

Hacking tomorrow with Euratechnologies and ActInSpace 2022

As humanity is reaching for the moon and beyond, international hackathon competitions such as ActInSpace (AIS) are helping us to imagine and prepare for tomorrow's world.

Temps de lecture : minute

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“Tomorrow, we can imagine laboratories in orbit to test biotechnologies, software, and robots, or simply to use 6G to enable the metaverse to function,” said Luminita Kanho, Program Director of EuraTechnologies Industry, Robotics and SpaceTech.

And preparing for tomorrow has started already. *EuraTechnologies*, the French startup incubator and accelerator, hosted the ActInSpace hackathon in the Hauts-de-France region with Engineering School of Aerospace Science's (ELISA) Saint-Quentin campus, an international competition for space-minded people, on November 18 and 19, 2022. Co-organised by the Centre National D'Etudes Spatiales (CNES, or National Centre for Space Studies) and European Space Agency (ESA) through AeroSpace Valley, the ActInSpace 2022 edition brought together over 2,700 people across 34 countries and 66 cities.



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No Sleep

For 24 hours, teams all around the world worked on real challenges presented by sponsors, such as Airbus and Thales, regarding technology and spatial data to come up with solutions for tomorrow's world.

When the clock started ticking, the competitors from all over the world and the five teams from Elisa Aerospace school present at Saint-Quentin got to work. According to Kanho, all teams were able to connect with experts to ask questions via chat rooms. There were also experts present at Saint-Quentin to make sure everything ran smoothly. The competitors also created their own clouds and chat rooms to communicate.

"They did not sleep," Kanho marveled. "We prepared a room for them to be able to rest and to have a nap if needed, but they did not use it," Kanho said. According to her, everyone was working tirelessly on the

projects from Friday until Saturday evening.

Conquest of Space

“Hackathons and challenges such as ActInSpace are very effective in bringing out innovative ideas and leading to concrete solutions,” Kanho explained. “The objective is to be able to welcome and support the holders of these projects and to enable economic development in the Hauts-de-France region via the creation of innovative and structured companies, in the short and long term, for all types of industries, both locally and internationally,” she continued. “The applications and fields of research go far beyond the conquest of space.”

“Since the first edition of ActInSpace, more than 30 startups have been created in the host countries,” Kanho said. Indeed, previous AIS competitions have sparked up startups such as Panda Insight UG, a German company specialising in health and fitness using machine learning and AI, and Kormap, a French startup dedicated to finding solutions concerning agriculture and the environment by using satellite image data.

Cannes and beyond

After 24 hours, the teams presented their projects in front of a jury of professionals, and the three best were selected. This year, the first prize went to the 5-in-1 team, who worked on a challenge of space debris alerts. The team found a possible solution to a challenge using a satellite video system. They also had a market study to accompany their project. The 5-in-1 team will continue to the national, held in Cannes in February, and possibly to the international final.

The second prize went to the Space Tape team and their project of a fuel-creating space station on the Moon, and the third place was secured by

the Omega team, who found a solution to recover and repair satellites in orbit via a space station. According to *EuraTechnologies*, all the prizes covered one-year support for startups and prototyping.

However, the race to Cannes and beyond continues; the ActInSpace 2022 French and international finals will be held on February 13 and 14, 2023.

Minea Laporcherie is freelancer journalist from Finland who is fascinated by space.

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