

## Press Release

SPACE SYSTEMS

### **ESA and Airbus Sign Partnership Agreement for new ISS commercial payload platform Bartolomeo**

Public-private partnership sets framework for launch and operations of the Bartolomeo payload platform in 2019

Airbus to invest around €40 million

Additional payload resources and All-in-One Space Mission Service will boost commercial exploitation of the ISS

Noordwijk/Netherlands, 7 February 2018 - The European Space Agency (ESA) and Airbus have signed a commercial partnership (PPP) agreement for construction, launch and operations of the commercial "Bartolomeo" platform. Airbus' new external payload hosting facility will be attached to the European Columbus module of the International Space Station (ISS) from mid-2019.

The agreement defines the roles and responsibilities of the two PPP partners, with Airbus investing around €40 million into the development, construction and launch of this innovative platform, and ESA providing Bartolomeo's installation on the ISS. Bartolomeo will be launched in the unpressurized compartment of an ISS supply vehicle and installed using the ISS robotics system and an extra-vehicular activity. Airbus is then responsible for platform operations and payload integration.

These new, commercially available opportunities are open to users world-wide, coming from areas including Earth observation, technology demonstrators, astro- and heliophysics, material science, new space flight applications and commercial missions.

"Our role is to make access to low-Earth orbit as easy as it possibly can be and open up the ISS to a global user community," said Oliver Juckenhöfel, Head of On-Orbit Services and Exploration at Airbus. "We are creating a cost and time efficient way for institutional and private organizations to bring their experiments into space as external payloads. We can get them launched just 18 months after signing a contract. With our All-in-One Space Mission Service, the Bartolomeo users can concentrate on their payload, while we take care of everything else, from launch and installation, to in-space operations, communication links and even all the way to returning the experiment to Earth if it is required," he continued.

"We are extremely pleased to have confirmed this agreement, as it is a major step towards an increased commercial use of the Space Station," said David Parker, Director of Human and Robotic Exploration at ESA. "The ISS is one of humanities' most exciting research

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facilities, and with Bartolomeo and Airbus' unique service concept, we will be able to offer more capacity to more users from more domains in the very near future."

Named after the younger brother of Christopher Columbus, the Bartolomeo platform will offer 12 payload slots on the outside of the Columbus module. The growing number of commercial space users for payloads in the 100kg class is driving demand. The payloads do not require hands-on maintenance by astronauts and can be operated outside of the ISS.

The platform development has recently passed the preliminary design review and is on track for launch in May 2019. First payloads are then expected to be installed in the second half of 2019. Key to offering a service for smaller payloads is the General-purpose Oceanering Latching Device (GOLD) – a new attachment mechanism for payloads of up to 125kg and 0.5 m<sup>3</sup> developed by Airbus' partner Oceanering Space Systems in Houston, Texas. The two companies are also working on the system to attach the platform to the Columbus module using ISS robotics.

Notes for editors: You can download photos, videos, footage, infographics at:  
[https://comms.airbus.com/linkshare.html?sh=4057f2bf\\_cead\\_421c\\_85cb\\_08e883d73438.EYXINYYRRIfTBOo0\\_vZ18tN0QFC0F5nhIEUcxguYzRzY](https://comms.airbus.com/linkshare.html?sh=4057f2bf_cead_421c_85cb_08e883d73438.EYXINYYRRIfTBOo0_vZ18tN0QFC0F5nhIEUcxguYzRzY)

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### About Airbus

Airbus is a global leader in aeronautics, space and related services. In 2016, it generated revenues of € 67 billion and employed a workforce of around 134,000. Airbus offers the most comprehensive range of passenger airliners from 100 to more than 600 seats and business aviation products. Airbus is also a European leader providing tanker, combat, transport and mission aircraft, as well as one of the world's leading space companies. In helicopters, Airbus provides the most efficient civil and military rotorcraft solutions worldwide.

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