
Press release

Investing in the Future: ESA BIC Slovakia to Directly Support Creation of Companies Driving Economic Growth and High-Value Jobs

KOŠICE, Slovakia – December 4, 2025 – The Slovak Republic has taken a fundamental step to strengthen Slovakia's presence on the map of the European space industry. Today, the ESA Business Incubation Centre Slovakia (ESA BIC Slovakia) was ceremonially opened at the Technical University of Košice (TUKE). This moment is all the more symbolic as it comes at a time when the European Space Agency (ESA) is celebrating its 50th anniversary.

Niels Eldering, Head of Entrepreneurship and Business Incubation at ESA: “With ESA BIC Slovakia, we are expanding Europe’s capacity to turn bold ideas into real companies and accelerate the creation of high-value jobs in one of Europe’s fastest-growing sectors. Slovakia’s entrepreneurs now have a direct gateway into ESA’s commercialisation ecosystem, enabling them to scale faster, reach global markets, and contribute to Europe’s strategic autonomy in space. This centre is not only an investment in start-ups, but also an investment in Europe’s future competitiveness.”

The opening ceremony was honoured by the presence of Prof. Dr. Kai-Uwe Schrogl, Special Advisor for Political Affairs at ESA. In his address, he emphasised that this is not just another project, but an institutional turning point: "Today is a historic moment for the Slovak space sector. ESA BIC Slovakia is not just a support programme – it is the first foothold supported by ESA in Slovakia and actively fulfilling its mission on the ground. In the year of our 50th anniversary, this physical presence creates a direct bridge between Slovak innovators and the vast resources, expertise, and networks of ESA for commercialisation."

The Centre, established under the auspices of the European Space Agency (ESA), is tasked with empowering space entrepreneurs and innovators and providing direct support for the creation of 25 new space companies. It is these companies that will be the key drivers of innovation and creators of high value-added jobs over the next five years.

Economic Impact: An Engine for Innovation The opening of the centre is a strategic investment in the Slovak economy. The ESA BIC network in Europe has proven that space technologies generate tangible growth:

- **Multiplier Effect:** Start-ups in the ESA BIC network have attracted over €1.54 billion in private investment from 2020 to 2024.
- **Job Creation:** The network has created and sustained over 6,300 high-skilled jobs over the past 5 years, helping to retain talent in Europe.

"The space industry is long past being just about prestige; it is a serious business with a huge multiplier effect," emphasised Marek Košuda, Manager of ESA BIC Slovakia. "By opening this centre, we are bringing a proven model to Slovakia that turns scientific knowledge into GDP."

First Open Call Live: Coinciding with the opening of the centre, the First Open Call was announced, available from December 4, 2025 with a deadline of February 15, 2026.

Applicants for incubation must download templates from the official website and submit a complete package of documents, which includes a business plan, incubation proposal, and cover letter.

Strength of the Consortium: Who Stands Behind ESA BIC Slovakia The implementation of the project is ensured by the East Slovak Space Cluster (ESSC), which unites the strongest players of the innovation ecosystem in the region. Its founding members are: Technical University of Košice (TUKE), Pavol Jozef Šafárik University in Košice (UPJŠ), Slovak Academy of Sciences (SAS): Institute of Experimental Physics, Deutsche Telekom IT Solutions Slovakia, SARIO.

The Cluster leads the national consortium in close cooperation with the Slovak University of Technology in Bratislava (STU) and the University of Žilina (UNIZA), creating a nationwide "Triangle of Innovation".

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