Airbus is committed to innovation; it is the backbone of its ongoing success and the key to its future. Through innovation, and out-of-the-box thinking, Airbus is leading the way to address the challenges met by the aviation industry in a rapidly changing world. As part of the company’s drive to bring the fastest delivery of the most valuable innovations to market, Airbus has a well-established strategy aimed at introducing new technologies, agile methods and a variety of prototyping capabilities.

For Airbus, collaborative spaces and prototyping labs organised in global networks are a strong lever to identify value adding innovations to bring them quickly to market, for the benefit of our customers. Having observed the rise of rapid prototyping in companies and start-ups outside the aviation industry, Airbus nurtures such practices within the company and takes inspiration from MIT’s “fab labs” or fabrication laboratories to create its own innovation space, Airbus ProtoSpace.

ProtoSpace provides Airbus employees and teams an inspiring environment and prototyping tools to accelerate the evaluation of new ideas.

ProtoSpace consists of two kinds of areas:

- **Design places**, in which employees can brainstorm on future concepts and develop them. The rooms are designed to foster creativity and cooperation.

- **Prototyping labs**, in which they can bring their concepts to life by accessing IT and electronic shop, exploring emergent technologies such as 3D scanners, virtual reality headsets, augmented reality and much more, as well as workshops where users can 3D print and use more traditional tools to create prototypes quickly.

All activities related to Augmented & Virtual Reality (so called Mixed Reality) is managed by the HoloAcademy, a specific lab of the ProtoSpace. This HoloAcademy has developed a specific network within Airbus in order to give access to the Mixed Reality.
technologies to all Airbus entities that may benefit from it (training, troubleshooting, manufacturing...)

ProtoSpace also aims to connect employees with renowned entrepreneurs and innovators from across the world through regular conferences on outstanding projects and breakthrough topics, to stimulate new thinking and new ideas, as well as to capture additional potential for Airbus.

ProtoSpace is also the home of the "SPRINT teams" that work over a period of 100 days on a dedicated project according to the "agile method". Their way of working in isolation aims at boosting the development of specific solutions by a tag team.

The strength of ProtoSpace is to rely on the talent of employees, their expertise, knowledge and curiosity and, most importantly, on their entrepreneurial spirit. Airbus considers it vital to be innovative, agile and efficient while preserving the high level of quality required in its products, all of this in face of shorter development times. ProtoSpace is symbolic of the company’s original pioneering spirit, as it enables incremental innovation and the capturing of potentials and trends in all types of industries working with new technologies.

The first ProtoSpace pilot was put together in only six months and inaugurated in February 2014 in Toulouse. Since then, the Toulouse ProtoSpace has been used by several tens of thousands of employees across the company and several thousands of parts have already been designed and produced. A ProtoSpace network is currently being set up: ProtoSpaces in Filton (UK), Hamburg, Bremen & Ottobrunn (Germany), Getafe (Spain), Toulouse, Saint Nazaire & Nantes (France) are already operational and to come Bangalore (India), Mobile (US) and Manching (Germany) Others sites are considering opening a ProtoSpace and the network will continue to grow. All the sites share the same single identity and principles to further enable cross-functional and cross-national collaboration.