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Airbus launches second Airbus Launchpad cohort for space SME

Farnborough, United Kingdom, 22 July 2026 – Airbus has officially launched the Expression of Interest (EOI) for the second cohort of the Airbus Launchpad SME programme.

Supported by the UK Space Agency's (UKSA) Space Clusters Infrastructure Fund, the Airbus Launchpad provides dedicated development space and state-of-the-art laboratory facilities at Airbus' Stevenage headquarters.

"British space businesses are brimming with talent and ambition, so it is fantastic to see Airbus continuing to invest in and champion the next generation of companies. The Launchpad scheme – backed by £3.9 million in government investment – gives them the platform they need to turn brilliant ideas into global success stories. I am confident the new cohort will demonstrate exactly what they can achieve when given the chance to thrive," said Rebecca Evernden, Director of the UK Space Agency.

"Collaboration across the UK space sector is what turns bold ideas into breakthrough capabilities. By working together, we are accelerating innovation and strengthening our national space ecosystem," said Kata Escott, UK Managing Director, Airbus Defence and Space.

The inaugural programme launched in January 2026, was developed from an Airbus funded space accelerator programme where Airbus space experts helped mentor nine UK small start-up companies. Many of the initial companies grew, improved their internal processes and concluded further fundraising.

The Airbus Launchpad provides participants with access to world-class laboratories, workspaces, and testing facilities as part of a no-cost residency, strengthening the UK supply chain and further developing sovereign skills.

It is a cornerstone of Airbus' Community for Space Prosperity (CUSP) programme, which aims to grow the activity of the UK space supply chain through enhanced research, innovation, and outreach activities.

The initiative is the result of a significant investment of £3.9 million in funding from the UKSA's Space Clusters Infrastructure Fund (SCIF), which was match-funded by Airbus. This open and adaptable facility is designed to foster innovation, encompassing a workspace for over 50 people.

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Companies wanting to apply should complete the Expression of Interest Form or email Airbus.Launchpad@airbus.com with any questions.

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Rebecca Evernden, Director UK Space Agency and Anisha Patel, Key Account Manager, Airbus Defence and Space launching the EOI for Airbus' Launchpad © Airbus SAS 2026

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