



Welcome to the first Space update, an overview of some of the space highlights of the past few weeks.

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## The ESA publishes a tender for lunar activities

The ESA is launching a tender on the 15th of March 2023 for :

Entrepreneurs with promising business ideas that would benefit from Moonlight's lunar communications and navigation services and which address relevant needs of downstream customers/users on the lunar surface and down on Earth. This includes:

- Attractive market opportunities and customer/user engagement
- Commercially viable service concepts
- Technically feasible solutions
- Added value of Moonlight's lunar communications or navigation services
- Motivated teams with business and domain expertise

Relevant customer/user communities include lunar users that benefit from Moonlight-enabled services, terrestrial service providers, and terrestrial end-customers/users.

The ESA will offer Enabling Studies to selected business ideas, providing:

- Zero-equity funding of up to 200,000 Euro per study
- Personal ESA consultant
- Technical & commercial guidance
- Access to our network of partners
- Credibility of the ESA brand

## The Exploration Company raises €40,5M

The Exploration Company has secured €40.5M in Series A funding led by EQT Ventures and Red River West.

The company is developing a reusable space capsule called Nyx that will be used to fly science missions, resupply space stations, and, in time, hopefully, host crewed missions.

This latest round of funding will be used to **commercialize the maiden full-scale prototype of Nyx**, finalize and launch a **second capsule demonstrator**, and expand its workforce.

## ArianeGroup and Arianespace

### A new CCO for Arianespace

Effective January 16, 2023, **Steven Rutgers** became the new Chief Commercial Officer of Arianespace. Prior to joining Arianespace, Rutgers was the VP Sales of Hiber, an IoT Satellite solutions provider startup. Given his experience with large customers served by the satellite industry, he can be expected to reshape Arianespace's commercial strategy to **mitigate the loss of customers that followed the failure of VEGA-C and Ariane 6 delays.**

### Ariane 5 and Ariane 6: what is up

The Ariane 5 heavy launcher, in pre-retirement, should have its last flight in April 2023 to launch the JUICE (Jupiter Icy Moons Explorer). The JUICE probe has left Europe for Kourou, French Guiana, in January 2023.

January 20, 2023: Successful firing test of the Ariane 6 upper stage at Lampoldhausen, testing site of the DLR (German Space Agency)

<https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7023313266080641027/> (video)

### An explosive end of year for VEGA-C

Following the failure of VEGA-C's first commercial launch on December 20, 2022, Arianespace and the ESA appointed an **independent inquiry commission** to look into the reasons for failure, and the measures necessary to resume VEGA-C flights while guaranteeing safety and reliability.

The inquiry commission is co-chaired by the Inspector General of ESA (Professor Massimo Trella) and the Chief Technical Officer of Arianespace (Pierre-Yves Tessier).

The failure occurred following the nominal ignition of VEGA-C's second stage engine (Zefiro 40). A decrease in pressure led to the decision to destroy the launcher.

**VEGA-C is grounded until further notice**

## Discoveries and scientific developments

### James Webb Telescope

The James Webb telescope has detected a new extremely small main belt asteroid, under 1km in length. It is the smallest object observed by the James Webb Telescope to date (the main asteroid belt is located between Mars and Jupiter). This detection happened following a failed observation of a known asteroid within the belt: “Our results show that **even ‘failed’ Webb observations can be scientifically useful**, if you have the right mindset and a little bit of luck,” Thomas Müller, astronomer..

### Spaceport Esrange Inauguration

January 13, 2023: Inauguration of the first spaceport on European mainland, at Kiruna in Sweden. This spaceport will support and strengthen Kourou Spaceport offer. Its northern position is an undeniable advantage for the launch of satellites to high inclination orbits.

Esrange will be used by ArianeGroup for tests on its Themis reusable launcher project. The demonstrator arrived at Kiruna in January 2023.

The first launches from Spaceport Esrange could start in end 2023/ early 2024 (negotiations are underway between the Swedish Space Corporations and multiple partners).

## Fun Facts

### The Satellite Industry Playlist

Via Satellite published the *Satellite Industry's 2022 Playlist*, with the most played Spotify songs of key actors in the satellite industry.

You will be happy to learn that Stephane Israël's (Arianespace CEO) favorite song is “Romeo and Juliet” by Dire Straits

<https://www.satellitetoday.com/business/2022/12/16/spotify-wrapped-in-space-the-satellite-industrys-2022-playlist/>