**Space BIC by ERATOSTHENES CoE**

Application Template – Space Connection Assessment, v1.0, 12/06/2025(subjected to amendment)

# Space Connection Assessment – the “We Need More Space” check

## Introduction

To be accepted for incubation in the Space BIC by the ERATOSTHENES CoE , the applicant must present a business idea with a valid *space connection*. This document provides a guideline to assist all parties involved to assess the space connection of your business idea.

*The use of the document is not mandatory, but recommended especially in cases where the space connection is not clear beforehand and needs elaboration or justification.*

The assessment principle is based on the main characteristics of a valid space connection. The principle should work for the majority of business ideas expected to be proposed to the Space BIC. However, as innovations tend to lead to new types of technologies and applications that fall outside the range of commonly proposed ideas, more information may be needed at a later stage.

It may also happen that a space connection found valid now may turn out to be invalid at a later stage if the initial assumptions no longer hold.

## For the applicant to the Space BIC

*Please contact the Space BIC support team to discuss the space connection in advance of submitting your application.*

Applications for the Space BIC are typically considered with the following types of space connections (please use the check-boxes to indicate in which category your idea falls):

* Downstream – Your idea is about utilising space systems or exploiting space technology in a non-space domain, in one of the following areas:
  + Applications
    - Satellite Navigation
    - Earth Observation
    - Satellite Communication
  + Technology Transfer
    - Hardware
    - Software or Firmware
    - Knowledge, processes
    - Intellectual Property Rights (IPR)
* Upstream – Your idea is about exploiting new technology in the space domain, or you intend to be active as a supplier to the space sector, in one of the following areas (including systems, sub-systems, components, and services):
  + Launchers
  + Satellites
  + Ground systems
  + Human spaceflight
  + Other

If the space connection of your business idea is in one of the above areas, please continue the initial assessment below. Otherwise please contact the Space BIC for clarification and guidance.

## Assessment of the Space Connection

Below are the main criteria against which the space connection will be evaluated. To proceed with the initial assessment, please proceed as follows:

* First, go to the relevant section “Downstream” or “Upstream”.
* Read the text carefully and answer the questions clearly and concisely. Note that further details of your space connection should be described in the application. This document should *just contain the key arguments*.
* When finished, send the initial assessment to the Space BIC. Preferably, this should be done well in advance of submitting the application so that the Space BIC can provide guidance if needed.
* The Space BIC should be able to advise whether the space connection is sufficient. Note that the Space BIC Evaluation Board still may reject an application if it deems the space connection to be insufficient.

## Downstream: Application/Technology Transfer

**Criterion 1. “We *need* space”**

First and foremost, the reviewers must be convinced that a genuine need for space-related technology, data, or infrastructure exists within your proposal. In other words, they must be convinced that

* Space provides a feasible solution to solve the problem, and
* Space offer a technical, cost, or other advantage compared to other non-space or existing solutions.

When analysing the **need for space**, you must understand the requirements for the product/service that you plan to bring to the market and to what degree both your own and any existing alternatives meet these requirements.

*Please provide a very brief explanation to the reviewers of your application why space is needed:*

<We need space because …>

**Criterion 2. We need *more …***

Furthermore, for the Space BIC to support your business idea, the space-based solution must be more than what is obvious or already commonly in use. Generally, we expect that *some innovative step is taken*, for example, that data is being analysed or combined with other sources to generate new information, or that software or hardware is being integrated to provide a new technical solution.

There are some space connections that are *normally* *not considered sufficient*, for example:

* If the business idea builds on “re-packaging” of space-related data, software, or hardware, we consider the space connection too weak.
* In case the business idea is related to re-using a technology/product/service that another Space BIC start-up has commercialised, this will not be considered a sufficient space connection on its own.
* Likewise, if the proposed technology transfer from space has already taken place in the targeted non-space domain, additional arguments would be needed.
* We will not support the development of “yet another” Location Based Service for mobile phones.
* We will not support the development of applications using Earth Observation data merely as background maps or similarly, with no or only little additional processing taking place.

Cases where the technical solution is standard but the novelty is rather in the business model, or where a market segment is addressed in which space is still not used in a way that may be standard elsewhere, may still be acceptable.

*Please describe very briefly for the reviewers of your application why your solution is “more” than the state-of-art and what the specific innovation is.*

<We do more …>

**Criterion 3. Space is *available***

In order for the Space BIC to support your start-up, you also need to make sure that the space you need is available in practice. Data, services, or products are often commercially available or even free; however, especially for IPR, including technologies, licenses need to be negotiated.

In some cases, the price for using space technology or data can be a limiting factor for your business idea. The price is not assessed as part of the space connection; instead, it is assessed when evaluating your business case. However, you are advised to already now consider whether the price could substantially impact your business. For example, while using Earth Observation data provided by any party, raw or in a processed form, the price difference may be significant.

*In any case, incubation may not start before access to the data, services, IPR or technology you need is granted.*

If you intend to use a patent or other IPR/technology with space origin, you need to investigate and confirm in advance that the IPR/technology provides advantages with respect to the state-of-art.

Please indicate the status of availability:

□ Available for free

□ Commercially available □ Price is known

□ Price is unknown or needs to be negotiated

□ Availability is unknown or needs to be negotiated

□ In case of IPR including technologies, the owner has been contacted and a positive statement has been received regarding access to IPR

*Please describe very briefly for the reviewers of your application the status of availability:*

<Space is available …>

## Upstream

For upstream business,s ideas the space connection usually is obvious. In the proposal to the Space BIC you will have to explain how the business idea can be realised. There are situations when it is not immediately clear that a proposed technology, service, etc. would be useful in a space context, for example:

* New types of systems, sub-systems or components that provide new functions (i.e. not merely replacing existing technology with something better),
* Technology and services intended to be used onboard the International Space Station (ISS) or related to other human spaceflight activities.

In such situations we *request that a Letter of Interest from a potential customer or user* be provided with the proposal. This letter should:

* Confirm the usefulness of the proposed technology, service, etc., in a space context,
* Declare the customer’s/user’s intention to participate in trials during the incubation,
* Preferably contain a statement of becoming a customer if the development of the idea is successful.

If in doubt, please get in touch with the Space BIC team to understand whether a Letter of Interest is advisable. (Note that such a letter is *always* useful and that it is never too early to engage potential customers!)

In case you have been in contact with experts at the Space BIC to discuss your idea, please provide references (name, e-mail, and telephone number) in your proposal.

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