Expands Spectrum Access for Satellite Gateways Across the UK**

Ofcom has announced new measures to increase spectrum availability for satellite gateway stations, supporting the expansion of satellite communications infrastructure across the UK. In its statement published on 23rd October 2026, the regulator confirmed that up to 8 GHz of Q/V-band spectrum will be made available for satellite gateways in urban, high-density areas. This builds on its March 2026 decision to release up to 10 GHz of spectrum across the remaining 94% of UK landmass, extending opportunities for operators of both geostationary (GSO) and non-geostationary (NGSO) satellite systems. The changes are intended to accommodate growing demand for satellite connectivity and provide greater flexibility in locating gateway infrastructure.

The additional spectrum will be available through Ofcom's existing satellite gateway licensing processes, with applications assessed on a first-come, first-served basis. Access to certain frequencies will require additional coordination with the Ministry of Defence to manage potential interference.

Read the full Ofcom statement

k. **Spaceport Cornwall and Dawn Aerospace Partner to Explore Reusable Suborbital Flights from the UK**

Spaceport Cornwall and Dawn Aerospace have signed an MoU to explore establishing a new reusable suborbital flight service from Cornwall Airport Newquay. The proposed DASH UK (Dawn Aerospace Suborbital Horizontal UK Launch Programme) would use Dawn Aerospace's *Aurora* spaceplane to provide access to microgravity, high-altitude testing and advanced aerospace research. Designed to take off and land on conventional runways, Aurora aims to reach altitudes of 100 km and speeds exceeding Mach 3.7, carrying payloads of up to 15 kg and providing more than two minutes of microgravity. With a potential turnaround time of just four hours, the vehicle could eventually support multiple missions in a single day.

Read the full announcement

l. **UK Space Agency Publishes Quantum Technology Roadmap for Space**

The UK Space Agency published its Quantum Technology Roadmap for Space on 27th October 2026, identifying priority technologies and commercial opportunities for the UK space sector through to 2040. The roadmap highlights three areas with significant potential: quantum-secure communications, precision timing and navigation, and quantum sensing. These technologies could improve the resilience of satellite communications, reduce dependence on conventional GNSS services and enable more accurate sensing and autonomous spacecraft operations. Quantum computing is also recognised as a longer-term opportunity. The roadmap recommends targeted investment in technology development, demonstration and integration to help translate the UK's research strengths into operational space capabilities.

A central finding is the need to strengthen the UK supply chain and the facilities required to test and qualify quantum technologies for space. Opportunities are identified in photonics, specialist electronics, lasers, detectors, thermal management, precision engineering and advanced packaging, alongside the development of standards and skills. These priorities are particularly relevant to the Midlands' strengths in quantum research, advanced manufacturing and aerospace engineering, creating potential opportunities for regional businesses to collaborate with technology developers and contribute to future space-qualified components and subsystems. The roadmap provides a useful indication of where future research, industrial collaboration and investment activity may be directed, although it does not itself announce a new funding competition.

Read the Quantum Technology Roadmap for Space

m. **UK Space Agency Publishes Artificial Intelligence Roadmap for Space**

The UK Space Agency has published its Artificial Intelligence Roadmap for Space (2026–2036), setting out a ten-year framework for developing and adopting AI technologies across the UK space sector. The roadmap identifies opportunities to use AI in Earth observation, satellite communications, positioning, navigation and timing (PNT), space domain awareness, autonomous spacecraft operations and in-orbit servicing. It highlights eight priority AI capabilities, including computer vision, machine learning, predictive analytics, digital twins, autonomous decision-making and resource-efficient edge computing.

A central recommendation is that the UK should focus on trusted, certifiable and resource-efficient AI, rather than competing solely in large-scale computing infrastructure. The roadmap identifies seven strategic investment themes and recommends strengthening AI assurance, validation and certification, improving access to data and testing infrastructure, and developing closer collaboration between industry, academia and government. It also highlights opportunities to embed AI in future UK Space Agency funding and procurement programmes, although the roadmap does not itself announce a new funding competition.

Read the Artificial Intelligence Roadmap for Space

n. **MOD Awards Astroscale £15 Million Contract to Strengthen UK Space Defence Capabilities**

The UK Ministry of Defence has awarded Astroscale UK a £15 million contract to develop new space-control capabilities under Project LEDA, announced on 28th October 2026. Astroscale will act as prime contractor, supported by BAE Systems and Open Cosmos, developing capabilities to improve the UK's ability to understand and respond to potential threats to satellites in orbit. The programme will build on Astroscale's experience in rendezvous and proximity operations, including spacecraft inspection and manoeuvring close to other orbital objects. It follows the publication of the new UK Space Strategy, which places greater emphasis on defence, national security and the protection of critical space infrastructure.

Project LEDA will involve the manufacture, launch and operation of spacecraft to support the UK's understanding of orbital threats and potential defensive responses. The contract highlights the growing importance of space domain awareness, autonomous spacecraft operations, sensing and resilient satellite systems, with technologies relevant to both defence and commercial space activities. For Midlands businesses working in advanced engineering, electronics, sensors, propulsion and spacecraft subsystems, the programme illustrates emerging opportunities within the UK's space defence supply chain. Detailed technical requirements and potential subcontracting opportunities have not yet been announced.

Read the full Astroscale announcement

o. **SaxaVord Secures £60 Million Investment to Expand UK Space Launch Infrastructure**

SaxaVord Spaceport in Shetland has secured a £60 million public-private investment agreement, marking a significant step forward in the development of the UK's domestic satellite launch capability. The agreement combines £30 million of government investment with £30 million from private investor Wild Ventures, providing funding for three launchpads, mission-management infrastructure and a second satellite and rocket integration hangar. The investment will support the development of SaxaVord as a commercial launch facility, strengthening the UK's ability to launch satellites from domestic territory.

SaxaVord is licensed to conduct up to 30 launches annually, with Rocket Factory Augsburg and HyImpulse identified as launch customers. The investment represents an important development for the wider UK space supply chain, creating potential opportunities in launch systems, propulsion, advanced manufacturing, electronics, ground infrastructure and mission support services. For Midlands space and aerospace businesses, the expansion of domestic launch infrastructure could open new routes to engage with launch providers and contribute specialist

engineering and manufacturing capabilities. The agreement also supports the UK's wider ambition to develop an integrated national space sector, connecting satellite development, manufacturing and launch services.

3. Events and Networking - Midlands

a. **"Made in the Midlands. Built for Space" Advanced Engineering 2026,** 5th November, 10:30-11:00, Aerospace Forum area, NEC Birmingham

The Midlands Space Cluster is hosting a dedicated speaker session at Advanced Engineering 2026, exploring opportunities and capabilities within the space sector. Join us to hear from the cluster and some of our cluster member companies.

You can register for Advanced Engineering now.

b. **Systems Engineering 2026,** 10th November, Dassault Systèmes, Warwick

TECHNIA is hosting Systems Engineering 2026 for engineers and technical specialists to explore how modelling, simulation, artificial intelligence and Model-Based Systems Engineering (MBSE) can improve product development. The event will demonstrate practical applications of Dymola, Modelica and VeSyMA, with presentations and case studies covering simulation-led design, AI-assisted model development, automated testing and digital engineering.

Of particular interest will be a Thistle Rocketry case study on modelling and validating rocket propulsion systems, alongside presentations on robotic arm development and the integration of physics-based simulation with requirements verification. The programme also includes industry discussions and networking opportunities, making it relevant to systems engineers, simulation specialists, design engineers and technical managers working on complex products and systems. The event runs from 9:00am to 3:50pm, with places limited and advance registration required.

Find out more and register

c. **ESA 101 Workshop,** 23rd November, Birmingham, venue tbc

Delivered by the UK Space Agency in collaboration with ESA and the Space Cluster, this event covers essential topics such as ESA's industrial policy, current activity and programmes, basics of ESA procurement and how to navigate through ESA STAR. Welcome will be at 9.30am, with talks from the cluster, ESA and industry, followed by a networking lunch 12:30-14:00.

Unfortunately details and venue are not yet finalised – we will send a link for registration once they are ready.

4. Events and Networking – UK and Global

a. **Innovate UK National Quantum Technologies Showcase 2026,** 6th November, Business Design Centre, London

The UK National Quantum Technologies Showcase returns to London as the UK's largest quantum event and one of the largest events of its kind globally. The showcase will bring together thousands of representatives from industry, government, investment and academia to explore advances in quantum hardware, software, communications, sensing and imaging, alongside their emerging commercial applications.

Featuring live demonstrations, expert panels, industry sessions and networking, with opportunities to explore partnerships, investment and commercialisation, space and defence are specifically identified as relevant sectors. Register here.

b. **NEXT Space**, 9th November, Gothenburg, Sweden

Next Space 2026 will bring together international space industry leaders, entrepreneurs, investors and policymakers for a major new conference focused on the commercial future of space. The inaugural event will examine how nations and businesses can better leverage space technologies and services to create new capabilities, accelerate innovation and strengthen economic competitiveness.

The one-day conference will feature discussions on national strategy, commercialisation opportunities, cross-sector collaboration and emerging business models across the global space economy. Designed to showcase real-world applications of commercial space services while helping build stronger international partnerships and investment opportunities within the rapidly evolving space sector. Read more and register here

c. **ESA 101 and UK Beyond Earth Network: Space & Semiconductors,** 10th November, Cardiff

This combined ESA 101 workshop and UK Beyond Earth Network event will provide a practical introduction to doing business with the European Space Agency, covering ESA's industrial policy, current programmes, procurement opportunities and the ESA STAR tendering system. Participants will also hear first-hand experiences from organisations that have successfully worked with ESA, making the workshop particularly useful for businesses new to the space sector or looking to expand their involvement.

The afternoon session, organised through the UK Beyond Earth Network (UK-BEN) and supported by the Satellite Applications Catapult, will bring together the space and semiconductor industries to explore emerging technologies, shared challenges and opportunities for collaborative R&D. Discussions and networking will focus on strengthening connections between the two sectors and identifying potential innovation partnerships.

Find out more and register

d. **New UK Metamaterials Roadmap Sets Out Commercialisation Priorities,** 10th November, 12:00pm Webinar

   The Government has published a new UK Metamaterials Commercialisation Roadmap, setting out a coordinated approach to translating the UK's research strengths into commercial products and manufacturing capability over the next decade. Developed with the Metamaterials Strategy Action Group, the roadmap identifies five priorities: strengthening collaboration across the innovation ecosystem, developing demonstrators and prototypes, supporting manufacturing scale-up, establishing testing and standards, and building the necessary skills. Metamaterials offer potential applications across satellite communications, advanced antennas, sensing, aerospace structures and thermal management, making this an important emerging technology area for the space sector.

   The University of Birmingham, which co-leads the UK Metamaterials Network, has contributed to the roadmap. This introductory webinar will outline the roadmap, its strategic context and next steps, with a second, more detailed webinar planned.

   Read the roadmap and Find out more and register for the webinar

e. **Space Partnership: Space Skills Dashboard Event,** 11th November, 13:00-14:30, Online

   The Space Partnership is hosting an online event introducing its new Space Skills Dashboard. Developed to bring together key skills-related datasets in one place, the dashboard will support discussions at the Space Skills Advisory Panel (SSAP) and across the wider UK space sector. The session will provide an overview of the dashboard, explain the underlying data and offer participants an opportunity to ask questions ahead of its publication on the Space Partnership website.

   Find out more and register

f. **UK Space Composites Technology Forum,** 12th November, NCC, Bristol

   The National Composites Centre (NCC) and UK Space Agency are hosting the next UK Space Composites Technology Forum, bringing together industry, academia and the public sector to strengthen collaboration and showcase emerging materials and manufacturing technologies for space. The forum is a national platform designed to champion UK and European capability in composites and space technology and connect organisations with technical experts and potential collaborators.

   This session will focus on Materials for Extreme Environments. The forum forms part of a series of focused one-day sessions aligned with the ESA Harmonisation Report, supporting the development of UK capabilities in space manufacturing, materials and systems.

See more here.

g. **Space for Climate Observatory World Virtual Congress,** 16th - 20th November, Online

The Space for Climate Observatory (SCO) is hosting its first World Virtual Congress alongside the COP31 international climate conference. The event will feature 12 online sessions exploring how satellite data and space technologies can support climate monitoring, adaptation and resilience around the world. Sessions will showcase practical applications of Earth Observation, highlight the results of international projects and explore opportunities for collaboration. Topics include climate policy, coastal resilience, environmental monitoring and the use of satellite information to support decision-making.

The programme includes a UK Space Agency and Space4Climate session on national space and climate strategies on 16th November, alongside a European session on translating satellite data into practical climate solutions on 18th November. Participants can register for individual sessions according to their interests.

View the programme and register

h. **Space Tech Expo Europe 2026,** 17th - 19th November, Bremen, Germany

Space Tech Expo Europe, Europe's largest B2B space event, returns to Bremen this November, bringing together the international space supply chain to showcase technologies, source solutions and develop new partnerships. The exhibition covers the breadth of the sector, including satellite operations, launch services, communications and ground systems, manufacturing, materials, subsystems, components, software, optics and engineering services, alongside a programme of conferences exploring the latest industry trends, technologies and challenges.

Register here.

***NOTE* Space Clusters Pitching & Networking Opportunity**, Tuesday 17th November at Space Tech Expo Europe

Midlands Space Cluster have partnered with Space South Central to allow Midlands companies attending Space Tech Expo Europe in Bremen to potentially take part in a Space Clusters Pitching & Networking Session, taking place on Tuesday 17th November, from 3:00–5:00pm. The session offers an opportunity to showcase capabilities, innovations and expertise to businesses and representatives from across the conference.

Companies wishing to participate should submit one PowerPoint slide introducing their business, highlighting their capabilities and providing contact details. There are 16 UK pitching slots available, but slides from companies not selected to present will still be displayed during the networking session.

Expressions of interest close **Friday 6th November**, with successful applicants notified by Wednesday 11th November. Please email your slide to both Victoria May-Chamberlain and Dan Smith of Space South Central.

i. **Beyond the Moon 2026,** 19th - 20th November, London & Online

The British Interplanetary Society's 6th Beyond the Moon Symposium will explore the challenges and opportunities involved in expanding human activity beyond lunar bases and into the wider Solar System. Bringing together scientists, engineers, policymakers and other space professionals, the two-day event will consider both technical and societal challenges, including radiation protection, sustainable habitats, advanced propulsion and governance, while exploring the technologies and long-term strategies needed to enable a sustained human presence beyond Earth.

The symposium takes place at BIS HQ in London, with online participation also available via Zoom. See more here.

j. **5th UK PNT Leadership Seminar**, 26th November, the Royal Society, London

The Royal Institute of Navigation (RIN) is hosting its fifth annual UK Positioning, Navigation and Timing (PNT) Leadership Seminar bringing together leaders from government, industry, academia and key user sectors. The event will explore developments in resilient PNT technologies, national security and commercial opportunities. The programme includes an ESA keynote on assured PNT for a resilient Europe, alongside discussions on GNSS interference, emerging threats, situational awareness and the UK's strategic priorities for 2027.

Find out more and register

k. **Metamaterials in the Real World: Industry Showcase 2026,** 1st December, IET London, Savoy Place

The UK Metamaterials Network is hosting its fifth annual industry showcase bringing together researchers, businesses, policymakers and innovators. The event will explore advances in metamaterials and their translation into commercial applications and includes keynote presentations, industry discussions, technology demonstrations and networking, with opportunities to connect with organisations developing and commercialising new materials technologies.

Expressions of interest to attend close on **8th November**, with places limited. Sponsorship and exhibition opportunities are also available; interested organisations should contact info@metamaterials.network.

Find out more and register

l. **SpaceCom 2027,** 13th –14th January, Orlando, Florida

SpaceCom 2027, held in collaboration with NASA, will bring together leaders from government, defence, commercial and international space to develop partnerships, explore procurement and investment opportunities and accelerate the commercialisation of new space technologies. The event expects 5,000+ attendees, 200+ speakers and 250+ exhibitors from more than 80 countries, with the programme covering priorities including lunar and cislunar exploration, commercial LEO, orbital manufacturing, robotics, space traffic management, resilient supply chains and future power and propulsion.

SpaceCom forms part of Commercial Space Week 2027 at the Orange County Convention Center, alongside the Space Mobility Conference and Global Spaceport Alliance Spaceport Summit. The wider exhibition runs from 12th-14th January.

Learn more here.

m. **LEO PNT: From Promise to Practice,** 20th January, Holiday Inn London Bloomsbury

The Royal Institute of Navigation (RIN) is hosting a one-day conference exploring the latest developments in Low Earth Orbit Positioning, Navigation and Timing. Building on its successful 2026 event, the conference will examine progress towards operational LEO-based navigation and timing services, including satellite signals, infrastructure requirements, emerging technologies and commercial opportunities. The programme features expert presentations and panel discussions on signal-of-opportunity navigation, timing and quantum technologies, and the challenges of moving research into operational systems.

Find out more and register

n. **Advanced Technology & Manufacturing Summit (ATMS),** 2nd – 3rd February 2027, ICC, Belfast

The summit brings together the space, aerospace, defence and maritime sectors around advanced manufacturing, technology innovation and resilient supply chains. Rather than treating space in isolation, the event is deliberately focused on the opportunities created by cross-sector collaboration, with themes including advanced manufacturing, materials, cybersecurity, digitalisation & AI and technology innovation. The programme combines a conference and workshops with an exhibition and structured B2B matchmaking meetings with industry decision-makers, OEMs, Tier 1s and supply-chain companies.

Belfast is particularly relevant for this approach because Northern Ireland has a significant concentration of major aerospace and defence businesses alongside a well-established advanced-engineering supply chain. These include Short Brothers (now a Boeing company), Airbus and Thales, whose Belfast operation is a centre of excellence for air defence, surface-attack systems and space propulsion.

Importantly for smaller businesses, the organisers are offering lower-cost participation rates for small companies, making the B2B programme more accessible to SMEs as well as larger organisations.

Read more and register here.

o. **Small Satellites & Services International Forum (SSSIF 2027)**, 16th – 18th February 2027, Málaga, Spain

The 8th Small Satellites & Services International Forum (SSSIF) will bring together the international small satellite community in Málaga for three days of technical discussion, knowledge exchange and networking. The forum attracts designers, engineers, scientists, developers, suppliers and launch providers, with panels and technical sessions exploring the latest technologies, market developments and future trends shaping the small satellite sector.

Opportunities are available to participate as an exhibitor, sponsor or speaker, as well as to attend the forum. Find out more here.

p. **In-Orbit Servicing, Assembly & Manufacturing (ISAM) Conference,** 23rd February 2027, ExCel London

One day before Space-Comm Expo, the ISAM Conference 2027 will bring together industry, academia, government and the wider space community to explore the technologies and capabilities enabling the next generation of activity in orbit. The conference provides a forum for discussion and collaboration around in-orbit servicing, assembly and manufacturing, including the technologies, applications, regulation and commercial opportunities that will support a more sustainable and capable space economy.

Read more and register here.

q. **Space-Comm Expo Europe 2027**, 24th – 25th February 2027, ExCel London

Space-Comm Expo Europe returns to ExCeL London in February 2027, bringing together the commercial space sector with senior representatives from government, defence, international space agencies and investment. More than 6,000 attendees from 50 space nations are expected, providing a major platform for companies to showcase capabilities, understand emerging market and procurement priorities, and build relationships with customers, partners and decision-makers from across the global space sector.

Registration is now open here.

r. **SATShow Week 2027,** 8th – 11th March, Walter E. Washington Convention Center, Washington DC, USA

SATShow Week 2027 will bring together the global satellite and space industry for one of the world's largest satellite communications events. The event is expected to

attract over 15,000 industry professionals and 500 exhibitors from more than 100 countries, spanning satellite manufacturing, communications, ground systems, launch services, cybersecurity and emerging space technologies. The programme combines the flagship SATELLITE conference and exhibition with GovMilSpace, a dedicated forum for government, military and defence space stakeholders.

Topics include resilient satellite communications, multi-orbit connectivity, AI-enabled operations, space cybersecurity, defence applications and commercial space investment. Alongside the exhibition, technical seminars, startup showcases and structured networking sessions provide opportunities to engage with satellite operators, prime contractors, investors and government representatives.

Find out more and register

s. **Inaugural Space Economy Conference 2027,** 25th – 26th March, London

The Inaugural Space Economy Conference 2027 will bring together academics, industry professionals and practitioners to explore the management, commercial and organisational challenges of the growing space economy. The two-day developmental conference will feature academic and professional tracks, paper and poster presentations, expert panels and keynotes, and structured networking designed to encourage collaboration between researchers and industry.

Of particular interest is the Professional Track, which invites challenge-and-solution proposals addressing real managerial and organisational problems facing the space sector. The submission platform is now open, with extended abstracts submission date of **15th November 2026**.

Read more here.

t. **The Advanced Materials Show 2027,** 16th – 17th June, NEC Birmingham

The Advanced Materials Show brings together materials suppliers, manufacturers, researchers and engineers to explore the latest developments in high-performance materials and advanced manufacturing technologies. The free-to-attend exhibition and conference will showcase innovations in composites, polymers, ceramics, nanomaterials, metals, alloys and functional coatings, alongside technologies for materials processing, additive manufacturing, testing, characterisation and precision engineering. The conference programme will cover topics including digitalisation and AI, thermal management, surface engineering, materials industrialisation and manufacturing innovation.

The event offers opportunities to identify new suppliers, explore technology transfer between sectors and connect with potential customers and research partners. The show is co-located with other specialist exhibitions covering advanced ceramics, batteries, vehicle electrification and energy technologies, providing additional opportunities for cross-sector collaboration.

Find out more and register

u. **EUCASS 2027,** 28th June to 2nd July, Scottish Event Campus, Glasgow

The 12th European Conference for AeroSpace Sciences (EUCASS 2027) is a major international conference bringing together scientists, engineers, researchers and industry professionals to share advances in aeronautics and space science. The event provides a forum for presenting research, discussing emerging technologies and strengthening collaboration between academia, research organisations and the aerospace industry.

EUCASS covers a broad range of aerospace disciplines, including propulsion, aerodynamics, flight dynamics, structures, materials, systems engineering and space technologies. The conference offers opportunities to exchange technical knowledge, establish international research and industrial partnerships, and showcase new developments. The call for abstracts is now open, with submissions closing on **15th January 2027**. Researchers and industry professionals are invited to submit contributions for consideration in the technical programme.

Find out more and submit an abstract

5. Funding and Support Opportunities with Deadlines

a. UKSA Space Clusters Infrastructure Fund – Call 2

The UK Space Agency is preparing to launch the competitive funding stage of Space Clusters Infrastructure Fund (SCIF) Call 2, a major investment programme supporting research and development infrastructure across the UK space sector. The programme will provide at least £37 million in grant funding through to 2030 for infrastructure that enables organisations to develop, test, manufacture, qualify and commercialise space technologies. Potential investments include laboratories, test facilities, cleanrooms, specialist equipment, digital manufacturing capability, advanced materials facilities and other infrastructure that strengthens UK space capability and supply chains.

The initial Expression of Interest stage has now closed and was non-mandatory. The formal competitive funding process will open later in 2026, with further details and eligibility requirements to be published with the full call. Midlands organisations considering an application are encouraged to continue developing their proposals and engage with the Midlands Space Cluster, particularly where we can help identify potential collaborators, demonstrate wider regional demand and strengthen the benefits to the local space ecosystem.

See the latest SCIF Call 2 information

b. STFC Cross Cluster Proof of Concept Call 2026 – Up to £50,000 for Space Innovation

The Science and Technology Facilities Council (STFC) has launched its latest Cross Cluster Proof of Concept funding call, offering grants of up to £50,000 for collaborative, business-led R&D projects focused on space, defence, national

security and growth. The call aims to accelerate the development and commercialisation of innovative technologies, products and services, including dual-use applications. Priority areas include Space Domain Awareness, In-Orbit Servicing, Assembly and Manufacturing (ISAM), satellite communications, assured access to space, positioning, navigation and timing (PNT), Earth observation and space exploration. Projects may demonstrate new technologies, develop novel applications or validate solutions in relevant operational and commercial environments.

Applications must be led by a UK-registered business, involve collaboration and undertake all project activities within the UK. Importantly, at least one project partner must be part of the Harwell Space Cluster or North West Space Cluster, creating an opportunity for Midlands businesses to develop cross-cluster partnerships. Proposals involving collaboration between civil, commercial, defence and security sectors are particularly encouraged. Midlands Space Cluster members interested in exploring potential partnerships are welcome to contact us for support with introductions. The application deadline is **5:30pm on Thursday 12th November 2026**, with application forms and guidance available by emailing CrossClusterPOC@stfc.ac.uk.

Find out more about the funding call

c. **NSIP Call 3 – Full Proposal Stage Opens**

The UK Space Agency's National Space Innovation Programme (NSIP) Call 3 has now moved to its Full Proposal stage, with applicants successful at the earlier Outline Proposal stage being invited to submit detailed applications. Up to £20 million is available through two funding streams: Kick Starter, offering grants of £150,000–£1 million for disruptive, earlier-stage innovations, and Major Projects, offering £150,000–£2 million for projects focused on higher-TRL development, commercialisation and growth. Around 15–30 projects are expected to receive funding.

This stage is only open to applicants invited following the Outline Proposal assessment and is not an opportunity for new applications. Full proposals must demonstrate clear technical and commercial outcomes, with NSIP particularly encouraging projects relevant to Satellite Communications, In-Orbit Servicing, Assembly and Manufacturing (ISAM), Space Domain Awareness and Assured Access to Space. Successful projects are expected to begin from April 2027 and must finish by 30th September 2029. The deadline for Full Proposals is 11:59pm on **Thursday 12th November** 2026.

Full details and application guidance

d. **Digital Twin Technology Access Programme**

Digital Catapult's UK Digital Twin Centre is inviting UK businesses to apply for its Digital Twin Technology Access Programme, offering practical support to explore how digital twin technologies could address engineering, manufacturing or

operational challenges. Open to UK-registered businesses across all sectors, the programme provides access to specialist software, training and one-to-one technical guidance through technology providers CADFEM, MathWorks and Cadence. Applicants must identify a relevant use case and be available to participate from January 2027.

Potential space applications include spacecraft subsystem modelling, thermal and structural analysis, virtual testing and satellite operations. The support offers an opportunity to evaluate digital twin technologies and build internal capability without committing immediately to a full-scale implementation. Applications close on **17th November 2026.**

Read more here

e. **Innovate UK – £4m Manufacturing Digitalisation Innovation and Scale-up Hub**

Innovate UK has opened a £4 million competition to establish a new Manufacturing Digitalisation Innovation and Scale-up Hub, supporting the adoption and commercialisation of Industrial Digital Technologies across five priority advanced manufacturing sectors: Advanced Materials, Aerospace, Automotive, Batteries and Space. The Hub will identify common industrial challenges, connect manufacturers with high-potential technology providers and help develop digital solutions capable of wider adoption across UK manufacturing supply chains.

The opportunity covers technologies including AI and machine learning, robotics and automation, additive manufacturing, IoT and connectivity, digital twins, data analytics and AR/VR. This is a competition to establish and operate a single substantial Hub rather than a general SME funding call: applications must request £3.8m-£4m, run for 36 months and be led by a UK-registered RTO or academic institution, either alone or in collaboration. Businesses can participate as project partners. The successful Hub will start on 1st April 2027, with applications closing at 11:00am on **18th November 2026**.

Find out more and apply

f. **ESA BASS Funding Opportunities for UK Organisations**

UK organisations can access funding through the ESA Business Applications and Space Solutions (BASS) programme to develop commercially viable products and services that use space assets such as satellite communications, navigation or Earth observation. Current UK-supported routes include the permanently open Proof-of-Concept Studies and Pilot Projects call, alongside selected thematic Calls for Proposals, Enabling Studies and Competitive Invitation to Tender (ITT) opportunities. Proof-of-Concept studies help businesses validate market opportunities and develop an MVP, while Pilot Projects support testing with customers in real operational environments.

Enabling Studies and Competitive ITTs typically support more detailed Proof-of-Concept feasibility studies, generally lasting up to nine months, with ESA budgets

typically in the region of €200,000–€300,000. UKSA normally provides up to 50% co-funding, although rates can vary by opportunity. Organisations interested in an Enabling Study or Competitive ITT should contact the UK Space Agency before developing a proposal to confirm that the particular call is supported and to obtain the required Authorisation of Funding.

View the current ESA BASS opportunities supported by the UK Space Agency here.

g. **ESA Funding Call – Space-Enabled Solutions for Road and Traffic Safety**

ESA is inviting proposals for new commercially sustainable services and products that use space technologies to improve road and traffic safety. The call covers areas including vehicle-to-vehicle and vehicle-to-infrastructure communications, road condition monitoring and maintenance, traffic-flow optimisation, protection of vulnerable road users and improved road-safety assessment.

Projects can combine satellite Earth observation, navigation and communications with technologies such as AI, IoT sensors, connected vehicles and autonomous systems. ESA is supporting both Proof-of-Concept Studies and Pilot Projects, and UK companies are eligible to apply. The call closes on **27th November 2026**.

Find out more and apply

h. **UK Space Agency Offers £2.1 Million for Spacecraft Life Extension Feasibility Studies**

The UK Space Agency has launched a £2.1 million Contracts for Innovation competition to investigate technologies and mission concepts that could extend the operational life of satellites in orbit. Funding is expected to support approximately three feasibility studies exploring spacecraft life-extension missions, including rendezvous, proximity operations and docking technologies. The competition forms part of the UK's wider development of ISAM capabilities, with the potential to inform future demonstration missions.

Projects will help establish the technical and commercial feasibility of future life-extension services, supporting the development of UK capabilities and supply chains. Applications close at **1:00pm on 27th November**, with projects expected to begin in January 2027.

UKSA is holding a bidder engagement event at Harwell Campus on 6th November, covering this and the related in-orbit manufacturing competition. To attend, email UKSA.commercial@dsit.gov.uk by **3:00pm on 4th November**, using the subject *IOD Discovery Phase Engagement Event*.

View the competition and application details

i. **UK Space Agency Launches £1.4 Million In-Orbit Manufacturing R&D Competition**

The UK Space Agency has announced a £1.4 million Contracts for Innovation competition to advance technologies for manufacturing products and components in space. The funding is expected to support approximately two R&D projects focused on developing and testing manufacturing processes and associated payload technologies, with the aim of progressing capabilities towards Technology Readiness Levels 4–5. The competition supports the UK's ambitions in in-orbit servicing, assembly and manufacturing (ISAM), helping establish the technical foundations for potential future in-space demonstration missions.

The programme offers an opportunity to explore how terrestrial manufacturing expertise could be adapted to the space environment and contribute to emerging in-orbit manufacturing supply chains. Applications close at **1:00pm on 27th November**, with projects expected to begin in January 2027.

A UKSA bidder engagement event will take place at Harwell Campus on 6th November, covering both this competition and the spacecraft life-extension opportunity. Interested organisations should email UKSA.commercial@dsit.gov.uk by **3:00pm on 4th November**, using the subject *IOD Discovery Phase Engagement Event*.

View the competition and application details

j. **ESA Funding Call – Space-Enabled Solutions for Wildfire Preparedness**

ESA has opened a new Wildfire Preparedness call seeking commercially viable services that use space technology and data to improve the prevention and management of wildfires. The call focuses on areas including wildfire risk assessment, fuel-load management, preventative measures and adaptation, with potential solutions drawing on Earth observation, satellite navigation and satellite communications.

The opportunity supports Proof-of-Concept Studies and Pilot Projects, with ESA offering zero-equity funding of 50–80%, depending on SME status and Member State approval, alongside technical and commercial support. Applicants need to demonstrate customer engagement, market potential, technical feasibility and clear added value from using space assets. UK organisations are eligible, although applicants are strongly advised to engage with the UK National Delegation early, as written authorisation for ESA funding is required for a full proposal. The call closes on **1st December 2026**.

Find out more and apply

k. **UK Space Agency Launches £2 Million Unlocking Space for Business Funding Call**

The UK Space Agency has opened a new £2 million Unlocking Space for Business (USB) funding competition, supporting the adoption of satellite data and services to address environmental challenges across the UK economy. Grants of £150,000–£400,000 per project are available for near-market solutions that demonstrate measurable operational and commercial benefits. The competition focuses on two challenge areas:

- Environmental Intelligence for Climate, Nature and Natural Capital – using space-enabled data to improve climate risk assessment, environmental monitoring, nature-related decision-making and resilience.

- Environmental Emissions Monitoring and Verification – developing solutions to detect, monitor and verify emissions, supporting environmental compliance, sustainability reporting and emissions reduction.

Projects must be led by a UK-registered end-user business working with at least one UK space supplier, with other technology providers, integrators or research organisations able to participate. Potential end users include businesses in energy, utilities, agriculture, infrastructure, financial services and environmental management. Projects must use Earth observation, satellite communications or positioning, navigation and timing technologies, and demonstrate a credible route to operational adoption. Projects are expected to begin in January 2027 and run for up to nine months.

Applications close at 4:00pm on **Friday 11th December** 2026.

Applicant briefing webinar: **Tuesday 3rd November** 2026, 11:00am. UKSA will explain the competition requirements, application process and eligibility criteria, with an opportunity for questions. Register for the applicant briefing webinar If you can't make it at such short notice, the recording will be loaded to the UKSA YouTube channel.

Read the full competition guidance and apply

l. **Innovate UK–Singapore Collaborative R&D 2026 – Up to £3m Available**

Innovate UK, working with Enterprise Singapore, has launched a new collaborative R&D competition with up to £3 million available to support innovative projects between UK and Singapore businesses. Projects must focus on Advanced Manufacturing, Clean Energy, Life Sciences, or Digital and Technologies, including frontier technologies such as semiconductors, quantum, artificial intelligence, cyber security and advanced connectivity.

UK projects can request between £100,000 and £900,000 in grant funding, covering up to 70% of eligible costs depending on business size, and must run for 24–36 months. Projects must be led by a UK-registered business working with at least one

separate Singapore-registered business, with UK universities and RTOs also able to participate as partners. Innovate UK Business Connect is providing matchmaking support for organisations looking for a Singapore partner. Applications close at **11am on 16th December.**

Learn more and apply here.

m. **UK–Florida Space Innovation Partnership Call Now Open**

The UK Space Agency and Space Florida have launched a new joint funding call to support collaborative R&D between UK and Florida space companies. A total of £150,000 from UKSA and $200,000 from Space Florida is available, with up to two projects expected to be supported. Each project can receive up to £75,000 of UKSA funding for the UK partner and $100,000 from Space Florida for the Florida partner, subject to applicable match-funding requirements.

Projects can address any area of the space sector, although particular interests include in-orbit servicing and manufacturing, space transportation, satellite systems, in-space research and advanced exploration technologies. Applications must involve at least one for-profit UK company and one for-profit Florida company, with universities and research organisations also able to participate. Projects are expected to begin on 3rd May 2027 and conclude by the end of March 2028. Applications close at 3:00pm UK time on **11th January 2027**.

If you have any questions about anything not covered in the call guidance, then please contact the IBF team at UKSA.IBF@dsit.gov.uk.

Find out more and apply

n. **ESA BSGN Agri-food Industry Accelerator Opens Second Call**

The ESA Business in Space Growth Network (BSGN) Agri-food Industry Accelerator has opened its second call for commercially driven R&D projects exploring how microgravity can enable new products, processes and technologies for terrestrial markets. The call is particularly aimed at companies across areas including microbial biomanufacturing, precision fermentation and synthetic biology, plant biology, cellular agriculture, food preservation and bio-based materials and sustainable packaging. Cross-cutting ideas addressing resource efficiency, sustainable manufacturing and the circular bioeconomy are also encouraged.

Selected projects will receive a tailored acceleration programme including technical and commercial support, help designing microgravity experiments, access to commercial space providers, support identifying ESA funding opportunities and assistance securing wider investment and funding. The programme is particularly interesting for Midlands organisations with strong capabilities in biotechnology, advanced materials, manufacturing and agri-tech that may not previously have considered space or microgravity as an R&D environment. Applications are open through ESA's OSIP platform until **15th January**

2027, with successful projects expected to enter the acceleration phase in April 2027.

Find out more and apply

o. **UK Space Agency Announces £4.5m Funding Call for National Space Education Programme**

The UK Space Agency, in partnership with ESA, has launched a funding call to deliver the next phase of ESERO-UK (European Space Education Resource Office), the UK's national space education and engagement programme. Up to £4.5 million of UK Space Agency funding is available for delivery from April 2027 to March 2030, with ESA expected to contribute a further €750,000, bringing the total potential funding to approximately £5.14 million. The programme aims to inspire young people aged 4–19 to explore STEM subjects and space careers, improve access for underrepresented groups, and support teachers and educators in using space as a context for learning.

The Agency is seeking a UK-led consortium with the expertise, networks and delivery capacity to operate a nationwide programme encompassing schools, colleges, community organisations and other educational settings. Applications close at 11:59pm on **20th January 2027**.

Find out more and apply

6. Ongoing Funding and Support Opportunities

a. **UK National Delegate support for ESA ARTES Invitations to Tender**

UK organisations can now apply for National Delegate support to access funding through the European Space Agency's ARTES (Advanced Research in Telecommunications Systems) programme. ARTES supports the development of innovative satellite communications technologies, products and services, with eligible ESA Invitations to Tender (ITTs) offering up to 100% funding for early-stage technology development and innovation.

The opportunity is open to UK companies, universities and research organisations applying to UK Space Agency-supported ESA ARTES calls. Organisations should first check that their chosen ITT is supported by the UK Space Agency before applying for National Delegate approval, which is a mandatory step before submitting a proposal to ESA. Further details, supported activities and application guidance are available here.

b. **ESA General Support Technology Programme (GSTP)**

The UK Space Agency is inviting UK organisations to access ESA's GSTP, which supports the development and maturation of innovative space technologies across almost all space domains, from early-stage concepts through to mission-ready hardware. The programme is open to businesses, universities and research

organisations developing technologies with strong commercial or strategic potential, helping bridge the gap between research and deployment.

Funding opportunities are available through a range of GSTP activities, with support levels varying depending on the type of project. Organisations wishing to apply should review the current calls and submit a Statement of Interest to the UK Space Agency for National Delegate approval before applying to ESA. Full details, including submission dates and guidance, are available here.

c. **ESA NAVISP Supports Next-Generation Navigation Technologies**

The UK Space Agency is inviting organisations to apply for funding through ESA's Navigation Innovation and Support Programme (NAVISP), which supports the development of innovative Positioning, Navigation and Timing (PNT) technologies. The programme is open to UK businesses, universities and research organisations developing commercially focused products, services and technologies across the space, ground and user segments, with opportunities ranging from competitive tenders to open calls for proposals.

The programme is open year-round, with funding available across three NAVISP elements. Support can range from up to 100% funding for some early-stage research activities to co-funded commercial innovation projects, depending on the funding route. Organisations must obtain UK Space Agency National Delegate approval before submitting proposals to ESA and are encouraged to engage with the UK Space Agency at the earliest opportunity. Read more here.

d. **Horizon Europe 2026-2027 Work Programmes**

You can view available work programmes for 2026-27 now at Horizon Europe work programmes - Research and innovation

Work has been going on behind the scenes to make the opportunities more accessible for SMEs, start-ups and new applicants. Of particular interest are - Cluster 4 which covers Digital, Industry and Space and Cluster 5 which covers Climate, Energy and Mobility.

e. **UKSA Accelerating Investment Export Pathway**

The Accelerating Investment Export Pathway (AIEP), developed by the UK Space Agency and supported by KPMG, is designed to help high-potential UK space SMEs prepare for international growth and become export-ready. Up to ten businesses will receive targeted training and support covering international market selection and entry, overseas procurement, export regulations and trade barriers, alongside guidance on accessing wider Government export support and Department for Business and Trade missions. Participants will also receive a tailored Export Guide and programme materials.

The programme is aimed at UK-registered and headquartered early-stage space businesses with a market-ready product or service, proven commercial activity and

ambitions to grow internationally. Companies should have an existing customer base, sufficient financial capacity to support export activity and be able to commit to the programme's training, mentoring, workshops and networking activities. Applications are currently available through KPMG and spaces are limited.

Find out more and apply here.

f. **The ESA Proposal Advice Service** (ESA PAS)

Designed to support UK-based organisations bidding for European Space Agency contracts and improve the quality, completeness, strategic alignment and consistency of bids - thereby aiming to strengthen the bidder's application for funding - by providing free, non-technical advice to organisations through a thorough review of their draft bid (before submission).

Organisations should apply as soon as they have taken a decision to bid for a specific opportunity. Read more here

g. **UK Innovation Science Seed Fund** (UKI2S)

UKI2S focuses on nurturing and adding value to innovative ideas that shape the future alongside investing in groundbreaking technology companies. UKI2S invests in innovations that are in the UKIS strategic priority areas or from the UK's publicly funded science and knowledge base. They focus on those with high growth potential at pre-seed and seed stages – to get the most groundbreaking technologies and ideas to market.

If you are interested in learning more and applying visit Space – UKI2S

Sign Off

Are you looking to form collaborations to apply for funding but need help connecting to the relevant partners? Get in touch with us to help you!

Have some space-sector news or a business success to share? Get in touch.

Latest News and Newsletters at Midlands Space Cluster

Nicola Deards
Midlands Space Cluster Manager

Mobile: 07713 832217
Midlands Aerospace Alliance Tel: 024 7643 0256
nicola.deards@midlandsaerospace.org.uk