

## EVENT: ESA Business Training brings together representatives from industry and research organizations



The Ministry of Education and Science in collaboration with the ESA, organized business training for Latvian companies and research organizations working in the space sector. During the training, participants acquired the necessary skills to develop potential business cases in the space industry and better prepare for negotiations with ESA representatives.

Private companies are playing an increasingly active role in the space sector, from high-profile businesses like “SpaceX” and “Airbus” to nearly 3,000 small businesses that contribute to European Space Agency (ESA) missions and the development of new technologies. However, entering the space market and conceptualizing new products and services comes with specific challenges. Because Latvia is an associated member of ESA, its entrepreneurs and research organizations have the opportunity to participate in specialized training to provide the necessary knowledge and competencies to successfully integrate into the European space industry. Representatives from more than 15 Latvian companies and research organizations participated in the training organized by the Ministry of Education and Science and ESA to collaboratively work in teams, develop potential business cases,

and prepare applications for space projects. The opportunity was utilized not only by employees from industry and research organizations but also by students who are still developing their research and planning to specialize in various areas of the space sector. Such training serves not only as an opportunity to acquire new knowledge and skills to expand capacities in the space sector but also as a networking opportunity at the national level among players in Latvia's space industry.

The courses "Developing a Business Case for Space" and "How to Handle the Negotiation Phase" were led by experienced ESA representatives Inesa Castelao (Country Desk Officer and Engineering Support) and Karol Brzostowski (Country Capability Development engineer), who specialize in supporting the successful integration of new and existing member states into ESA. During the training, they emphasized the importance of defining the uniqueness and necessity of the product, highlighting its application in the space sector. The lecturers stressed the need to invest time in thorough market research to understand the company's position and to grasp customer needs and what they would gain from the specific product or service. Given the specificity of the space sector—especially in terms of lengthy product development and substantial costs—large companies are hesitant to take risks and trust lesser-known market players. In this regard, ESA can assist Latvian companies not as a client but as a valuable developer and trusted guarantor on the path to partnership with major market players like Airbus, OHB, and Thales Alenia Space. This provides companies with the opportunity to participate in ESA innovation projects, thereby enhancing their recognition and credibility. **As K. Brzostowski emphasized, "If there is no trust, there is no business", and he highlighted positive examples of Latvian companies such as Eventech, Allatherm, and Bitlake Technologies. ESA representatives encouraged attendees from industry and research organizations to be persistent and seek opportunities to demonstrate the significance of their products.**

The training was conducted within the framework of the ERAF project No. 1.1.1.1/1/24/I/001 "More Efficient Implementation and Management of Latvia's Science Policy".

### **About the European Space Agency**

European Space Agency intergovernmental organisation with the mission to shape the development of Europe's space capability. Latvia joined ESA as an associate member state in 2020. The organization currently consists of 22 member states and four associate member states. Latvia's participation in ESA opens access to European and global space industry networks, providing opportunities to develop technologies used both in space and on Earth.