

PRESS RELEASE

The ESA Business Incubation Centre (BIC) Bavaria funded for another four years

EUR 1.5 million secured for 60 new startups in Bavaria

The European Space Agency (ESA) is extending its successful collaboration with AZO Anwendungszentrum GmbH Oberpfaffenhofen for its ESA BIC Bavaria by an additional four years. A corresponding agreement was signed on Friday, 4th May 2018, by ESA Director General Prof Johann-Dietrich Wörner and AZO CEO Thorsten Rudolph. By the end of 2021, ESA BIC Bavaria will support a further 60 and thus over 200 space technology startups together with its partners ESA, DLR, Airbus, Fraunhofer, Kreissparkasse and the Free State of Bavaria.

Oberpfaffenhofen, 4 May 2018 – During an official ceremony, the ESA Director General Prof. Johann-Dietrich Wörner signed the ESA BIC Bavaria contract extension for a further four years in the presence of the Bavarian Minister of Economic Affairs Franz Josef Pschierer. With this, ESA is providing funds totalling EUR 1.5 million. The most successful ESA BIC in Europe can thus continue and develop its work.

This first European space incubator was founded by the German Aerospace Centre (DLR) with the support of the Free State of Bavaria in 2003. This incubator, which was renamed ESA BIC Bavaria in 2009, has been operated by AZO since 2005. ESA BIC Bavaria has been pursuing this programme for over 15 years in close collaboration with ESA and its partners DLR, Airbus, Fraunhofer, Kreissparkasse München Starnberg Ebersberg, and the Free State of Bavaria, with the aim of promoting market development for applications from aerospace and creating high-tech jobs in the region.



Left to right: Stefanie Herrmann (CFO AZO Anwendungszentrum GmbH Oberpfaffenhofen), Prof „Jan“ Wörner (ESA Director General), Bavarian Minister of Economic Affairs Franz Josef Pschierer, Thorsten Rudolph (Managing Director AZO Anwendungszentrum GmbH Oberpfaffenhofen)

Bavaria's Minister of Economic Affairs Franz Josef Pschierer: "With significant financial support of the Bavarian Ministry of Economic Affairs, the ESA BIC Bavaria incubator has created more than 1,800 high-tech jobs and fostered future-oriented companies with innovative ideas, since its foundation. Here, visions are turned into reality."



Contract extension – left to right: Prof. „Jan“ Wörner (ESA Director General), Bavarian Minister of Economic Affairs Franz Josef Pschierer, Thorsten Rudolph (Managing Director AZO Anwendungszentrum GmbH Oberpfaffenhofen), Stefanie Herrmann (CFO AZO Anwendungszentrum GmbH Oberpfaffenhofen)

“I am delighted that we have been able to establish such a successful business incubator thanks to the collaboration with ESA, the state of Bavaria and our partners,” explains Thorsten Rudolph, CEO at AZO. “We now need to continue pursuing these successes together. This means further developing our sites and promoting new startups, which develop new ideas and products based on space technologies that make our lives on Earth simpler, more convenient and safer!,” continues Rudolph.

ESA Director General Prof Johann-Dietrich Wörner: “Progress and economic growth are driven forward thanks to support for startups that develop new business ideas based on space technologies. With our technology transfer programmes and the ESA BICs, we support clever minds who have an idea and develop this to market maturity.”

Besides Prof Wörner, the event was also attended by Bavarian Minister of Economic Affairs Franz Josef Pschierer, Frank Salzgeber, Head of the Technology Transfer Programme Office (TTPO) at ESA, Frédéric Teston, ESA Head of Systems Department, Dr Walther Pelzer, Member of the Executive Board at DLR Space Administration, Dr Franziska Zeitler, DLR Space Administration Innovation & New Markets, Dr Rolf-Dieter Fischer, Director of DLR Technology Marketing, Dr Michael Mittnacht, Airbus D&S, Dr Günter Rohmer, Coordinator of the Fraunhofer site in Nuremberg, the Deputy Chair of KSK München Starnberg Ebersberg, as well as numerous successful startups. AZO also welcomed the Space Working Party of the Council of the European Union, accompanied by representatives of the General Secretariat of the Council and the European Commission.

All of the ESA BIC Bavaria partners involved agreed that the joint involvement in startup promotion is an important aspect of the collaboration.

AZO Anwendungszentrum GmbH Oberpfaffenhofen operates ESA BIC Bavaria at the sites Oberpfaffenhofen, Nuremberg and Ottobrunn. Together with its partners ESA, DLR, Airbus, Fraunhofer Institute for Integrated Circuits (IIS) and KSK München Starnberg Ebersberg, it has supported 140 startups to date. These generated an annual turnover of around EUR 150 million in 2016. ESA BIC Bavaria thus created more than 1,800 jobs in the high-tech sector in Bavaria. An ESA BIC alumnus was launched on the stock market for the first time in the 2017 fiscal year. Moreover, risk capital totalling over EUR 140 million was circulated in 2017.

ESA BIC Bavaria based in Oberpfaffenhofen is one of the 18 ESA BICs in Europe.

About ESA BIC Bavaria

AZO and its ESA BIC supported to date more than 140 startups since 2002 with an annual turnover of round about EUR 150 million in 2017, creating more than 1,800 high-tech jobs in Bavaria and involving the amount of more than EUR 140 million Venture Capital since 2016. ESA BIC Bavaria promoted pioneering companies in recent years with disruptive products and digital businesses in areas like robotics, mobile, mobility, automotive, aviation, satellites etc. Additionally, the first IPO of an ESA BIC alumni took place in 2017. ESA BIC Bavaria is one of the most successful incubation programs in Europe. For more information, please see www.esa-bic.de.

About AZO

AZO Anwendungszentrum GmbH Oberpfaffenhofen is an international networking and branding company initiating the most important space-related innovation competitions with more than 15,000 participants, over 200 industrial & public - and 400 international stakeholders. The Masters Series, presented by AZO consists of European Satellite Navigation Competition (ESNC), Copernicus Masters, Space Exploration Masters, and INNOspace Masters. AZO has been supporting entrepreneurship with more than 130 company foundations to date and the creation of 1,800 high-tech jobs in Bavaria with an annual turnover of about EUR 150 million. Additionally, AZO runs a very successful business angel network which invested more than EUR 130 million Venture Capital in 2016/17 as well as the ESA Incubation Centre (ESA BIC) Bavaria. For more information, please visit www.azo-space.com.

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