

Application guide

ARTES 4.0 Call of Interest

ARTES Spanish National Call 2026

February 2026

Agencia Espacial Española



European Space Agency



Table of Contents

1. Introduction.....	4
2. What can I apply for?	5
3. Who can apply?	6
4. Timeline and planning for the 2026 Workplan	6
5. ARTES 4.0 Work Plan 2026 Activities	7
6. Contact information.....	7
Annex 1: Expression of Interest Questionnaire	7
Annex 2: Detailed evaluation criteria	12

1. Introduction

As per the Implementing Rules of the ESA ARTES 4.0 programme, bidding for the ARTES 4.0 workplan activities require the authorization of the Agencia Espacial Española (hereafter, AEE).

In order to decide on the eligibility for authorization of the activities, AEE will take into account budget availability, the quality of proposed activity and the strategic interest for Spain.

To support this decision, AEE, with the support of ESA, launches this process to seek the inputs from interested Spanish Economic Operators.

This note explains the process and provides the schedule for the 2026 exercise. In summary:

- Publicaiton of a Call of Interest:
 - a. presenting the activities of the different ARTES Work Plans, and;
 - b. soliciting the completion of a questionnaire (Annex 1).
- Interested Economic Operators provide their feedback to AEE;
- AEE, with the support of ESA, evaluates the responses to the questionnaire and selects the of eligible activities;
- The list of eligible activities is published on the AEE website;
- Upon publication of a Tender for an eligible activity, Economic Operators may contact AEE to request the Authorisation of Funding (AoF).

By Participating in this call, you acknowledge and agree that:

- Participation in this questionnaire is voluntary.
- The information provided is indicative, non-binding and subject to change.
- Submission of this form neither constitutes a commitment, nor guarantees eligibility, selection, funding nor the issuance of a tender, nor generates rights, advantages in future ESA calls or any other procedure.
- This questionnaire neither forms part of any administrative procedure nor implies any obligation nor commitment by AEE. Non-participation

will not have any exclusionary or negative effects for organisations or companies.

- The information collected will be used by the AEE, with the support of ESA, solely for evaluation, planning and decision-support purposes within the ARTES 4.0 programme.
- Any personal data provided (e.g. contact details) will be processed in accordance with applicable data-protection regulations and used only in the context of this process.

In compliance with Regulation (EU) 2016/679, General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), and Spanish Organic Law 3/2018 on Personal Data Protection and the Guarantee of Digital Rights (LOPDGDD), the personal data provided in this questionnaire will be processed by AEE solely for the purpose of collecting industry interest related to future ESA activities.

The legal basis for this processing is the performance of a legal task of the data treatment responsible carried out in the public interest and in the exercise of these obligations.

Data will not be shared with third parties except when legally required and will be retained only for the time necessary to fulfil this purpose.

You may exercise your data protection rights (access, rectification, erasure, restriction, portability, and objection) through the Secretariat General of the Spanish Space Agency You may also contact the Data Protection Officer at dpdatos@aee.gob.es or file a complaint with the Spanish Data Protection Agency (AEPD).

For more information, please consult the AEE Privacy Policy [here](#).

2. What can I apply for?

The main goal of [ARTES 4.0](#) programme outlines ESA's strategy to restore Europe's competitiveness in a rapidly changing satellite communications market by making the programme faster, more flexible, and more strategically focused. It responds to disruptive global trends—such as mega-constellations, 5G/6G non-terrestrial networks, and new vertically integrated players—by reinforcing critical European capabilities, investing in industrialisation, and prioritising sovereign technologies. The proposal strengthens ESA's long-standing ARTES framework while adapting it to address key pillars of connectivity, including mobile convergence with Direct-to-Device services, secure and resilient governmental communications, optical and quantum networks, and spectrum sustainability. This call invites Spanish entities to indicate their interest in activities of the ARTES 4.0. The

aim is to build alignment between Spanish priorities, ESA work planning, and space industry capabilities. The activities selected in the Calls will be included in open competitive procurements under the ARTES 4.0 Work Plan, leading to successful technology developments and products.

The activities in ARTES 4.0 workplans are awarded through open competition. For each activity, the Invitation to Tender (ITT) is published on [esa-star publication](#) in two stages:

- first as “Intended”, including a brief description of the procurement, and
- second as “Issued”, including the complete solicitation package, in particular the Letter of Invitation, the Statement of Work and the draft Contract

The proposed work shall not overlap with any previous or presently running ESA, European institutions, national or international contracts awarded to any entity in the Proposed Team.

3. Who can apply?

To apply for funding from the ARTES 4.0 Call 2026, applicants must meet the following eligibility requirements:

- The applicant entity (company or institution) must be registered in Spain.
- In case of a planned cooperation with economic operators in other ARTES 4.0 Participating States, the applicants share of the activity must take place in Spain.

Applicants should be registered in <https://esastar-emr.sso.esa.int/> for the final steps of the application process. Early registration is strongly encouraged.

4. Timeline and planning for the 2026 Workplan

The following table provides the timeline for the 2026 Work plan eligibility decision.

Date	Description	Who
3rd February 2026	Call for Interest issue (call opens)	AEE
3rd March 2026	Responses Call for Interest (call closes)	Economic Operators
17th March 2026*	Publication of activities eligible for AoF	AEE

* Indicative, depends on the quantity of proposals received

5. ARTES 4.0 Work Plan 2026 Activities

To ensure that the activity lists within the Work Plan remain consistently up to date, please consult the following links:

- [Space Systems for Safety and Security” \(4S\)](#)
- [Scylight & Quantum](#)
- [Space for 5G/6G and Sustainable Connectivity](#)
- [Advance Technology](#)

Please note that the amounts indicated correspond to ESA’s planned budget; for the Spanish participants, the final budget would be also limited by the Spanish availability of funds for the call.

6. Contact information

The Spanish Space Technology Calls of interest are managed by AEE.

If you have any questions concerning the Calls, you are welcome to contact AEE for clarification. Potential applicants who have no previous experience with the application process at ESA are encouraged to contact AEE for guidance.

Please contact artes26int@aee.gob.es if you need advice.

Annex 1: Expression of Interest Questionnaire

This Questionnaire can be found by clicking the following link:

- [ARTES 4.0 Questionnaire](#)

ARTES 4.0 Call of Interest (Spanish Space Technology Call 2026)

In accordance with the **Implementing Rules of the ESA ARTES 4.0 programme**, participation in **ARTES 4.0 workplan activities** requires prior **authorization from the Agenda Espacial Española (AEE)**. To assess eligibility for authorization, the AEE will consider:

- The **annual budget** allocated to the workplan,
- The **interest of Spanish Economic Operators** in the proposed activities,
- The **contribution of the activities to Spain's national strategic objectives** within the programme.

To support this decision, AEE, launches run this process seeking the inputs of the interested Spanish Economic Operators.

By Participating in this call, you acknowledge and agree that

- Participation in this questionnaire is voluntary.
- The information provided is indicative, non-binding and subject to change.
- Submission of this form neither constitutes a commitment, nor guarantees eligibility, selection, funding nor the issuance of a tender, nor generates rights, advantages in future ESA calls or any other procedure.
- This questionnaire neither forms part of any administrative procedure nor implies any obligation nor commitment by AEE. Non-participation will not have any exclusionary or negative effects for organisations or companies.
- The information collected will be used by the AEE, with the support of ESA, solely for evaluation, planning and decision-support purposes within the GSTP programme.
- Any personal data provided (e.g. contact details) will be processed in accordance with applicable data-protection regulations and used only in the context of this process.

Key Information

1. ARTES 4.0 Work Plan ID *

2. ARTES 4.0 Activity Title *

3. Overall Project Budget *

Please indicate the **estimated total budget (K€) associated with your organisation's participation** in the activity.**

** (All budget figures are indicative and non-binding. They will be used exclusively to support internal planning and decision-making).

****Attention: Do not exceed the ESA budget.**

El valor debe ser un número.

4. Funding sought (max, in k€) *

Please indicate the **maximum funding amount requested from ARTES 4.0** for your organisation. The value shall be expressed in **thousand euros (k€)**, as an integer, and should not exceed the total budget indicated in the previous question. **

This amount is **indicative and non-binding and will be used for **evaluation and planning purposes only**.

El valor debe ser un número.

5. Do you intend to implement the activity in cooperation with partners (Consortium including a Prime and Subcos)? *

Please indicate whether you **intend to participate as part of a consortium**. A consortium implies the presence of a **Prime Contractor and one or more subcontractors**. **

This information is **indicative and does not constitute a binding commitment.

Yes

No

6. Role intent *

Please indicate the **role your organisation intends to assume**, should the activity be implemented as a consortium. **

This selection is **non-binding and may be refined at a later stage.

Prime Contractor

Subcontractor

7. Is the consortium composed exclusively of national entities, or does it include international partners? *

National

International

8. Company *

Please indicate the **name of your organisation**.

Escriba como máximo 50 caracteres

9. Consortium

If participating as part of a consortium, please indicate the **consortium name and/or known partners**, if available at this stage.

Escriba como máximo 50 caracteres

10. Point of Contact (Email addresses) *

Please provide a **professional email address** of the main contact person for this submission. The email address will be used **exclusively in the context of this Call for Interest and related clarifications**.

11. Point of Contact (Name and Surname) *

Please provide name and surname of the main contact person for this submission. These personal data will be used **exclusively in the context of this Call for Interest and related clarifications**.

12. Size/type of Lead Organisation *

Please select the option that **best describes the organisation acting as Lead (Prime Contractor)** for the proposed activity. This information is requested **for statistical and evaluation purposes only** and is **non-binding**.

SME (Small and Medium-sized Enterprise): An enterprise that employs fewer than 250 persons and has an annual turnover not exceeding EUR 50 million, and/or an annual balance sheet total not exceeding EUR 43 million.

Large Enterprise: This category includes large industrial companies, prime contractors and system integrators, typically characterised by a large workforce and significant annual turnover. Large Enterprises usually have the capacity to lead complex projects, manage large consortia and integrate multiple subsystems or activities.

Research Organisation: A public or private entity, such as a university or research institute, that conducts scientific research, industrial research, or experimental development as its primary objective.

Other: Entities not classified as LSEs, SMEs, or research organisations. The "Other" category includes Mid-caps (250-3,000 employees), foundations or associations, other specific legal entities.**

**The classification provided will not be used as an exclusion criterion and does not prejudice eligibility or evaluation outcomes.

- SME
- Large Enterprise
- Research Organisation
- Other

Delivery Case

13. Do you plan to bid for the entire activity or only for specific tasks? *

Please indicate your **current intention**. **

This information is **indicative and non-binding and may evolve as the activity definition and consortium setup mature.

- Entire activity
- Only specific tasks / work packages
- To be defined at a later stage

14. If only specific tasks, please briefly indicate which ones

Please indicate the **main tasks or work packages** your organisation is interested in (high-level description only).

Escriba como máximo 1500 caracteres

15. The approximate percentage of the activities carried out in Spain.

Please indicate the **approximate percentage** of work carried out in and out of Spain. **The total must add up to 100%.**

Escriba como máximo 1500 caracteres

16. If interested in only a part of the activity, could you please indicate the preferred partners to form a consortium, if any?

If applicable, please specify preferred partner(s) and the intended scope of collaboration. Otherwise, indicate "N/A".

Escriba como máximo 1500 caracteres

Funding Case

17. What is the estimated impact of the project results on the Spanish space sector? *

Briefly describe the expected benefits, in terms of competitiveness, sustainability, resilience, job creation, or technology transfer.

Escriba como máximo 1500 caracteres

Consent

18. Consent *

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Yes, I confirm that I have read and agree with the above statements.

Annex 2: Detailed evaluation criteria

Detailed evaluation criteria and related Weighting Factors for the eligibility of the activity will be:

EVALUATION CRITERIA		Weighting Factors in %
1	Soundness of Delivery Case (Number of the Applications for the same topic)	60
2	Strength of Economic Operator Benefits	40