

1

OBJECTIVE

The objective of this *International Call for Interest* is to encourage and invite enterprises and public organizations from around the world to collaborate with Portuguese enterprises and research laboratories to design, install and operate a spaceport on the Island of Santa Maria, in the Azores, in association with the development and operation of a new generation of satellite launch services to space. The ultimate goal is to provide low-cost, frequent and regular access to space for small satellites, as a way to boost the utilisation of space for the benefit of humanity.

The Government of Portugal and the Regional Government of the Azores are jointly engaged in supporting the growth of the current Portuguese space business in close international cooperation and in a way to guarantee the growth of global “*New Space*” industries with the technical support of the European Space Agency (ESA).

The immediate goal is to start sustainable small-satellite launch services from Santa Maria, Azores, in 2021. Its installation should be oriented in a way to open up to new areas of intervention for launch services, including the potential development of a spaceport in the Atlantic, extending existing satellite and launcher monitoring and tracking, as well as accelerating a new generation of space activities oriented for small satellites.

The activities to be developed are to be considered under the overall effort associated with growing international initiatives for the “*New Space*” commercial sector, along with the need to accelerate safety and security initiatives involving the use of micro, mini and small satellites. The overall concept should address the full end-to-end value chain by being associated with the emerging expansion of Earth observation activities to application areas, which may range from agriculture and fisheries, ocean, land and air measurements, to infrastructure monitoring, urban development, safety and security, together with the growth of “*New Space*” entrepreneurship worldwide.

The applicants are invited to express their interest and their views about the operational concept under which they would contribute to the following main objectives:

- a) The development of a low-cost, safe and ideally-located spaceport for Low Earth Orbits (LEO), namely Sun Synchronous Orbits (SSO) and Polar Orbits, where operators can launch small satellites, in a friendly cooperative environment including a modern legal framework supporting the “New Space” industry;
- b) Enabling business opportunities along the full value-chain of satellite and launchers development and operation, as well as “New Space” services opportunities, as provided by low cost satellite constellations and solutions

These Expressions of Interest constitute the first of a three-phase process aimed at setting partnerships between commercial launch service operators and Portuguese enterprises and other institutions for operating launch services from Azores by 2021.

