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PRESS RELEASE

## **New incubator for aerospace startups in Bremen**

**ESA Business Incubation Centre launches as a collaboration between Starthaus and AVIASPACE BREMEN**

**Bremen/Bremerhaven, 13 May 2019.** The ESA Business Incubation Centre Northern Germany (ESA BIC NG) is the new flagship project for the aeronautics and space industries sector in Bremen. The space incubator, part of the European Space Agency's (ESA) network of 29 centres across Europe, is set to take on 15 startups from Bremen and a further 15 from other federal states in northern Germany by 2021. The ESA BIC NG will provide the startups with 24 months of support to help them to establish their businesses.

“Space involves advanced technology that needs to meet high international standards. The ESA BIC NG will help entrepreneurs in Bremen to establish themselves in what is certain to remain an important industry for the future,” says Martin Günthner, Senator for Economic Affairs, Labour and Ports. The goal of the centre is to support startups and young entrepreneurs from or newcomers to the space sector by providing helpful infrastructure. Companies and individuals from other technology sectors are specifically invited to join forces with the space sector.

PlanBlue is the first startup to enter the incubator. The Bremen-based company has developed an intelligent underwater camera with self-learning software based on satellite technology that offers new ways of mapping and monitoring the ocean floor.

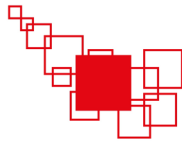
“The New Space movement has huge commercial potential, especially in Bremen. The ESA BIC NG facilitates the sharing of knowledge between the research community and business,” says Thorsten Rudolph, CEO, AZO Anwendungszentrum GmbH Oberpfaffenhofen. The ESA BIC NG will be jointly established and operated by AZO, AVIASPACE BREMEN e.V. and BAB – the development bank for Bremen and Bremerhaven – as the initiator of the Starthaus initiative.

The transformation of markets and value chains also known in the space sector under the term New Space, presents great opportunities for companies across northern Germany. “The ESA BIC NG supports New Space startups by providing



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access to a strong network and specific development partners in the aeronautics and space industries sector in collaboration with other clusters,” says Holger W. Oelze, Chairman of the Board of AVIASPACE BREMEN e.V. The strong combination of research community and industry, which is an asset in Bremen, will contribute significantly.

“I believe that the ESA BIC is the perfect add-on to the current activities of the Starthaus initiative,” says Ralf Stapp, Managing Director of BAB. “The idea of providing a central point of contact for entrepreneurs and startups, and strengthening the startup network in the state of Bremen, has been extremely well received. This approach is the first of its kind in Germany. The ESA BIC NG is an additional module in the network, and increases Bremen’s attractiveness as a location to start a business,” Stapp adds. Training, funding and advice modules offered by Starthaus will take the specific requirements of the space industry into account.

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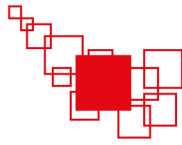
### **About Starthaus**

Starthaus is the first port of call within Bremen’s startup ecosystem. It provides support during the establishment and early development phases, creates contacts to the state of Bremen’s startup network, and designs and coordinates the various subsidy modules. Experienced consultants are on hand in Bremen city centre and in Bremerhaven to provide entrepreneurs and startups with advice and information on setting up and running a business. Starthaus is an initiative run by BAB (Bremer Aufbau-Bank GmbH), the development bank for Bremen and Bremerhaven. For further information, please visit [www.starthaus-bremen.de/starting-up](http://www.starthaus-bremen.de/starting-up), [www.starthaus-bremerhaven.de](http://www.starthaus-bremerhaven.de)

### **About AVIASPACE BREMEN**

AVIASPACE BREMEN is an association of dedicated companies and application-oriented research institutes in and around the federal state of Bremen. This network implements





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the federal state of Bremen's strategy for the aeronautics and space industries. The key areas of AVIASPACE are network formation, technology transfer, and economic growth through fostering young entrepreneurs and startups in particular. For further information, please visit [www.aviaspace-bremen.de](http://www.aviaspace-bremen.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 155 company foundations to date and the creation of 2,000 high-tech jobs in Bavaria with an annual turnover of about EUR 150 million. For more information, please visit [www.azo-space.com](http://www.azo-space.com).



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