

# Copernicus Masters 2017: Tripled Prize Pool for Space- based Innovations



The 2017 edition of the Copernicus Masters - Europe's leading innovation competition for Earth observation (EO) - presents the immense prize pool of more than EUR1.5 million. It aims to power the transformation of great business ideas into real ventures. In addition to this huge prize pool, the European Space Agency (ESA) is opening up the competition to upstream entries with its Sentinel Small Sat (S<sup>3</sup>) Challenge.

But that is not all, the European Commission (EC) is hosting a total of six Challenges which enrich the overall Copernicus Masters prize portfolio. Moreover, the EO innovation competition is now even accompanied by dedicated Associated Regions which highlight its European regional dimension. To top it off, the Overall Winner will be invited to attend the satellite launch of ADM-Aeolus in Kourou, which is accompanied by a further cash prize.

Future-oriented teams and individuals from the realms of business, research, and higher education now have the chance to win their share of the tripled Copernicus Masters prize pool. The largest international competition in the commercial use of Earth observation data is in search of outstanding ideas, applications, and business concepts that make use of bespoke information in everyday life. Submissions are welcome from 1 April until 30 June 2017.

"We're very proud to have seen the Copernicus Masters develop into one of the innovation drivers for Earth observation in the last years. The launches of additional Sentinel satellites will continuously boost the commercialisation of related services," states Josef Aschbacher, Director of ESA's Earth Observation Programmes.

## ESA Makes the Copernicus Masters Go Upstream

ESA has annually provided an exciting Challenge ever since the competition's initiation. The 2017 Challenge is the next level of growth. The winner of the Sentinel Small Sat (S<sup>3</sup>) Challenge will be awarded EUR 1 Million for the design and development of the mission and shall be provided with a launch service free of charge. In addition, the winner will receive EUR 10,000 cash prize. The goal of this Challenge is to stimulate ground-breaking satellite design, testing and manufacturing solutions leading to small missions complementary, or providing added value to current Sentinel family missions.

## Six Brand-new Additional EC Challenges

The EC is deeply involved in the Copernicus Masters with six new EC Challenges. Each Challenge has is topic-specific, covering the topics: **Sustainable Development, Government, Big Data, B2B, Copernicus Services and -Security**. The winner will be rewarded with a cash prize of EUR 5,000. Moreover, the winner will benefit from a substantial satellite data quota worth the same value. These new features powered by the EC, complement the EC programme Copernicus Accelerator. Thereby, the top 50 entrants of the Copernicus Masters have the opportunity to join the Copernicus Accelerator – an outstanding tailored business coaching service.

"The popularity of the Copernicus Accelerator programme results mainly from its unique characteristic: involving future-oriented entrepreneurs as mentees and high-level professionals as mentors. The perfect interaction between these two core assets of the tailored business coaching service is what makes this EC programme so unique." underlines Philippe Brunet, Director of Aerospace, Maritime, Security and Defence Industries, EC.

## Powerful Copernicus Masters Partner Network Supporting New Business Models

With support from its international network, the Copernicus Masters aids participants in realising their applications and business models. This year's edition once again features Challenges and corresponding prizes to be awarded by a series of prominent partners, including ESA, the EC, the German Aerospace Center (DLR), Stevenson Astrosat Ltd., CGI, and the German Federal Ministry of Transport and Digital Infrastructure. The University Challenge, meanwhile, is geared specifically towards students and research employees. The topics addressed by these Challenges will include innovative uses of Earth observation data in the fields of upstream services, energy, health and the environment, disaster management, sustainable living, big data, digital transportation, and smart cities.

The following significant startup, which experienced a major boost through winning the Copernicus Masters and being part of the Copernicus Accelerator 2016, impressively showcases how smart use of big data from space enables new types of business.

## The Copernicus Masters Value Chain Boosts Sinergise to the Next Level

Before submitting their idea to the Copernicus Masters in 2016, the Sinergise team already had a working solution, but only very few users. “Becoming the Overall Winner of the competition and benefitting from the follow-up coaching service provided by Francesco Liucci from Catapult, within the Copernicus Accelerator framework, helped us to boost our idea even further and to gain confidence from experts worldwide.” says Grega Milcinski, CEO Sinergise. To mention some figures, the company’s newly released EO Browser has the impressive number of 1.1 million processed requests by nearly 12,000 users.

### Europe’s Leading Earth Observation Innovation Competition

Since 2011, the Copernicus Masters competition has evolved into the leading innovation platform for promoting user uptake of Earth observation data in a commercial and societal context. “The Copernicus Masters scouts and showcases new ideas and trends each year. Put into figures, the competition already selected a total of 50 winners from among more than 1,200 entrants from 50 different countries, who have submitted over 900 cutting-edge business ideas.” explains Thorsten Rudolph, Managing Director AZO. He adds: “Each year, we are honoured to have Europe’s most renowned space stakeholders host their own prizes in topic-specific Challenges”. Along with cash prizes, the winners will receive access to a leading international network, corresponding data, startup funding, and other support valued at more than EUR 1.5 million in total.

For all of the details on this year’s prizes, partners, and terms of participation, please visit [www.copernicus-masters.com](http://www.copernicus-masters.com).

Additional information on the Copernicus programme is available at: <http://www.esa.int/copernicus> and [www.copernicus.eu](http://www.copernicus.eu).

### International Kick-off Event in Brussels

The joint international kick-off event of [the Copernicus Masters](http://www.copernicus-masters.com) and the European Satellite Navigation Competition (ESNC) took place on 5 April 2017 in Brussels, kindly hosted by the Representation of the Free State of Bavaria to the EU. The regional dimension as a propulsion component of the EU Space Strategy and the innovation competitions skyrocketing growth and entrepreneurship across Europe were hot topics of the roundtable discussions. The event offered the perfect chance to interact with the European space community and experience first-hand how the partners of the innovation network drive space-related topics. Use your opportunity to become part of the network and register now to boost your business idea with prizes at [www.copernicus-masters.com](http://www.copernicus-masters.com) and [www.esnc.eu](http://www.esnc.eu).

### Festive Awards Ceremony and Space Conference

The festive Awards Ceremony for Europe’s largest innovation competitions for commercial space applications – the Copernicus Masters and the European Satellite Navigation Competition (ESNC) – takes place in early November 2017. This exciting event brings together the important players of industry, politics, entrepreneurship and research to showcase the most disruptive space applications and discuss trendsetting developments in the satellite downstream sector and its various application fields.

### AZO – an Experienced Organiser

[Anwendungszentrum GmbH Oberpfaffenhofen \(AZO\)](http://www.anwendungszentrum.de) has been organising the Copernicus Masters competition on behalf of ESA since 2011. By leveraging its extensive experience as a specialist in building and maintaining global innovation networks and organising related competitions, AZO supports business innovations and the creation of new companies, primarily in the field of commercial aerospace applications. Next to the Copernicus Masters, AZO organises [the European Satellite Navigation Competition \(ESNC\)](http://www.esnc.eu), the Space Exploration Masters, carries out [the INNOspace Masters](http://www.innospace-masters.com) and manages [the ESA Business Incubation Centre Bavaria](http://www.esa-bavaria.com).