

## PRESS RELEASE

### Space for Every Day

#### ESA Innovation Prize for satellite navigation

Oberpfaffenhofen, 04.07.2008 – Believe it or not, airbags, antilock brake systems, cooling suits for Formula 1 drivers and satellite navigation do have one thing in common: the technologies behind them were originally developed for use in space. The Technology Transfer Programme of the European Space Agency (ESA) sees to it that trend-setting innovations find their way to Earth, having already converted over 200 space technologies for more common uses up to now. The ESA Innovation Prize, to be awarded as part of the European Satellite Navigation Competition 2008, is looking for creative, market-ready ideas for commercial use of global satellite navigation systems (GNSS).

The main focus of ESA's Technology Transfer Programme is applying existing space technologies to new fields of use. Of course, this also increases public awareness of the economic potential of the European space programmes.

Promotion of high-tech start-ups is another of the programme's key elements. Three incubation centres in Germany, Italy, and the Netherlands provide young entrepreneurs with technical and business-related support, bridging the gap between an abstract idea and a successful company foundation.

As part of this year's European Satellite Navigation Competition, ESA is sponsoring a special prize for the first time as a way of investing systematically in new ventures at the European level.

The ESA Innovation Prize concentrates on application ideas that can both be quickly implemented and have a long-lasting influence. To be eligible, an innovation must involve terrestrial use of satellite technology.

“The business of the future needs interdisciplinary solutions. For instance, in a few years, satellite navigation and Earth observation will be used to optimise agricultural processes. The European space programme provides the technological basis for these new solutions. From entertainment to flood protection, there is potential in nearly every conceivable business area. You only need the courage to think outside the box – and the right support, of course,” says Frank M. Salzgeber, Head of ESA’s Technology Transfer Programme. “By sponsoring the ESA special prize, we want to do more than just encourage creative minds and lateral thinkers to develop their ideas; we want to provide the winner with the unique ESA resources that can bring their ideas to life.”

The prize winner can look forward to an extensive support package for implementing the winning innovation. In addition to an incubation programme at one of ESA’s Business Incubators, the most innovative entrepreneur will receive technical and financial assistance to bring the application to market as quickly as possible.

Successful start-ups supported by the ESA incubation programme are, for instance, iOpener Media GmbH and its real-time racing concept for the interactive gaming market, the mobile social network bliin.com, and Sport-Track, a sporting events tracking and visualisation system that has already seen use during the Tour de France.

Ideas from all over the world can be submitted at [www.galileo-masters.com](http://www.galileo-masters.com) until July 31.

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## **About the ESA technology transfer programme**

The main mission of the ESA TTPO is to facilitate the use of space technology and space systems for non-space applications and to further demonstrate the benefit of the European space programme to European citizens. The TTPO is responsible for defining the overall approach and strategy for the transfer of space technologies including the incubation of start-up companies. [www.esa.int/ttp](http://www.esa.int/ttp)

## **Information on the European Satellite Navigation Competition**

The European Satellite Navigation Competition is an international innovation competition that awards the best ideas for innovative applications in the field of satellite navigation. Organised annually since 2004 by Anwendungszentrum GmbH Oberpfaffenhofen and SYSTEMS, the ESNC is oriented toward companies, entrepreneurs, research institutes, universities, and private individuals. Since its inception, the competition has grown from including three partner regions to 13 high-tech regions of Europe: Bavaria, Hesse, Baden-Württemberg, Nice / Sophia Antipolis, Prague, South Holland, Madrid, Lombardy, Great Britain, and this year's new regions, Queensland / Australia, Taipei / Taiwan, Lower Saxony, and North Rhine-Westphalia.

The goal of the ESNC is to continue to strengthen the international collaboration of these regions, particularly with regard to the development of applications and services made possible by the European satellite navigation system Galileo. The ESNC is carried out under the patronage of the Bavarian State Ministry for Economic Affairs, Infrastructure, Transport, and Technology with the support of the German Aerospace Center (DLR).

The overall winner – the GALILEO Master – will be awarded along with the special prize winners and the 13 regional winners on October 21, 2008 at a state reception to be held at the Munich Residenz. They will also have the chance to present their ideas and applications to a wide audience of ICT decision-makers from October 21-24 at this year's SYSTEMS trade show in Munich.