



GSMA Foundry and ESA Announce Access to New Funding worth up to €100M for AI, NTN, D2D and 6G at MWC26 Barcelona

Descrizione

COMUNICATO STAMPA - CONTENUTO PROMOZIONALE

New ESA Member State funding builds on successful awards with NextWorks, Lasting Software, OQ Technology, Celeste, AWTG, and Keysight & Sateliot

BARCELONA, March 2, 2026 /PRNewswire/ - GSMA Foundry and the European Space Agency (ESA) today announced new funding worth up to €100 million for projects to accelerate the convergence of space and mobile industries. This new initiative, funded by ESA, aims to scale innovations in AI for Non-Terrestrial Networks (NTN), Direct-to-Device (D2D) connectivity, 5G/6G Hubs and 6G Innovation.

Building on the success of the GSMA Foundry and ESA partnership established in 2024, this major financial commitment from ESA is designed to fast-track the commercialisation of hybrid networks, and help ensure seamless global connectivity through the integration of satellite and terrestrial assets. The funding targets four strategic pillars, focusing on:

Laurent Jaffart, Director of Resilience, Navigation and Connectivity at ESA, said: "Our Member States' unwavering support in our programmes, particularly during the ESA Council at Ministerial Level (CM25), has made this collaboration with GSMA Foundry possible. At Mobile World Congress, we're collectively marking a pivotal moment for the convergence of Europe's space and telecommunication sectors. By offering access to funding for AI, NTN, and D2D, we are not just supporting the development of technology - we are preparing for the seamless, global 6G infrastructure of tomorrow."

Alex Sinclair, Chief Technology Officer at GSMA, added: "By combining the reach of the mobile industry with ESA's space expertise, we are unlocking a new era of connectivity. This funding and our showcase demonstrate that hybrid networks are no longer a concept - they are a commercial reality. The collaborative breakthroughs you see today signal a step-change for digital transformation, making seamless and universal connectivity possible even in the most remote regions. Together, we

are driving forward innovation that will empower businesses, revolutionise industries and bring transformative benefits to society as a whole.â€•

ESA and GSMA Foundry NTN Showcase at MWC26 Barcelona

The ESA and GSMA Foundry NTN Showcase is a highlight of the New Frontiers zone in Hall 6. Featuring fifteen live demonstrations that bring space-to-mobile convergence to life, the showcase will include standards-based D2D connectivity, NTN orchestration, AI-driven networks, and early 6G innovation illustrating how hybrid satellite and terrestrial architectures expand coverage to boost resilience and enable new services. The demonstrations will be supported by Accedo, Autodiscovery, AWTG, Celeste, Filtronic, Keysight & Sateliot, Lasting Software, MediaTek & Rohde & Schwarz, Microamp, MinWave Technologies, NextWorks, Nokia RXRM, OQ Technology, Photon Industries and Qoherent.

On Monday at 12:00, Laurent Jaffart, Director of Resilience, Navigation and Connectivity at ESA, will join GSMA's Chief Technology Officer, Alex Sinclair, on the New Frontiers Stage for a discussion on the â€“100M funding announcement from ESA.

In addition, Fabrizio De Paolis, ESA 5G/6G Implementation Manager, will be moderating a panel on NTN experimentation on the New Frontiers Stage on Tuesday at 10:30, while Antonio Franchi, Head of ESA's Space for 5G/6G & Sustainable Connectivity programme, will speak at the Satellite and NTN Summit on Wednesday at 10:00. The discussions will outline the roadmap to 6G and the role of space in sustainable, real-world deployments for operators, developers and enterprises.

At the ESA and GSMA Foundry NTN Showcase, ESA will offer live satellite demonstrations on Monday at 14:00 and Tuesday at 11:00 and 14:00, allowing visitors to see how Europe will explore the Moon in the coming decade. The live demonstration brings the capabilities of LUNA â€“ Europe's gateway to the lunar surface â€“ to the world stage, by showcasing how advanced connectivity, robotics, mixed reality and satellite communications will support ESA's role in the international return to the Moon.

The LUNA-themed demonstration at MWC26 showcases the future of space exploration powered by advanced European connectivity. Companies from across Europe â€“ including Nokia RXRM, Photon Industries, Autodiscovery and Microamp â€“ are joining ESA to show how 5G mmWave, satellite networks, mixed reality and robotics will make it possible to remotely control lunar landers, rovers, and even humanoid robots from Earth or the International Space Station (ISS).

A mixed-reality model of ESA's Argonaut lunar lander, the European lander designed to deliver scientific payloads and cargo to the Moon, is a key feature. Visitors can watch Nokia RXRM's ultra-high-resolution 360Â° camera streaming from inside the LUNA facility and remotely operate an ESA training rover connected over satellite, proving how astronauts and experts could one day work together seamlessly across Earth-Moon distances.

Celebrating the GSMA Foundry Excellence Awards winners

The GSMA Foundry Excellence Awards Ceremony held on Sunday 1 March at the iconic Circuit de Barcelona-Catalunya also saw the ESA and GSMA Foundry Challenges 2025 winners honoured for their breakthrough contributions to the ecosystem in the following categories:

About GSMA

The GSMA is a global organisation unifying the mobile ecosystem to discover, develop and deliver innovation foundational to positive business environments and societal change. Our vision is to unlock the full power of connectivity so that people, industry, and society thrive. Representing mobile operators and organisations across the mobile ecosystem and adjacent industries, the GSMA delivers for its members across three broad pillars: Connectivity for Good, Industry Services and Solutions, and Outreach. This activity includes advancing policy, tackling today's biggest societal challenges, underpinning the technology and interoperability that make mobile work, and providing the world's largest platform to convene the mobile ecosystem at the MWC and M360 series of events.

We invite you to find out more at [gsma.com](https://www.gsma.com)

About the European Space Agency

The European Space Agency (ESA) provides Europe's gateway to space.

ESA is an intergovernmental organisation, created in 1975, with the mission to shape the development of Europe's space capability and ensure that investment in space delivers benefits to the citizens of Europe and the world.

ESA has 23 Member States: Austria, Belgium, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom. Latvia, Lithuania and Slovakia are Associate Members.

ESA has established formal cooperation with four Member States of the EU. Canada takes part in some ESA programmes under a Cooperation Agreement.

By coordinating the financial and intellectual resources of its members, ESA can undertake programmes and activities far beyond the scope of any single European country. It is working in particular with the EU on implementing the Galileo and Copernicus programmes as well as with Eumetsat for the development of meteorological missions.

Learn more about ESA at www.esa.int

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