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CNES Innovation Day Pursuing the digital transformation

Year after year, the strategic importance of innovation for the space sector's future is becoming ever clearer in an increasingly competitive global arena. CNES's Innovation Day event this year presented technology prospects for orbital systems and launchers, as well as the agency's new organization geared to the challenges of global competition and the digital transformation. And for the first time, CNES invited 10 start-ups it is nurturing through its R&T plan and incubation and technology spin-off actions.

The Innovation Day event bringing together space specialists in an informal setting and organized by CNES scaled new heights this year with 700 attendees from scientific research institutions, space agencies, national and regional government, and of course industry.

To kick off the day, CNES's Spin-off and Technologies team outlined the priorities of the agency's new R&T plan. With a budget of €20 million, this plan hinges on 269 actions covering all areas of orbital system engineering and technologies.

How can we be more agile? How can we support innovation at a time when the cost of launch services is coming down? And how can we successfully achieve the digital transformation? These are just some of the questions being addressed by the Ariane Next initiative set in train by CNES's Future Launch Services Innovation team. Incubating new ideas, reusability and disruptive technologies are among the lines of action being pursued by this initiative that have already sketched the outline for the new Prometheus low-cost engine.

With the keen following attracted by the Proxima mission currently being conducted by Thomas Pesquet on the International Space Station, the team in charge of the CADMOS centre for the development of microgravity applications and space operations wound up the day's proceedings with a much-appreciated talk on the theme of "Living in space: physiological and technological challenges".

Summing up, CNES President Jean-Yves Le Gall commented: "By constantly boosting innovation, CNES is helping French industry to stay competitive in the global arena. I would like to congratulate our teams for opening their doors to all of their partners and notably the start-ups we will be working with to invent the future of space."

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