Switch to Space 5



FLYING TO THE MOON AND FURTHER
Belgium embraces the challenge

Belgian industry. Belgian research.
Shaping the future of Lunar exploration.

18 November, 2026

PROGRAMME



09:30 – 09:35
WELCOME

Introduction

09:40–12:10
MORNING PANEL

The evolution of space jobs • The challenge for the Belgian Industry & Research • Q&A session

12:15–13:50
LUNCH TIME | DISCOVER & CONNECT

Premium and Gold Sponsor talks •
Sponsor and startup booths • Speed dating •
CV, job and internship wall • Ask Me Anything with experts

14:00–17:15
PARALLEL SESSIONS

Auditorium: Living on the Moon – Technical Challenges
Banquet Room: Living on the Moon – Legal and Societal Challenges

17:30–19:30
COCKTAIL AND NETWORKING

Continue the conversations, meet the community and build new professional connections.

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Enjoy a day of discovery, inspiration & new connections!

WELCOME TO SWITCH TO SPACE 5



Your journey to the Moon and further starts here

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S2S5 Contest

Go to wooclap.com
Enter the event code in the top banner

Event code
FIXBLQI

1st



2nd





3rd



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Nine questions - One lunch time Challenge - Three winners

Switch to Space 5 Contest

Session 1

Go to wooclap.com
Enter the event code in the top banner

Event code
FIXBLQI



Nine questions - One lunch time Challenge - Three winners

09:40 – 10:30

Evolution of space jobs over a horizon of 5 to 10 years



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Evolution of space jobs over a horizon of 5 to 10 years



CHAIR
Olivier Chazot
Professor & Head of the Aeronautic and Aerospace department, VKI



Cathy Freitag
Head of HR

antwerpspace



Michael Marichal
Head of Manufacturing Operations

AEROSPACELAB



Almélie Revers
Director Engineering Support Services Business Unit

TELESPAZIO
a LEONARDO and THALES company



Adrian Hogg
Recruitment Manager

EUMETSAT 1986-2026



Rachid Atori
Chief Operating Officer

SPACEBEL



Lucy Van Der Tas
Senior Talent Acquisition Advisor

esa
EUROPEAN SPACE AGENCY

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Speakers

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Morning session

Evolution of space jobs over a horizon of 5 to 10 years



Cathy Freitag
HR manager
Antwerp Space



BUILDING A CAREER IN SPACE

“Don’t worry about finding the perfect first job. Stay curious, keep learning and never stop aiming for the stars.”

Cathy Freitag · Head of HR, Antwerp Space

antwerpspace
An OHB Company

Meet Antwerp Space: we connect space

A Belgian space story that started in 1962 and keeps on growing

antwerpspace
An OHB Company

1962

rooted in Antwerp

A proud Belgian space company

- A leading Belgian company specialized in space-based Radio Frequency applications
- Part of OHB SE, a European space and technology group
- Based in Antwerp, with labs and a cleanroom, easy reachable by train
- A growing team of engineers and PhDs from all over the world

“We connect space, and we are only just getting started.”

Proud of the missions we power

Our technology is on board some of the most exciting missions in space

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JUPITER — **Helping JUICE talk to Earth**

ARIEL — **Communication subsystem for Ariel**

VIGIL — **Communication subsystem for Vigil**

SCIENCE — **Contributing to ESA's LISA mission**

5G — **Advancing regenerative 5G networks**

LaRa: a Belgian first

The Lander Radioscience instrument is the first scientific instrument from Belgium to land on another celestial body.

Our values: team spirit, accountability, innovation and customer service.

The winning profile is T-shaped

Deep expertise remains essential, but it must connect

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Collaboration · Communication · Systems thinking · Customer awareness

RF
Software
Electronics
Systems
AIT / PA

DEEP EXPERTISE

Cybersecurity
Data / AI
Programme delivery
Supply chain
Business support

The technology will change. The ability to learn, integrate and collaborate will compound over an entire career.

Five things students can build now

A degree opens the door. These habits determine how far you go.

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01 A strong foundation

Choose a field you genuinely want to master.

02 Learning agility

Expect tools and technologies to evolve.

03 Systems thinking

Understand how your work affects the whole mission.

04 Clear collaboration

Explain complexity across disciplines and cultures.

05 Evidence of curiosity

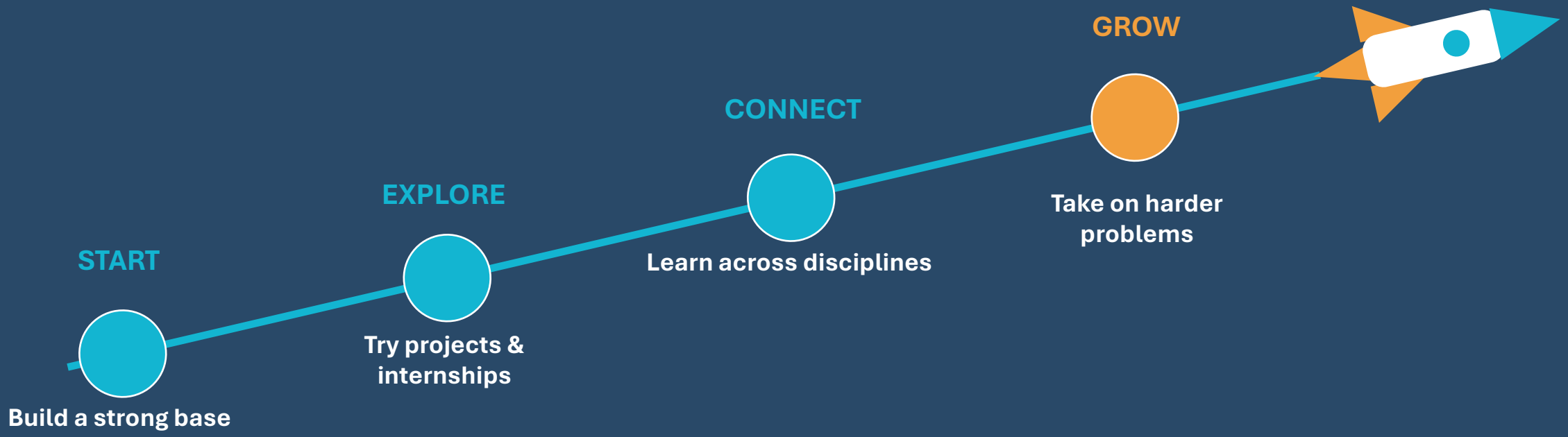
Projects, internships and questions matter.

My advice: optimise for learning, not perfection

Your first choice matters less than your direction of travel

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"Don't worry about finding the perfect first job.
Stay curious, keep learning and never stop aiming for the stars."



Thank you for your attention !

Cathy Freitag
Head of HR Antwerp Space
cathy.freitag@antwerpspace.be

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Evolution of space jobs over a horizon of 5 to 10 years



Michael Marichal
Head of Manufacturing Operations
Aerospacelab

Aerospacelab x S2C

November 2026

Confidential

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Morning session

Evolution of space jobs over a horizon of 5 to 10 years



Amélie Revers
Space Engineering Support Services Business Unit director and Head of Institutional Relations and Communication
Telespazio BeNeLux



Business Unit Director
Telespazio BeNeLux

"Turning complex space capabilities into real solutions for a safer, more sustainable and connected society."

1. Who we are

TELESPAZIO
a LEONARDO and THALES company
Benelux

Bringing space closer to people

We provide high value, accessible and innovative services and solutions, using space technologies to make a **positive impact on people, society and the planet**.

- Earth observation & environmental monitoring
- Satellite communications & navigation
- Data, applications & geospatial services

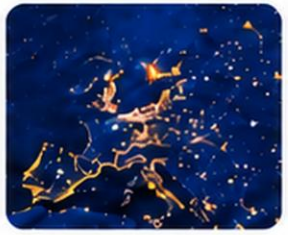
Our areas of business



Ground Systems, Deployment, Operations and Security



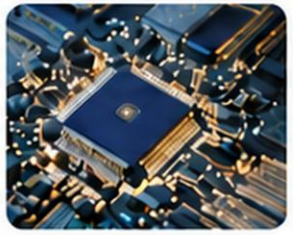
Space Systems Engineering & Consulting



Geoinformation



Integrated Downstream Applications



Embedded Systems Design & Implementation

60,000+ people worldwide

150 countries

82% of revenues from international markets



Space for a better tomorrow



2. Advice to newcomers

Lessons from my journey

TELESPAZIO
a LEONARDO and THALES company
Benelux

1. Start with curiosity
You don't need to know everything. Be open, ask questions and embrace change.

2. Build meaningful relationships
People make the difference. Say yes to opportunities, get involved and learn from others.

3. Combine your passions
My background in legal studies gave me a strong foundation to navigate complex environments and build trust. Don't be afraid to bring a different perspective.

4. Step out of your comfort zone
New challenges – even outside your expertise – lead to the most rewarding opportunities.

5. Give back
Share your experience, support others and help make the space sector more inclusive and diverse.

What the industry really needs from graduates today

CURIOSITY & INITIATIVE
Ask questions, seek to understand, bring new ideas.

ADAPTABILITY
Be comfortable with change and complexity.

COLLABORATION
Communication, teamwork and a genuine interest in people.

REAL-WORLD IMPACT MINDSET
Link your skills to societal and environmental challenges.

DIVERSITY OF BACKGROUNDS
Different perspectives – technical, legal, economic – make us stronger.

> *Your career will probably not be a straight line. Mine certainly wasn't...*
> ***and that's what made it exciting.***

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Morning session

Evolution of space jobs over a horizon of 5 to 10 years



Adrian Hogg
Recruitment Manager
EUMETSAT

EUMETSAT – Europe's Meteorological Satellite Agency

www.eumetsat.int

Primary objective

Establish, maintain and exploit European systems of meteorological satellites.

Further objective

Contribute to the operational monitoring of the climate and the detection of global climatic changes.

AUSTRIA
BELGIUM
BULGARIA
CROATIA
CZECHIA
DENMARK
ESTONIA
FINLAND
FRANCE
GERMANY
GREECE
HUNGARY
ICELAND
IRELAND
ITALY
LATVIA
LITHUANIA
LUXEMBOURG
THE NETHERLANDS
NORWAY
POLAND
PORTUGAL
ROMANIA
SLOVAK REPUBLIC
SLOVENIA
SPAIN
SWEDEN
SWITZERLAND
TURKEY
UNITED KINGDOM



A changing landscape

Demand is shifting from collecting imagery to delivering trusted, timely intelligence

GROWING MARKET

€3.5bn→ €7.9bn

FIVE DEMAND SHIFTS TO WATCH

01 FASTER & MORE FREQUENT

Near-real-time monitoring; denser revisit and persistent change detection.

More agile constellations • lower latency

02 CLIMATE & NATURE

Stronger demand for emissions, extremes, water, biodiversity and land-use evidence.

Risk, adaptation • compliance

03 SECURITY & RESILIENCE

More tasking for maritime, borders, infrastructure and crisis response.

All-weather SAR • secure access

04 RICHER, FUSED OBSERVATIONS

Optical + SAR + hyperspectral + in-situ, weather and socio-economic data.

Multi-sensor • consistent time series

05 AI-READY, ACTIONABLE PRODUCTS

Users expect analytics, alerts, forecasts and decision support—not just pixels.

Cloud workflows • trusted AI • APIs

THE BIG SHIFT

FROM raw data & images → TO reliable, interoperable, decision-grade intelligence

The emerging profile: T-shaped, digitally fluent and outcome-focused

Deep disciplinary expertise remains essential—but it must connect to adjacent disciplines, reliable delivery and sound judgement.



Specialist knowledge

T-shaped expertise

Connect science / engineering with software, data and operations.

Writing code

Engineering systems

Develop, test, deploy and maintain reliable services.

Producing data

Delivering outcomes

Translate observations into decision-ready information.

Performing tasks

Exercising judgement

Interpret uncertainty, detect failure modes and intervene.

Fixed career paths

Continuous learning

Adapt as tools, methods and mission needs evolve.

Experience alone

Evidence of capability

Demonstrate practical problem-solving and technical judgement.

The workforce challenge

Technology will move faster than workforce pipelines

The constraint is not simply the availability of staff for immediate needs —it is the supply, development and retention of people who can bridge disciplines.

Competition for digital talent

EO competes with technology and other sectors for AI, Big Data, software and cyber specialists.

Hybrid-skills shortage

Scientific understanding combined with production-grade software or AI is hard to find.

Mid-career capability gap

Experienced people are needed to lead complex work, mentor juniors and bridge science and engineering activities with operations.

Rapidly shifting requirements

Traditional qualifications and job histories may not reveal readiness for emerging tools.

Knowledge & continuity

Long missions require transfer of institutional knowledge and stewardship of legacy systems.

Security & access constraints

Geopolitical, nationality and clearance requirements can narrow candidate pools.

Strategic tension: attract scarce specialists now • build pathways for tomorrow • preserve mission-critical expertise

Build the workforce—not just the vacancy list

A practical agenda for organisations, hiring teams and early-career professionals.

THE EUMETSAT STRATEGY

01	Refresh job profiles around AI, data, automation and cyber capabilities.
02	Recruit for potential and learning agility as well as experience.
03	Create structured junior-to-mid-career pathways: mentoring, rotations and technical leadership.
04	Broaden recruitment beyond traditional aerospace and space-science backgrounds.
05	Protect scientific validation, measurement continuity and operational reliability.

ADVICE TO CANDIDATES

CORE DEPTH	Build expertise in a discipline: science, physics, maths, software, electronics or systems.
DIGITAL FLUENCY	Develop Python, data analysis, version control and automated testing; add role-relevant AI, C++, cloud or GIS.
APPLIED EVIDENCE	Show what you can do through projects, internships, open datasets and practical challenges.
HUMAN CAPABILITIES	Practise analytical thinking, communication, teamwork, adaptability and creativity.
OPERATIONAL AWARENESS	Understand quality, safety, security, uncertainty and dependable service delivery.

2030–2036: the strongest professionals will pair deep expertise with digital fluency, sound judgement and cross-disciplinary collaboration.

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Morning session

Evolution of space jobs over a horizon of 5 to 10 years



Rachid Atori
Chief Operating Officer
Spacebel

Switch *to* Space - SPACEBEL



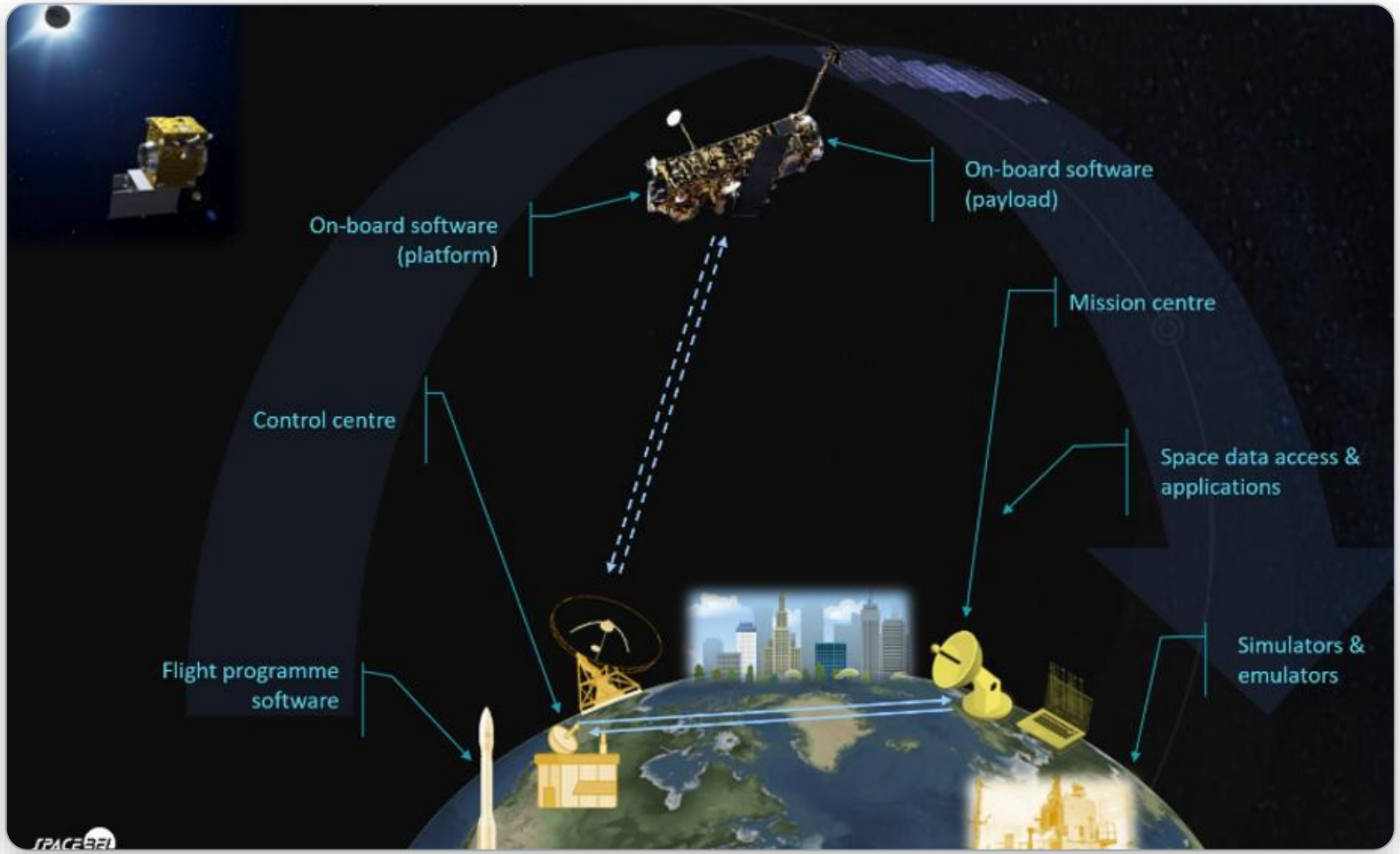
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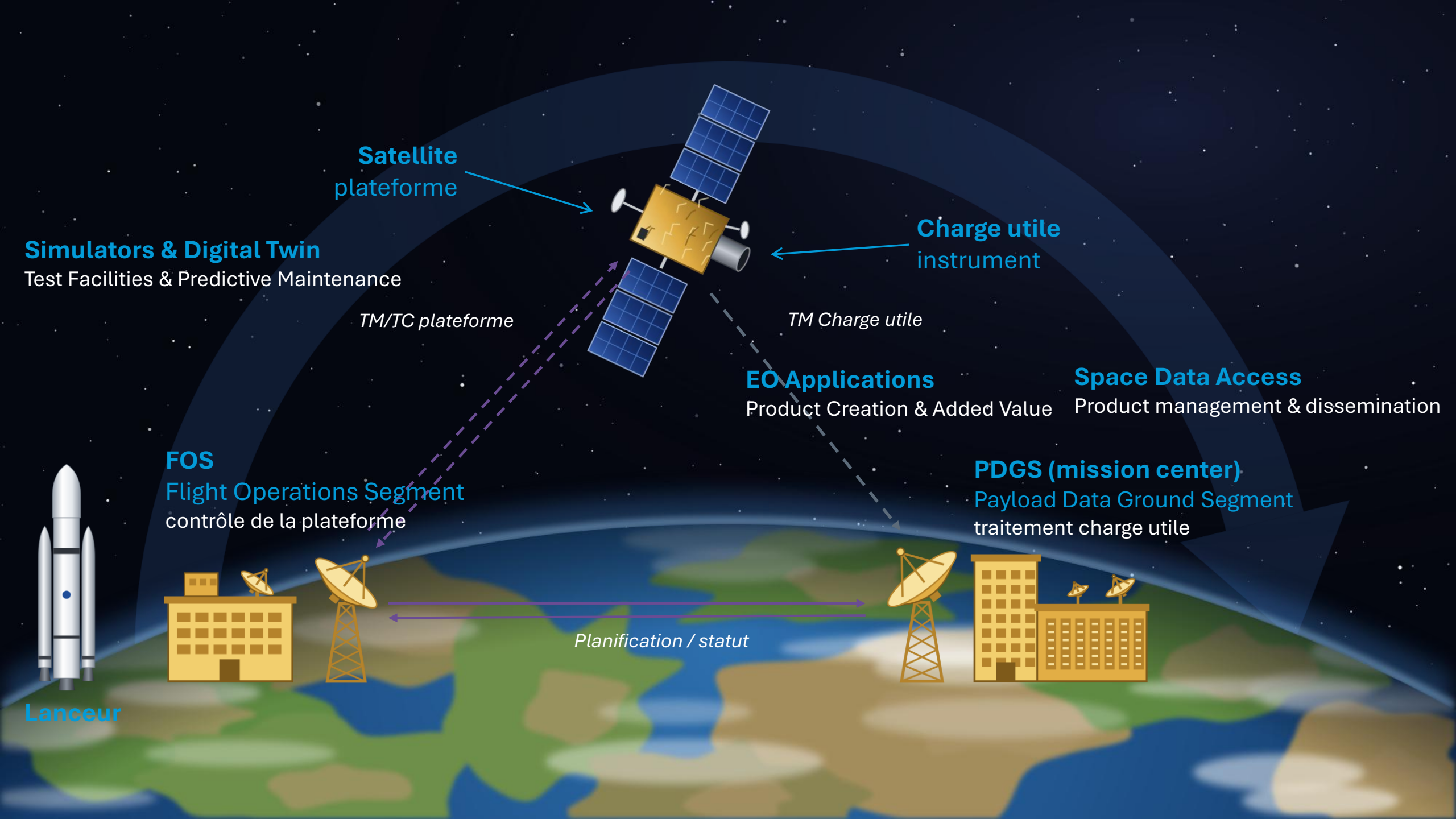
About SPACEBEL

Established since 1988, **SPACEBEL** is a Belgian space systems and software engineering company operating in the Space and applications sectors

- ✓ 38 years
- ✓ > 50 missions
- ✓ > 120 staffs
- ✓ 4 sites
- ✓ 500 m^2 clean rooms



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Satellite
plateforme
Charge utile
instrument
Simulators & Digital Twin
Test Facilities & Predictive Maintenance
TM/TC plateforme
TM Charge utile
EO Applications
Product Creation & Added Value
Space Data Access
Product management & dissemination
FOS
Flight Operations Segment
contrôle de la plateforme
PDGS (mission center)
Payload Data Ground Segment
traitement charge utile
Planification / statut
Lanceur

MISSION AND CONTROL CENTRES

SPACEBEL is a recognized developer of IT systems for the ground segment. It has a comprehensive knowledge of all sub-systems key requirements and constraints, and has a strong background in automation and mission planning technology. **SPACEBEL** offers turnkey mission and control centres for various types of missions and develops cloud-based ground segment functionalities.





REMOTE SENSING DATA MANAGEMENT

SPACEBEL specializes in the development and operation of data and information acquisition, integrity, archiving, discovery, processing, retrieval, visualization, dissemination and quality control. Its core expertise includes web-based spatial data infrastructures and service provisioning infrastructures facilitating interoperable discovery and access to earth observation data and application services consuming these data.

EARTH OBSERVATION APPLICATIONS

For many years **SPACEBEL** is operating in the sector of earth monitoring applications. The sustainable management of agriculture, forestry, natural resources and ground motion are part of the company's portfolio. Critical raw materials is a sector of importance too with a participation to the MINEYE European project, for which **SPACEBEL** will develop EO services for a resilient mine life cycle monitoring.



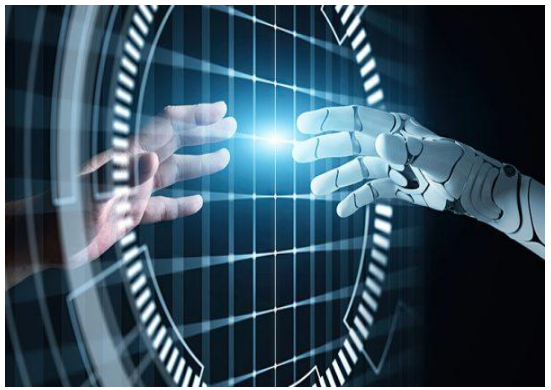


ON-BOARD SOFTWARE*

SPACEBEL is a leading provider of on-board software and on-board data management. It develops flight software for platforms, payloads or sub-systems of satellites, space probes or launchers, for earth observation, science, meteorological, telecommunication or space defence missions, over the entire lifecycle: early concept studies, analysis and specification, architecture, design and development, validation and qualification.

MODELLING AND SIMULATION*

SPACEBEL is a leading developer of system modelling and simulation products for satellites and probes segment, launchers segment, orbital transportation systems and ground segment. It addresses most of the related technology domains, e.g. satellite operational simulators for mission control, software validation facilities, numerical modelling of space environment, emulators of on-board processors, and much more.





SPACEPORTS AND LAUNCHERS

SPACEBEL is supporting Avio-ELV in the development and evolution of flight software piloting the Vega launch vehicle, in the guidance, navigation and control software engineering activities and in the simulation software. It is also the developer of the CNES Agency's simulation platform operated in Kourou (Guyana) for Ariane & Vega programmes, and participates to the ESA's Future Launchers Preparatory Programme.

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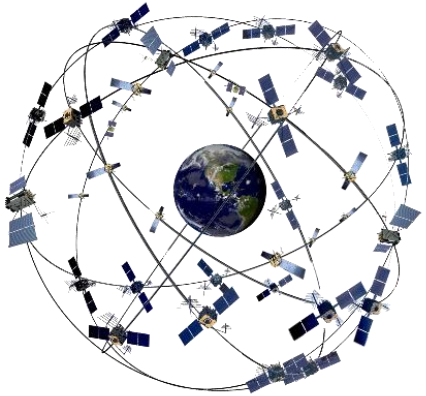
*** EUROPEAN TOP 2**











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The Mission Wall

Perspectives on the trends, challenges, changes, ...

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Some basics to keep in mind

- Science matters, and it will keep mattering

- Don’t let the reputation of science studies scare you off
  - They’re demanding, but very doable with regular work

- Expect your path to change once you start working
  - Just make sure you keep doing things that interest you

- Space isn’t only for engineers
  - Biologists, chemists, doctors, psychologists: there’s room for many profiles

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Using AI while you're still learning

- How do we keep real skills while still getting the benefits of AI?

- If you lean on AI before you've mastered the basics, you may never build solid foundations
  - And we all depend on people who truly understand their job
  - Use it to explain, check or practise, not to think for you

- The real skill: knowing when to use AI, and when not to

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Stay the course, keep going

- There will be hard moments: a bad grade, a subject that won’t click, a year that feels too long
  - That’s normal, and it happens to everyone, including those who later succeed

- Keep your goal in sight, even when the path gets steep
  - A detour is not a dead end

- Ask for help & support when you need it: teachers, friends, family

- No pain, no gain

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Morning session

Evolution of space jobs over a horizon of 5 to 10 years



Lucy Van Der Tas
Senior Talent Acquisition Advisor
ESA

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SWITCH TO SPACE

EVOLUTION OF SPACE JOBS OVER THE NEXT 5-10 YEARS

18 November 2026

Lucy van der Tas, Senior Talent Acquisition Advisor

EUROPEAN SPACE AGENCY

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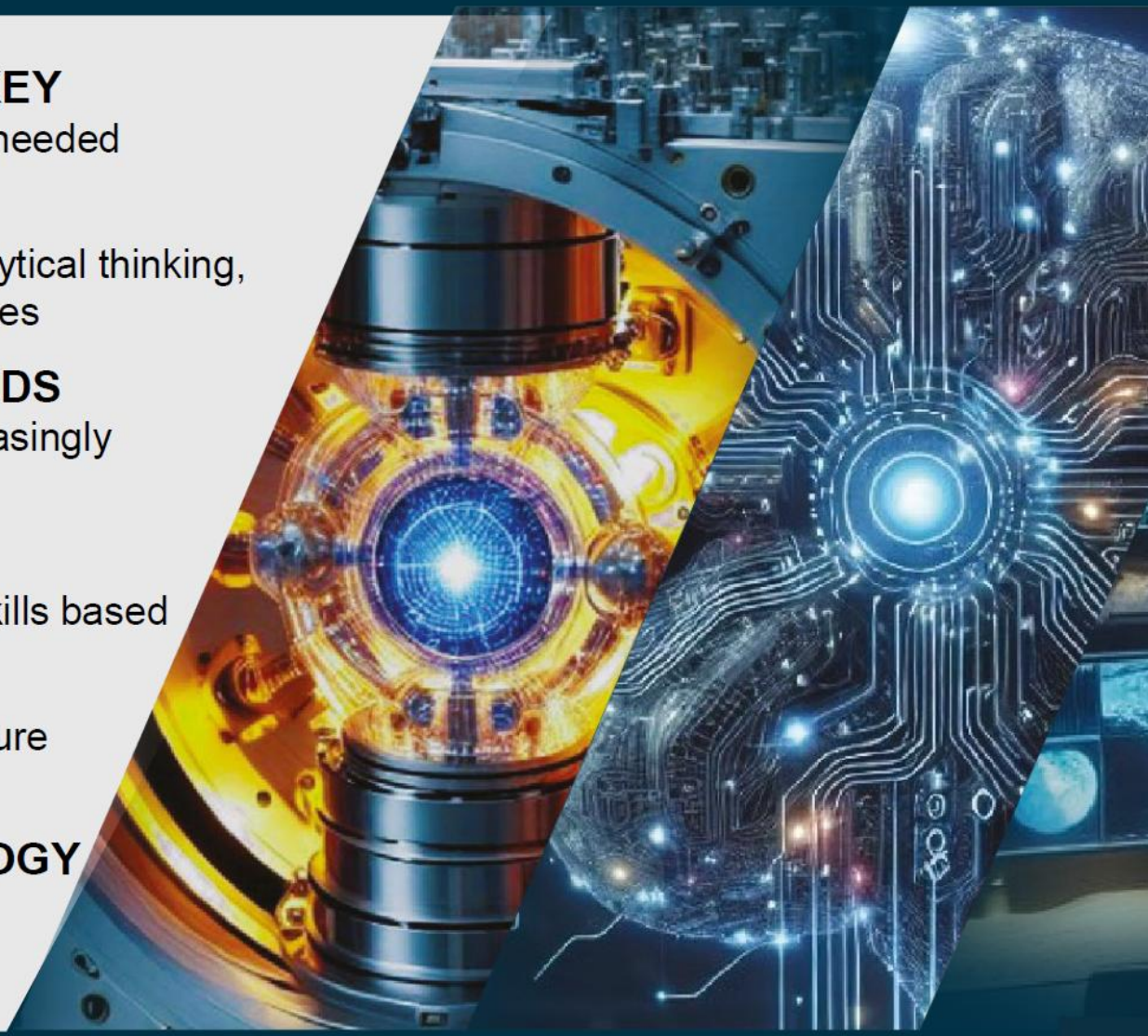
EUROPEAN SPACE AGENCY

WHO	23 Member States, and a workforce of > 6000
WHY	To elevate Europe's future through space
WHERE	HQ in Paris, seven sites across Europe and Europe's spaceport in French Guiana
BUDGET	**Around €8 billion per year** = €15 (one cinema ticket) per European a year



EVOLUTION OF EUROPEAN SPACE JOBS OVER THE NEXT 5-10 YEARS

- **TECHNOLOGY EVOLVES, ENGINEERING REMAINS KEY**
  Deep systems, software and hardware expertise continue to be needed
- **T-SHAPED PROFILES**
  Deep specialist expertise is combined with digital capability, analytical thinking, solid communication skills and the ability to work across disciplines
- **EVOLVING AND BROADER SPACE ECOSYSTEM NEEDS**
  Project management, regulatory and support functions are increasingly important
- **AI RESHAPES HOW WE WORK**
  AI automates routine tasks; learning becomes continuous and skills based
- **GEOPOLITICS SHAPE PRIORITIES**
  Autonomy, security and resilience are fully integrated into the future technology landscape
- **SUSTAINABILITY AN INTEGRAL PART OF TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT**
  Debris prevention and circularity shape mission design





EUROPEAN SPACE AGENCY

ELEVATING THE FUTURE OF EUROPE

Evolution of space jobs over a horizon of 5 to 10 years



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