

## **ispace Europe and ArianeGroup and European Space Agency assess Commercial Partnership for Lunar Transportation Services**

**Luxembourg, December 10** – ispace Europe (ispace EU), the European subsidiary of ispace, inc., and ArianeGroup have been selected by the European Space Agency (ESA) to participate in a pilot phase aiming to establish commercial partnerships in Europe for lunar transportation and exploration. ESA Director General, Josef Aschbacher, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on Wednesday, November 24, with ispace EU and ArianeGroup. This marks the official start of the pilot phase.

During this phase, the ispace EU-ArianeGroup partnership will undertake business, technical and socio-economic evaluations of their lunar transportation service, which will ultimately be presented to an ESA evaluation panel; the companies are seeking a decision from ESA by Summer 2022. If endorsed by the Panel and further confirmed by ESA Member States, ispace EU and ArianeGroup could become a vetted candidate to transport ESA payloads to the Moon.

Under the terms of the MOU, ispace EU intends to provide over 15 kg of lander payload capacity or 5 kg of rover capacity to ESA on its lunar lander for future lunar missions from 2024 onwards. The mission would be based on the Arianespace lunar rideshare ‘Highway to the Moon’ launch service using Ariane 6. ArianeGroup would support ispace EU through its mission assurance activities and leverage its experience in qualifying space transportation systems.

Building upon an already strong partnership between ispace EU and ArianeGroup, this collaboration further demonstrates the intention for ispace EU and ArianeGroup to continuously identify opportunities to cooperate on lunar exploration efforts that meet the needs of the European market. Currently, ArianeGroup is supplying key propulsion components for ispace’s Series 1 lunar lander, which is planned for launch on its first mission in the second half of 2022<sup>1</sup>. The lander is currently undergoing final assembly, integration and testing in collaboration with ArianeGroup in Lampoldshausen, Germany.

### **Comments**

- **Josef Aschbacher, Director General, ESA:** “The signature of this MOU will allow ESA to act as a partner and technical adviser to Industry, one of the key objectives of ESA’s Agenda 2025. The Agency will support ispace Europe and ArianeGroup by assessing the objective and feasibility of their ambitious project, aiming to provide the European market with integrated and trusted lunar delivery solution, and accelerate the lunar research and business ecosystem in Europe.”
- **André-Hubert Roussel, CEO, ArianeGroup:** “ArianeGroup is pleased to leverage its experience in space transportation system qualification to the benefit of the ispace lander mission, and to jointly propose this Commercial Partnership to ESA to fly their lunar mission on Ariane 6. This would further extend our existing collaboration on ispace lander propulsion and lander integration. Working closely with a creative startup to accelerate their project and benefit from their complementary lunar ambition is one of the pillars of ArianeGroup’s strategy for the future of European access to space.”
- **Julien-Alexandre Lamamy, Managing Director, ispace Europe:** “ispace is currently assembling and testing the flight model of its M1 lunar lander with ArianeGroup in Germany. This is a first such spacecraft being built in Europe. ispace looks forward to sustaining the partnership with ArianeGroup and having its future Series 1 landers bring European instruments and equipment to the Moon to solidify Europe’s leadership in lunar exploration.”

**ArianeGroup (<https://www.ariane.group/>)**

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. The joint venture, equally owned by Airbus and Safran, employs approximately 7500 highly qualified staff in France and Germany 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 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 revenues amounted to 2.7 billion euros in 2020.

**ispace, inc. (<https://ispace-inc.com/>)**

ispace is a lunar exploration company with over 160 staff and offices in Japan, Europe, and the United States. ispace builds small commercial lunar landers, aiming to provide a high-frequency, low-cost delivery service to the Moon. Aspiring to be a gateway for private sector companies to bring their businesses to the Moon, ispace has also launched a lunar data business concept to support companies with their entry into the lunar market. The company's first lunar mission is planned for 2022<sup>ii</sup>. Both ispace, inc., and ispace EU were awarded contracts to collect and transfer ownership of lunar regolith to NASA, and ispace EU was selected by the European Space Agency (ESA) to be part of the Science Team for PROSPECT, a program which seeks to extract water on the Moon.

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<sup>i</sup> Current plan as of December 2021.

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