esa BUSINESS INCUBATION CENTRE Slovakia

ESA BIC Slovakia

Where Slovak innovation meets space

- Mentoring & business coaching
- Technical & engineering support
- ESA & investor network access
- University partnership ecosystem

Grow your space business with ESA

- Comprehensive 2 year support package
- Up to 60 000 € financial incentive
- 50 hours of expert business coaching
- 20 hours of technical support
- 10 hours of legal and IP advice

EAST SLOVAK SPACE CLUSTER

STU

UNIVERSITY OF ŽILINA

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EUROPEAN SPACE AGENCY

The European Space Agency (ESA) is Europe's gateway to space – an intergovernmental organization of 22 member states dedicated to the peaceful exploration and use of outer space for the benefit of humanity. Founded in 1975, ESA coordinates Europe's efforts in satellite navigation, Earth observation, telecommunications, launch systems, space science, and human exploration.

ESA's programmes have created the world-renowned Copernicus satellites for climate and environmental monitoring, Galileo for precision navigation, and Ariane launch vehicles for independent European access to space. By pooling resources and expertise, ESA enables its member states to achieve together what none could do alone – securing Europe's autonomy, competitiveness, and technological leadership.

Slovakia's cooperation with ESA began through the Plan for European Cooperating States (PECS), which connected Slovak research and industry with ESA's scientific missions and technology programmes. In 2022, Slovakia became an Associated Member of ESA, a significant achievement that expanded access to European projects and industrial contracts. ESA BIC Slovakia is the next strategic step: it transforms this institutional partnership into direct, tangible benefits for Slovak innovators.

ESA BUSINESS INCUBATION CENTRES

BUSINESS INCUBATION CENTRE

The ESA Business Incubation Centres (ESA BICs) are Europe's largest network dedicated to transforming space technology and satellite data into commercial success stories. Established in 2003, the network today comprises more than 25 centres across 17 European countries. Together, these centres have supported over 1 300 start-ups, creating more than 12 000 high-value jobs and attracting over €800 million in private investment.

Building on this success, ESA is now preparing the ACCESS Programme – Accelerating Commercialisation and Competitiveness of the European Space Sector – which will unite and expand existing business support initiatives, including the ESA BIC network. Through ACCESS, ESA aims to strengthen Europe's ability to nurture start-ups, scale-ups, and established companies alike, ensuring that the achievements of ESA BICs continue as an integral part of a broader European innovation ecosystem. The network's mission remains clear: to turn space technologies into sustainable businesses, stimulate regional economies, and bridge the gap between research excellence and market demand, now within a stronger, pan-European framework of commercialisation and growth.

ESA BIC SLOVAKIA

ESA BIC Slovakia joins this network as part of ESA's long-term strategy to strengthen the innovation landscape in Central and Eastern Europe. It is implemented by a national consortium led by the East Slovak Space Cluster (ESSC) in partnership with the Slovak University of Technology in Bratislava (STU) and the University of Žilina (UNIZA). The main objective of ESA BIC Slovakia is to identify and support the 25 most promising space-tech startups over the next five years. Each selected company will receive a comprehensive support package for two years, which includes:

- A financial incentive of up to 60,000€,
- Access to office facilities in a Business Incubation Centre at one of the 3 hubs
- 50 hours of expert business coaching,
- 20 hours of technical support,
- 10 hours of legal and intellectual property advice.

To further strengthen this support, the consortium has also established an Advisory Board composed of leading Slovak and international space companies, which will provide startups with invaluable strategic advice and access to important industry contacts. The program will operate through a harmonized three-hub model, leveraging established innovation ecosystems in Košice, Bratislava, and Žilina ensuring equal access for innovators from all Slovak regions. Each hub builds on local expertise:

Košice

As the consortium leader, the East Slovak Space Cluster (ESSC) anchors ESA BIC Slovakia in the heart of Košice, a city with a proud history of technological excellence and academic innovation. Long known as Slovakia's industrial and educational powerhouse, Košice has evolved into a vibrant centre for advanced research, digital technologies, and deep-tech entrepreneurship. The cluster unites leading academic, research, and industrial institutions including the Technical University of Košice, Pavol Jozef Šafárik University, the Slovak Academy of Sciences, and Deutsche Telekom IT Solutions Slovakia. Košice is the operational heart of Slovakia's space ambitions. It is from here that space missions are coordinated, and where new collaborations between science, business, and technology are taking flight. This network combines world-class research infrastructure with practical industrial experience, offering start-ups a unique environment where innovation thrives.

Žilina

The University of Žilina will serve as the ESA BIC center for Central Slovakia, leveraging its strong focus on technology transfer and applied research. Through its Technology Incubator, UNIZA has a successful history of guiding projects from idea to realization, with notable achievements such as the aerospace startup Straton Technologies. The university excels at fostering entrepreneurship among students and researchers through targeted programs and access to modern laboratories, including facilities for optical communications, laser technologies, and advanced electronics. UNIZA's active collaboration with local, national, and international innovation partners ensures that startups receive comprehensive support.

Bratislava

The Slovak University of Technology in Bratislava, which serves as the hub for Western Slovakia, brings decades of proven experience in supporting deep-tech companies. Its University Technology Incubator, InQb, founded in 2004, is one of the longest-running and most successful in Slovakia, having supported more than 95 companies that have collectively generated revenues exceeding €64 million. STU plays a key role in the commercialization of cutting-edge research and has built an extensive network of partnerships that includes global leaders such as ESET, IBM, and Google.

Each incubated company also gains entry to the European ESA BIC network and industry events. The programme directly supports the objectives of the Slovak Space Strategy 2030, which aims to build national capacity in space research, strengthen industrial competitiveness, and create high-tech employment.Through ESA BIC Slovakia, Slovakia not only joins Europe's innovation ecosystem — it actively shapes it.

IMPACT ON STATE ECONOMY

ESA BICs are more than incubators; they are strategic instruments for economic development. This means that countries hosting ESA BICs see a direct increase in innovation, SME productivity, and employment. Each €1 invested in ESA BIC operations creates around €4 in economic return within five years. The programme therefore represents one of Europe's most efficient public innovation initiatives.

Beyond numbers, ESA BICs strengthen the entire innovation ecosystem, they:

- Build bridges between universities, research institutes, and industry.
- Help start-ups secure private investment and enter global markets.
- Foster dual-use technologies with wide spectrum of applications.
- Create a culture of entrepreneurship within scientific communities.

For Slovakia, these benefits are particularly valuable. Our country has a strong academic base and growing ICT sector but faces a need to commercialize research results and retain talent. ESA BIC Slovakia acts as a catalyst for this transition, transforming knowledge into companies and companies into growth drivers. In the broader sense, ESA BIC Slovakia helps the nation shift from a technology user to a technology creator, an evolution that directly contributes to economic resilience and sovereignty.

SUCCES STORIES FROM OTHER ESA BICS

Behind every economic indicator and policy objective lies a simple truth: innovation begins with people and with their courage to explore, experiment, and persist. ESA BICs were founded on this principle. They transform the bold ideas of engineers, scientists, and entrepreneurs into technologies that serve humanity. Across Europe, hundreds of start-ups have already proven that space innovation is not reserved for a select few. It belongs to all those who dare to connect space expertise with life on Earth — from monitoring our planet's climate to enhancing communication, navigation, and sustainability.

The ESA BIC network illustrates what becomes possible when knowledge, ambition, and support come together. The following success stories demonstrate what future Slovak entrepreneurs can achieve under the umbrella of ESA BIC Slovakia:

isar aerospace

1. Isar Aerospace (Germany)

Founded in 2018 at ESA BIC Bavaria, Isar Aerospace develops launch vehicles for small satellites, offering independent European access to space. Within five years, the company secured over €310 million in private investment and grew to more than 400 employees. Its Spectrum rocket positions Germany as a competitive launch provider on the global market.

OPEN COSMOS

2. Open Cosmos (United Kingdom)

Graduated from ESA BIC Harwell, Open Cosmos offers affordable, turn-key satellite missions for Earth observation and IoT applications. By reducing mission cost and complexity, it democratizes access to space. Today its satellites support environmental monitoring projects in Europe, Latin America, and Asia and serve clients such as ESA and the UK Space Agency.

clearspace today

3. ClearSpace (Switzerland)

ClearSpace, originating from ESA BIC Switzerland, develops technologies for active debris removal and orbital cleanup. In 2020, it signed an €86 million contract with ESA to launch the world's first mission to capture and deorbit space debris (launch planned for 2026). The company is now a symbol of Europe's commitment to sustainable space operations.

Alén .space
A GMV COMPANY

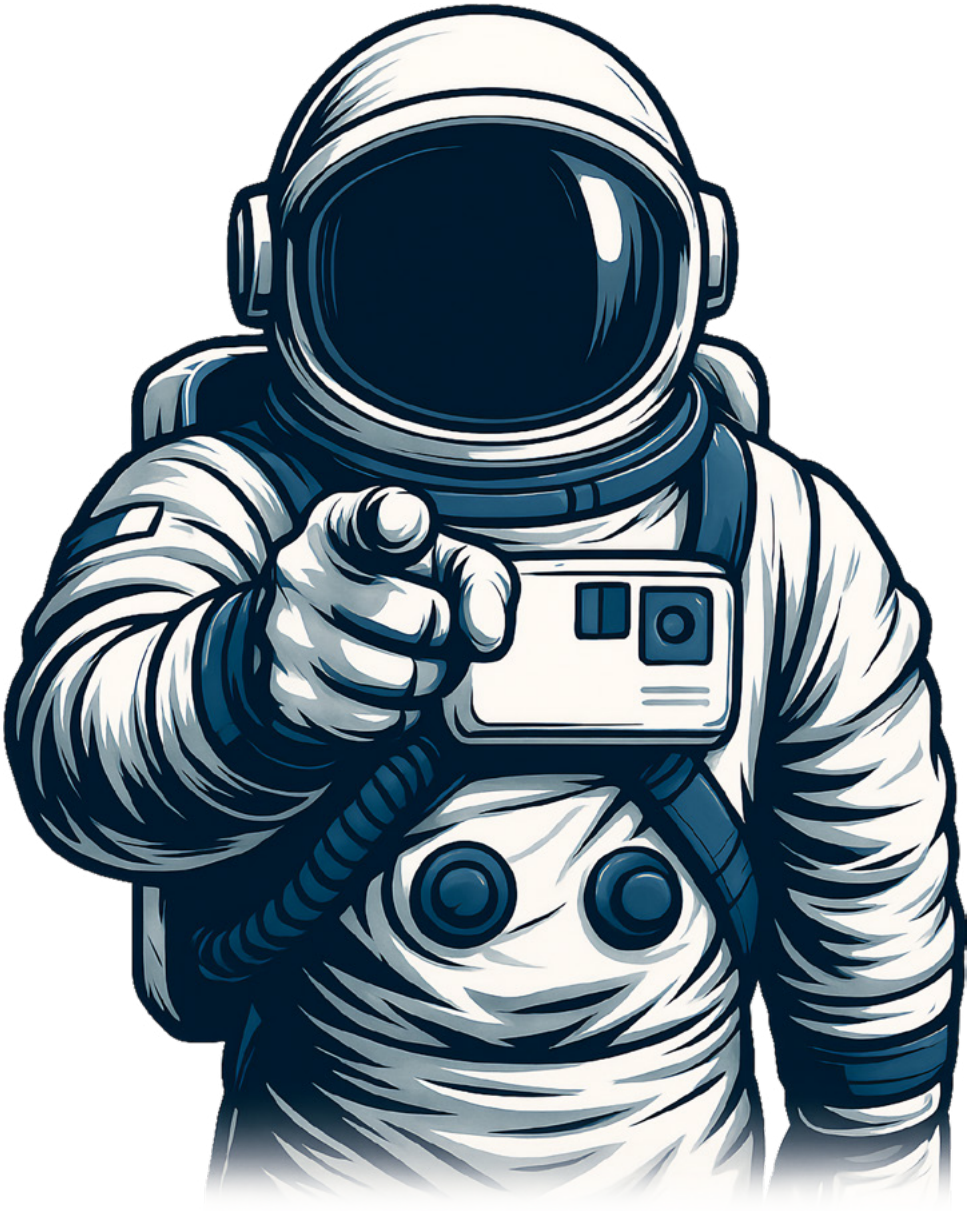
4. Alén Space (Spain)

At ESA BIC Galicia, Alén Space grew from a university research group into an international supplier of modular satellite platforms for communications, defence, and IoT. Its products are exported to more than 15 countries, and the company has been recognized for its role in boosting Spain's New Space economy.

The launch of ESA BIC Slovakia marks the beginning of a new journey, one that connects Slovak ingenuity with Europe's most dynamic space innovation network. By empowering local entrepreneurs to grow beyond national borders, access cutting-edge expertise, and collaborate on global challenges, ESA BIC Slovakia opens the door to limitless opportunity.

It is more than an incubation programme. It is a national platform for vision and collaboration. By linking start-ups with academia, investors, and international partners, ESA BIC Slovakia creates a virtuous circle of innovation that strengthens the entire economy and places Slovakia firmly on the map of Europe's space future.

The innovators of ESA BIC Slovakia will play a vital role in building Slovakia's reputation as a trusted ESA partner. Their work, innovations, and determination will help shape the nation's path toward full ESA membership, proving that Slovakia is ready not only to reach for space but to grow with it.



YOUR IDEA
OUR LAUNCHPAD

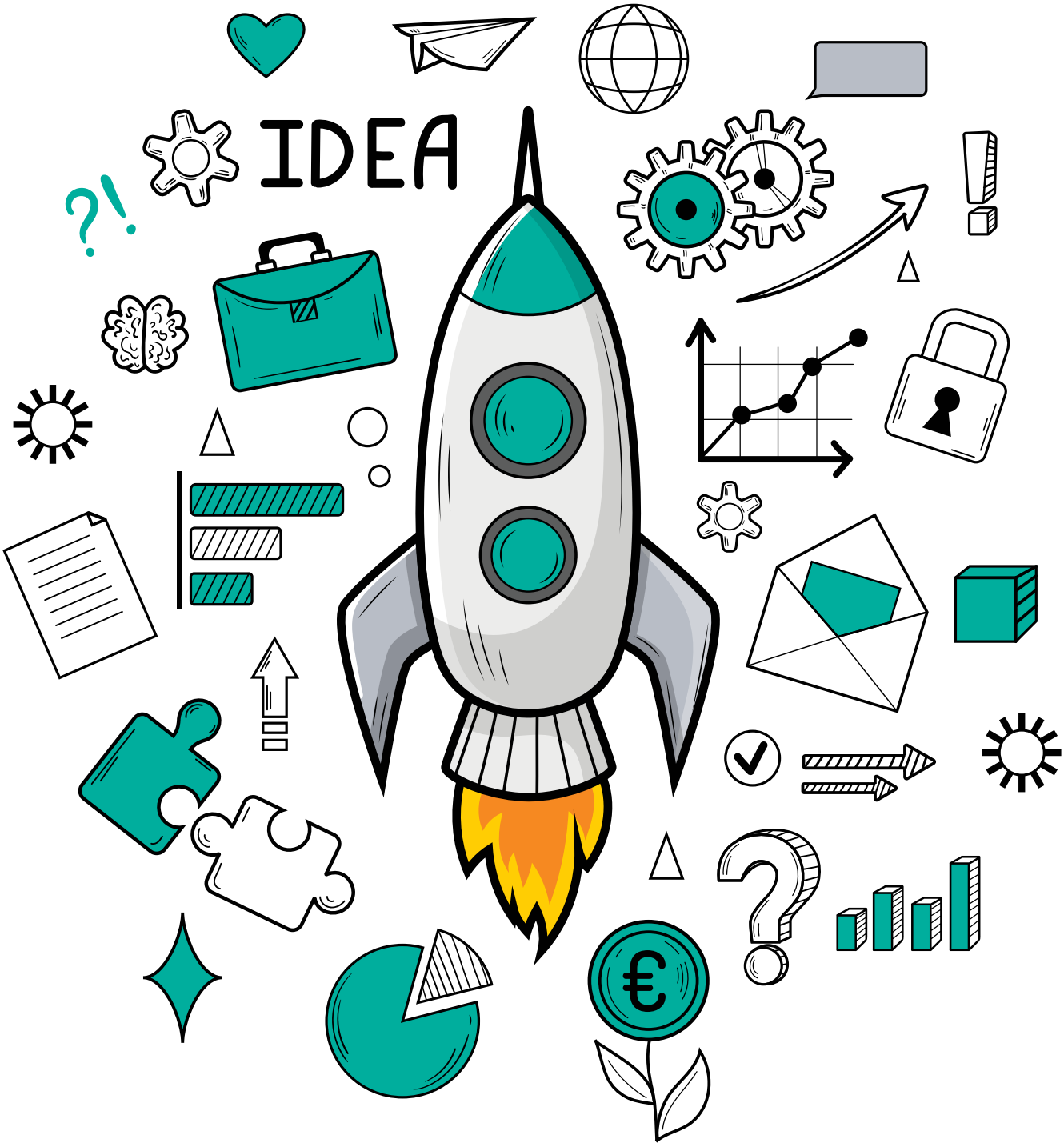
OUR OFFER TO SELECTED PROJECTS

Becoming part of ESA BIC Slovakia means more than joining an incubation programme, it means gaining access to an entire ecosystem built to help ambitious ideas grow, connect, and succeed. Each selected project will receive not only resources but also a platform, a gateway if you want, into Europe's most extensive space innovation network.

Every start-up will receive individualised support over a two-year period, designed to accelerate both business and technological development. This includes financial assistance of up to €60,000, tailored business and technical mentoring, and legal and intellectual property guidance. Yet the true strength of ESA BIC Slovakia lies beyond numbers. It is in the people, the knowledge, and the community surrounding every incubated project. Through the consortium's network of universities, innovation centres, and industry partners, start-ups gain direct access to expert knowledge, laboratories, and specialised facilities across Košice, Bratislava, and Žilina. But the incubator goes further, it activates a pro bono support network of professionals from leading Slovak and European companies, investors, and law firms who volunteer their expertise to help young entrepreneurs refine their products, protect their ideas, and navigate complex markets.

Start-ups will also benefit from strategic mentoring provided by the Advisory Board, which includes representatives of established technology companies, research leaders, and venture capital experts. Their insight ensures that every project is not only technically sound but also market-ready, globally competitive, and aligned with the fast-evolving European space economy. Beyond expert advice, incubated companies become part of an active community of innovators. Regular networking events, training sessions, and public "Space Parks" gatherings connect entrepreneurs with peers, investors, and ESA specialists, fostering collaboration and visibility. Through these connections, start-ups can find first customers, form partnerships, and gain access to European acceleration programmes, investment funds, and international missions.

ESA BIC Slovakia is also a long-term commitment. The relationship with each start-up does not end after incubation. Alumni continue to receive invitations to ESA events, access to the European BIC community, and opportunities for follow-up collaboration, investment, or research participation. Selected projects will gain more than funding as they will gain credibility, visibility, and community. ESA BIC Slovakia offers an environment where local innovation meets European opportunity, where every idea can grow into a business that reaches beyond borders, and every entrepreneur can become part of Slovakia's collective journey into space.



THE POTENTIAL OF SLOVAKIA'S SPACE SECTOR

Space is no longer the exclusive domain of rockets and satellites, it has become the foundation of the modern digital economy. Every day, it powers the technologies we rely on: navigation, communication, weather forecasting, climate monitoring, and secure data exchange. For Slovakia, the space sector is not a distant dream but an emerging reality. One that carries vast economic, scientific, and strategic potential. Over the past decade, Slovakia has moved from cooperation to contribution. As an **Associated Member of the European Space Agency** (ESA), the country now stands at the threshold of full membership. The creation of ESA BIC Slovakia is a decisive step forward. An instrument that turns national expertise in research, engineering, and IT into economic value and visibility within Europe's growing space ecosystem.

Economically, the space sector offers Slovakia an opportunity to diversify and modernise its industry. Studies conducted across the ESA BIC network show that every euro invested in space entrepreneurship generates several times its value in return, thanks to job creation, technology transfer, and export growth. For Slovakia, which already has strong automotive and ICT industries, space technologies open pathways to high-value manufacturing, software development, and dual-use innovation for both civil and defence applications. The Space Strategy of the Slovak Republic 2030+ identifies this as a national priority — a domain where public research, private capital, and European cooperation can jointly raise productivity and resilience.

This potential of Slovakia's space sector is built on a solid foundation of academic excellence and industrial innovation. Universities have developed strong competencies in aeronautics, mechatronics, information technology, artificial intelligence, data processing and other disciplines that form the technological backbone of modern space activities. In partnership with the country's expanding network of high-

tech companies, research centres, and innovation hubs, Slovakia is steadily building the capabilities needed for independent participation in European missions and programmes. From the design of satellite components and ground-station systems to Earth-observation analytics, cybersecurity, and digital infrastructure, Slovak experts are contributing to technologies that serve both civil and strategic applications. The consortium behind ESA BIC Slovakia embodies this strength . I tis connecting universities, regional innovation centres, and private industry into a single national platform for the growth of space-related entrepreneurship. This combination of technical skill, creativity, and cross-sector collaboration gives Slovakia a realistic path to join Europe's new generation of space nations.

Our potential in space lies not in competing with large powers, but in specialising, cooperating, and creating added value where precision and innovation matter most. By combining research excellence, agile start-ups, and international partnerships, the country can turn its size into an advantage — a launchpad for new technologies, flexible enough to respond to global trends. Through **ESA BIC Slovakia**, this potential becomes tangible. It connects talent with opportunity, research with business, and national ambition with Europe's collective journey into space. Each successful start-up will not only strengthen the domestic economy but also move Slovakia closer to its goal — becoming a full ESA member and a respected contributor to Europe's shared future beyond Earth.

THE FUTURE BEYOND INCUBATION

The launch of ESA BIC Slovakia is not the final milestone. Iit is the foundation of a broader national journey into the European space innovation landscape. In the coming years, Slovakia will expand its involvement in the ESA Commercialisation Gateway, introducing new initiatives that complement the incubator and create a continuous pathway for innovation – from the first idea to full commercial deployment.

The ESA ACCESS Programme – Accelerating Commercialisation

Central to this evolution is the forthcoming ESA ACCESS Programme (Accelerating Commercialisation and Competitiveness of the European Space Sector). ACCESS unites ESA's most successful business-support instruments, including the ESA BIC network, Technology Brokers, and Commercialisation Ambassadors, under one integrated framework designed to help start-ups and established companies scale faster. For Slovakia, participation in ACCESS will mean a direct connection to European investors, new funding opportunities, and cross-border collaboration in high-impact technology fields. By aligning ESA BIC Slovakia with ACCESS, the country will ensure continuity of support for its entrepreneurs from incubation and technology transfer to large-scale industrial partnerships and international market entry.

ESA Technology Broker Slovakia

The next planned step is the creation of the ESA Technology Broker Slovakia, a national initiative that links Slovak innovators with the vast portfolio of ESA-developed technologies. The broker will facilitate both "spin-off" and "spin-in" processes, helping local companies adapt proven space technologies for non-space sectors such as mobility, health, energy, and the environment, while also introducing domestic innovations into the space supply chain. Working hand in hand with ESA BIC Slovakia, the Technology Broker will ensure that the benefits of space innovation extend to the wider economy.

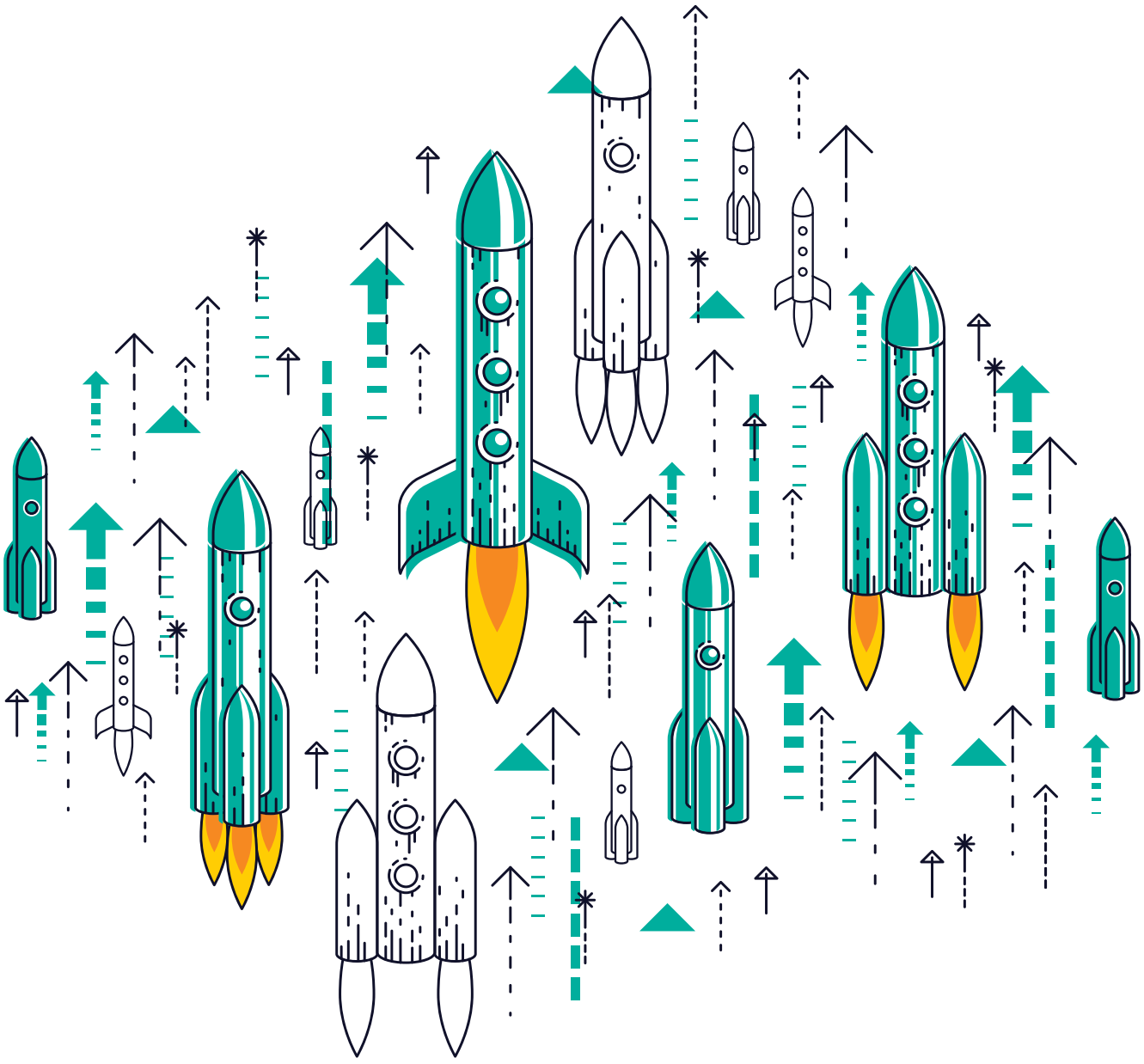
Commercialisation Ambassador

To strengthen international visibility and partnerships, Slovakia may appoint a Commercialisation Ambassador as part of ESA's European network. This role will promote Slovak start-ups abroad, attract investment, and connect local entrepreneurs with European accelerators, research centres, and corporate partners. The ambassador will also coordinate participation in programmes such as ESA ACCESS and the EU Space Programme, ensuring that Slovak innovators remain at the forefront of Europe's commercial space transformation.

Phi Lab Network – Exploring the Next Frontier

Looking further ahead, Slovakia plans to join the ESA Phi Lab Network, which serves as the Agency's platform for breakthrough, high-risk research and disruptive innovation. Phi Lab explores the use of artificial intelligence, quantum technologies, advanced materials, and Earth-observation data to create entirely new space solutions. By connecting Slovak universities, research centres, and start-ups to this network, ESA BIC Slovakia will help position the country within Europe's most advanced innovation communities.

Through these initiatives, Slovakia will move from participation to leadership — becoming a recognised contributor to Europe's commercial space future and ensuring that the nation's journey through space continues to accelerate.



NATIONAL CONSORTIUM

The success of ESA BIC Slovakia is founded on the strength of its national consortium, a partnership uniting Slovakia's leading academic, research, and innovation institutions. Together, they create a countrywide platform that connects science, entrepreneurship, and industry under a shared European vision for space innovation.

East Slovak Space Cluster (ESSC)

As the consortium leader, the East Slovak Space Cluster (ESSC) drives the national coordination of space innovation from the dynamic technological hub of Košice. ESSC unites the region's foremost institutions: the Technical University of Košice (TUKE), Pavol Jozef Šafárik University (UPJŠ), the Slovak Academy of Sciences (SAS), and Deutsche Telekom IT Solutions Slovakia (DT ITS), to advance multidisciplinary collaboration between academia, research, and private industry. Its mission is to position Eastern Slovakia as the heart of national space activity, ensuring that ESA BIC Slovakia builds on the region's long tradition of engineering excellence and innovation leadership.

- **Technical University of Košice (TUKE)**
  TUKE is one of Slovakia's most prestigious technical universities and a pioneer of entrepreneurship and applied research in the space domain. Through its University Science Park TECHNICOM, Startup Centre, and Incubator, TUKE has supported more than 200 start-ups and research projects, many of which focus on aerospace, data technologies, and AI-driven applications. Its expertise supports the development of innovative satellite technologies and provides ESA BIC Slovakia with a strong technical backbone — advanced laboratories, prototyping facilities, and mentoring capacity across engineering and space systems design.

- **Pavol Jozef Šafárik University in Košice (UPJŠ)**
  UPJŠ contributes cutting-edge scientific expertise that strengthens the research foundation of Slovakia's space and innovation ecosystem. Its faculties and research centres excel in physics, materials science, applied mathematics, and computer modelling, providing deep analytical capabilities that support advanced simulations, data processing, and experimental research. Through its multidisciplinary approach, UPJŠ bridges fundamental science with applied innovation

- **Slovak Academy of Sciences (SAS)**
  The SAS represents Slovakia's highest-level research institution, linking basic science with applied innovation. Through its institutes focused on electronics, informatics, and astrophysics, the Academy strengthens ESA BIC Slovakia with access to advanced laboratories and research staff experienced in European space programmes.

- **Deutsche Telekom IT Solutions Slovakia (DT ITS) / Innovlab Startup Centre**
  Based in Košice, DT ITS is a major international technology company and home to Innovlab, an award-winning start-up accelerator supporting digital and space-related innovation. Innovlab connects ESA BIC Slovakia to a global industrial network and provides mentoring in software development, cybersecurity, and connectivity – key enablers of today's space economy.

University of Žilina (UNIZA)

Serving as the hub for Central Slovakia, UNIZA focuses on applied research, technology transfer, and student entrepreneurship. Its Technology Incubator UNIZA has guided multiple start-ups from concept to market, including aerospace projects such as Straton Technologies. UNIZA provides access to advanced laboratories in optics, laser technologies, and electronics – vital for prototyping and testing new space applications.

Slovak University of Technology in Bratislava (STU)

As the hub for Western Slovakia, STU contributes two decades of experience in business incubation through its University Technology Incubator InQb. Since 2004, InQb has helped more than 95 companies succeed commercially, generating over €64 million in revenue. STU brings extensive expertise in technology transfer, digital innovation, and industry collaboration with partners such as ESET, IBM, and Google, making it an essential driver of ESA BIC Slovakia's entrepreneurship model.

ADVISORY BOARD

The Advisory Board of ESA BIC Slovakia unites leaders from Slovakia's most innovative space and technology companies with international partners. Together, they provide strategic guidance, mentoring, and pro bono expertise to ensure that every start-up in the programme grows within the real context of market needs, investment opportunities, and European collaboration.

3IPK

3IPK, founded in Slovakia in 2019, develops blockchain-based software for the space and defense industry, focusing on data integrity, authenticity, and traceability in Earth Observation and supply chains. The company has proven its expertise through multiple successful European Space Agency contracts. It has also expanded into national and European defense initiatives, strengthening its portfolio. 3IPK's participation in top European space accelerators like Seraphim, SpaceFounders, and Cassini shows its ambition to grow within the European space community. A major milestone was achieved with Thales Alenia Space and Microsoft on the Imagin-E mission, where 3IPK's solution ran on the International Space Station to secure hyperspectral data.

Aliter Technologies

Aliter Technologies is a Slovak-Canadian company specializing in information and communication technologies, supporting organizations and governments with secure and efficient data communication and sharing. The company develops solutions in tactical communications, builds information infrastructure, and provides both on-site and cloud security. Its quality is recognized by global leaders such

as AIRBUS, BAE Systems, Ericsson, and General Dynamics. With more than 300 completed projects, Aliter Technologies has contributed to rescue operations, special units, electromobility, and multinational information management initiatives. As a NATO-registered supplier and the first Slovak ICT company with a BOA agreement with the NATO Communication and Information Agency, its certified products meet US military MIL-STD standards.

Crowdberry

Crowdberry is one of Central Europe's most active private investment platforms, helping innovative companies secure capital from both individual and institutional investors. With offices in Slovakia and the Czech Republic, it has built a strong track record in supporting start-ups and scale-ups across technology, healthcare, manufacturing, and digital services. Crowdberry combines investment strategy, due-diligence expertise, and hands-on portfolio support to help young companies strengthen their business models, refine financial planning, and prepare for long-term growth. Through its ecosystem of investors, corporate partners, and advisory services, Crowdberry enables founders to access not only funding but also market opportunities, mentorship, and strategic know-how essential for scaling in competitive European markets.

DLA Piper

DLA Piper is a global law firm with more than 4,200 lawyers in over 90 offices across 40+ countries, providing fully integrated legal services worldwide. Its clients include multinational corporations, Fortune 500 companies, Global 1000 enterprises, governments, and public sector bodies, with over half of the Fortune 250 and nearly half of the FTSE 350 among them. The firm operates seamlessly across five continents, combining international reach with deep knowledge of local laws, languages, and cultures. Its global presence enables strategic advice on issues shaped by geopolitical and legislative changes, such as Brexit, COVID-19, and new international policies. DLA Piper's strength lies in its international network, sector-based approach, and full-service capabilities, covering all areas of law from daily corporate matters to complex cross-border negotiations.

GEODETICCA VISION

GEODETICCA VISION is a GeoAI company specializing in the fusion of Earth Observation data, Artificial Intelligence, Geospatial Technologies, and High-Performance Computing. Founded in 2008, the company brings over 15 years of experience in geospatial data collection, processing, analysis, AI model development, and their integration into WebGIS applications and services. As both Prime Contractor and Subcontractor in several ESA projects, GEODETICCA VISION has built a strong track record in developing applied GeoAI solutions for downstream services. Our ongoing mission is to converge all our technologies and experience into a scalable Earth Digital Twin platform.

Groundcom.space

Groundcom.space s.r.o. is a technology-focused company founded in 2020 that specializes in satellite communication infrastructure, with the mission to build and operate a global network of ground stations for small satellites in low Earth orbit. Operating under the Ground Station-as-a-Service (GSaaS) model, it provides cost-effective and scalable solutions for satellite constellation operators, particularly in Earth observation and the Internet of Things sectors. In addition to network services, the company designs and manufactures its own ground station systems for VHF, UHF, S-band, and X-band frequencies. With expertise spanning hardware design, software integration, production, and operational support, Groundcom delivers both standalone ground station systems and mission-critical satellite com-

munication services. Its ground stations are built for deployment in challenging environments, featuring remote control, monitoring, and autonomous operation to ensure high reliability without direct supervision.

ICKK – Innovation Center of the Košice Region

ICKK, the Innovation Centre of the Košice Region, is a Slovak organization established on August 4, 2021, as an interest association of legal entities involving the Košice Self-Governing Region, the City of Košice, the University of Pavel Jozef Šafárik, the Technical University of Košice, and the University of Veterinary Medicine and Pharmacy, aimed at fostering the development of the regional innovation ecosystem, boosting innovation potential, and creating sustainable growth conditions for new businesses to curb brain drain. Led by CEO Peter Breyl, ICKK supports startups through acceleration programs, modern coworking spaces like the Startup Campus on Strojárenská Street, talent development in secondary schools, and assistance for SMEs in international business expansion, while connecting innovation actors, science, research, education, and technology.

INOVIA – Innovation Centre of the Žilina Region

INOVIA was founded in 2021 as an association of legal entities, with founding members including the Žilina Self-Governing Region, the City of Žilina, and the University of Žilina. Its mission is to strengthen regional competitiveness, attract young talent, and foster sustainable development through innovation. Since its establishment, INOVIA has supported nearly 100 companies by helping them define strategies, solve challenges, connect with experts, access funding, and bring new solutions to market. It also develops the entrepreneurial ecosystem through technology transfer, networking, competitions, and events for entrepreneurs, start-ups, students, and public administration. INOVIA is a member or co-founder of major networks such as the CEE Startup Network, YNOVATE, and Enterprise Europe Network (EEN), ensuring strong connections across Europe.

M2M Solutions

M2M Solutions is an innovative technology company focused on developing supply chain management solutions based on Industry 4.0 standards. With over a decade of rapid growth, its solutions have been implemented in more than 12 countries worldwide. The company's development team covers the full cycle from product design to implementation in transport and internal logistics, aiming to reduce inventory, optimize warehouse processes, and deploy intelligent contactless systems. Its technologies enable efficient supply chains while minimizing environmental impact. In recent years, M2M Solutions has also expanded into the space industry, contributing to unique aerospace projects.

Needronix

Needronix s.r.o., a family-owned Slovak company based in Bratislava, specializes in designing and manufacturing high-quality, compact components for CubeSats and SmallSats, including sun sensors and space-grade RF components, with a focus on innovation, reliability, and low power consumption. As Slovakia's only NATO DIANA test center for space technology, it played a key role in integrating the country's first satellite, skCUBE, and the GRBAlpha nanosatellite, the world's first to detect gamma-ray bursts. Collaborating on multiple European Space Agency projects and mentoring young innovators, Needronix drives Slovakia's space industry growth through international partnerships and a spinoff, Needronix CZ s.r.o., in Prague, focused on aerospace research and development.

Orbitaly Solutions

Orbitaly Solutions is a consulting company with a mission to help businesses succeed in the space industry. It supports startups in developing the business side of their ventures, with a focus on guiding them in getting customers, building strong business cases, and applying for grants and public funding. The company brings extensive expertise in bridging the gap between technical innovation and market adoption, ensuring that promising ideas become commercially viable. By leveraging its network and industry know-how, Orbitaly Solutions empowers entrepreneurs to navigate the challenges of scaling in a highly competitive sector.

Satlantis

Satlantis, a New Space company headquartered in Bilbao, Spain, specializes in developing high-performance optical payloads and full end-to-end solutions for small satellites (SmallSats), focusing on Earth observation and universe exploration technologies. Founded in 2013 as a spin-off from the University of Florida and relocated to Europe in 2014, the company designs innovative, compact imagers like the iSIM series for high-resolution imaging in visible-near infrared (VNIR) and short-wave infrared (SWIR) spectra, enabling applications in sectors such as energy, environment, security, defense, and agriculture. With a team of around 45 experts, Satlantis has launched multiple missions since 2020, including demonstrations on the International Space Station and CubeSats for methane detection and infrastructure monitoring, while achieving 55% revenue growth to €18 million in 2023 through international partnerships and contributions to European Space Agency projects.

Touch4IT

Touch4IT is a strategic technology consultancy with a strong presence in Europe and the U.S., working with organizations from emerging leaders to Fortune 500 companies to solve complex challenges and deliver secure, scalable digital solutions. Its end-to-end services cover digital strategy, product design, and custom software development, with a focus on measurable outcomes and long-term value. The company specializes in cloud-native platforms, AI-driven automation, enterprise applications, and systems that boost operational efficiency across industries such as healthcare, aerospace, logistics, manufacturing, and retail. Proven results include a telehealth platform used by over 1 million patients and aerospace solutions that reduced MRO turnaround time by 23%. Touch4IT holds ISO 9001, ISO 27001, SOC 2 Type II, HITRUST, and HIPAA certifications, ensuring compliance and security while delivering clarity, trust, and execution excellence.

UpVision

UpVision provides top-tier airspace management and airspace access services for efficient drone use. We simplify the complex issue of safe navigation and the integration of drones into applications and services. UpVision develops dual use technologies that facilitate teaming between pilots, system operators and other cooperating systems. Our focus is on innovative safety concepts, a high level of automation, secured technology and advanced operational procedures.

YEESS

YEESS (Young European Enterprises Syndicate for Space) is an international non-profit association founded in 2021 in Brussels, Belgium, by a group of emerging European space startups and SMEs—including founding members like Satlantis, ANYWAVES, EXOTRAIL, and PANGEA AEROSPACE—to represent and accelerate the New Space sector across Europe. The syndicate advocates for greater integration of innovative young companies into public procurement, fair competition with established players, transparency in space contracts, and broader utilization

of space technologies to address global challenges, while fostering collaboration between institutions, primes, and SMEs. With over 13 members as of recent updates, YEESS engages in policy lobbying, attends major events like the European Space Conference, and promotes sustainable public investments in space, aiming to enhance Europe's competitiveness in the €9 billion space market through hybrid sector partnerships and direct interfaces with bodies like the ESA.

Zaitra

Zaitra, a Czech space tech startup founded in 2020 in Brno, develops AI-powered onboard data processing solutions for satellites, enhancing mission autonomy and optimizing Earth observation data by filtering noise and reducing bandwidth usage. Its flagship product, SKAISEN, enables AI-based cloud screening, and its high-performance data processing units support missions like VZLUSAT-2, Biomission19 on the ISS, and SLAVIA CubeSat. Zaitra secured €1.7 million in pre-seed funding in 2024 from Sunfish Partners, Czech Founders VC, and others, driving innovation in the Czech space sector with cost-effective, high-tech solutions.

Zero One Hundred

Zero One Hundred is a Slovak venture capital firm based in Bratislava, founded around 2019, that invests in early-stage startups (pre-seed to Series A) across Central and Eastern Europe and the Middle East, with a focus on innovative, high-growth companies in sectors like proptech, healthtech, and fintech. Backed by experienced private investors and institutions such as Slovak Investment Holding, it manages a €22 million first fund (Zero Gravity Capital) that has invested in over 28 portfolio companies, including Reado (real estate sales predictions), Powerful Medical (ECG analysis), Simplicity (municipal communication tools used in New York and Miami), and recently Vestberry (VC fund management platform, which raised €2.2 million in 2025 with Zero One Hundred's backing). In 2022, the firm launched its second €60 million fund to expand regionally, including LP commitments to other CEE VCs, while also operating under the 0100 Ventures umbrella for venture building, international VC conferences (like the Zero One Hundred Conference series), co-working spaces, and innovation consulting, driving ecosystem growth in Slovakia and beyond.

Together, the Consortium and the Advisory Board represent the core of ESA BIC Slovakia — a partnership where academia, industry, and innovation converge to transform Slovak potential into European success.

Supporting organisations:

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. Who can apply to ESA BIC Slovakia?

ESA BIC Slovakia is open to Slovak companies, start-ups, or individual entrepreneurs with innovative ideas linked to space technologies, data, or applications. To qualify, applicants must be or become legally registered in Slovakia before signing the incubation contract, and the company must be no older than five years at the time of application. This ensures that ESA BIC Slovakia supports early-stage innovators — those at the beginning of their commercial journey, ready to turn bold ideas into viable businesses within the European space ecosystem.

2. Do I need to develop a space technology to qualify?

Not necessarily. Projects can use existing space assets (like satellite data or positioning services) or adapt non-space innovations to the space sector. The key is a clear connection to space technology or data use.

3. Can I participate in other accelerator or funding programmes at the same time?

Yes — participation in other complementary programmes is possible, provided there is no conflict with ESA BIC rules. Many start-ups later continue into other European initiatives such as ESA ACCESS, EIC Accelerator, or Horizon Europe calls.

4. What happens after the two-year incubation period?

Graduates join the ESA BIC Alumni Network, which provides ongoing visibility, networking, and access to European investors, ESA events, and new funding opportunities. Successful alumni are often invited to join trade fairs, demo days, and ESA's annual Investment Forum.

5. How can I apply?

The first Open Call for Applications has just been officially announced at today's launch event. Innovators, start-ups, and researchers with ideas connected to space technologies or data can now begin preparing their submissions. Each application will include a concise business plan, a technical overview, and a clear description of the space connection — whether through technology, data use, or innovation potential.

Detailed guidelines, templates, and deadlines are available on the newly launched ESA BIC Slovakia website and through our partner institutions. If you're ready to take the first step toward joining Europe's largest space innovation network, contact us directly at **info@esabicslovakia.eu** or speak with a member of the consortium.

6. How are start-ups selected?

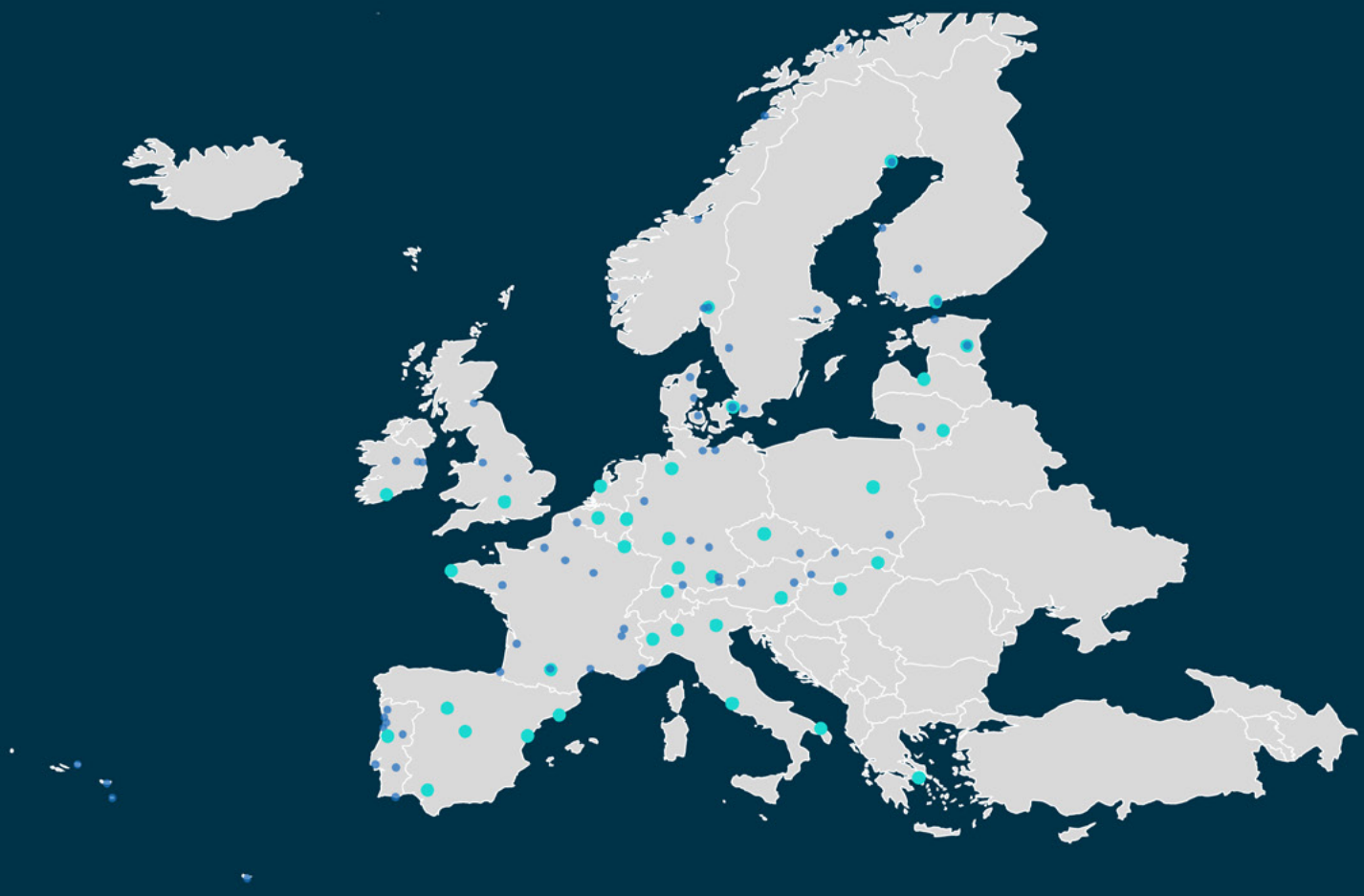
The selection process for ESA BIC Slovakia is fully transparent and follows the standards of the European Space Agency. Applications are evaluated by experts from ESA and national partners to ensure that each selected start-up demonstrates strong innovation potential and a meaningful connection to space. Detailed information about the evaluation process, timelines, and criteria is available on the ESA BIC Slovakia website, where applicants can also find all necessary guidelines, templates, and support materials for preparing their proposals.

7. What benefits extend beyond incubation?

ESA BIC Slovakia acts as a gateway into a broader European network. Graduates gain access to:

- The ESA Technology Broker programme for technology transfer,
- The ESA Commercialisation Ambassador network for international partnerships,
- The ESA Phi Lab Network for advanced R&D collaborations,
- Funding and scaling opportunities under the ESA ACCESS Programme, connecting start-ups to investors and new markets.

ESA BICS MAP



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