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Press Release

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ArianeWorks selects MyCTO to prototype stage-recovery concept for Themis

ArianeWorks, the acceleration platform launched by CNES and ArianeGroup last February, is geared notably towards ramping up development of the THEMIS low-cost reusable first-stage demonstrator, working in partnership with SMEs and start-ups. To this end, it has selected MyCTO, a young rapid-prototyping firm in the Paris region spotted at the Station F campus through FrenchTech and ConnectbyCNES, to build a prototype of one of the stage-recovery concepts under study.



FROG test vehicle in development

The prototype will match the scale of a small test vehicle called FROG, itself in development. FROG is an elementary experimental vehicle designed to test—at a reduced scale, rapidly, cheaply and using an agile approach—several concepts for THEMIS, such as landing algorithms, automated operations and the avionics architecture. Conceived with CNES oversight by non-profit association Planète Sciences, Polyvionics and Cachan technology institute (Paris Saclay University), FROG will initially be fitted with a turbojet and ultimately with a small rocket motor.

ArianeWorks is an acceleration platform working on future generations of European space launchers. Comprising a 15-strong team given free rein to pursue their passion with the support of the exceptional expertise and capabilities that CNES and ArianeGroup are able to marshal, this structure is resolutely open to new and fertile partnerships with new players, notably innovative start-ups, research laboratories, SMEs and manufacturers.

About CNES

CNES (Centre National d'Études Spatiales) is the government agency responsible for shaping France's space policy and implementing it in Europe. Its task is to conceive and orbit satellites, invent the space systems of the future and nurture new services to aid us in our daily lives. Founded in 1961, it is the initiator of major space projects, launch vehicles and satellites, and the partner of choice for industry fuelling innovation. CNES comprises some 2,500 men and women with a passion for space working to open up new and infinite fields of applications in five core areas of focus: Ariane, science, Earth observation, telecommunications and defence. It is a key player driving technology innovation, economic development and industrial policy for the nation. It also fosters scientific collaborations and has forged numerous international partnerships. France, represented by CNES, is the leading contributor to the European Space Agency (ESA).

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About ArianeGroup

ArianeGroup develops and supplies innovative and competitive solutions for civil and military space launchers, with expertise in all aspects of state-of-the-art propulsion technologies. ArianeGroup is lead contractor for Europe's Ariane 5 and Ariane 6 launcher families, responsible for both design and the entire production chain, up to and including marketing by its Arianespace subsidiary, as well as for the missiles of the French oceanic deterrent force. ArianeGroup and its subsidiaries enjoy a global reputation as specialists in the field of equipment and propulsion for space applications, while their expertise also benefits other industrial sectors. The group is a joint venture equally owned by Airbus and Safran, and employs approximately 9,000 highly qualified staff in France and Germany. Its 2018 revenues amounted to 3.6 billion euros.

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