

Press Release

Airbus Foundation launches youth development programme in Kenya

Nairobi, Kenya, 10 February 2018 – The Airbus Foundation, together with its partners – The Little Engineer and The Travelling Telescope – has launched the Airbus Little Engineer programme in Kenya. The goal of the initiative is to encourage students between the age of 10 and 16 to understand and embrace technology, and ignite passion that could grow into an exciting career in the fields of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics.

In the spirit of “think global, act local”, the Airbus Foundation is working with The Travelling Telescope, a local organisation founded by Susan Murabana and Daniel Chu Owen that helps to encourage both children and adults to learn more about astronomy.

Since its launch in 2012, the Airbus Little Engineer programme successfully positioned itself as an effective vehicle for discovery-based learning, working to enlighten and empower youth in the areas of science and technology through robotics and aerospace.

Held in partnership with the M-PESA Foundation Academy, the workshop challenged close to 30 Kenyan students to carry out a simulation of a launch mission to space. It focused on introducing students to the world of space exploration and enhancing their understanding of both the benefits and applications of space technology. Over the course of four hours, students assembled and launched a rocket, set up a base and established communications.

“We want to support and work with Kenyan youth whose innovative and high-tech spirit is getting stronger with many small and medium sized companies, social entrepreneurs and local non-profit organizations,” said Andrea Debbane, Executive Director of the Airbus Foundation. “The Airbus Little Engineer programme helps to facilitate access to STEM skills which are crucial in solving the complex problems of today. I would like to thank all partners for joining efforts and making this project possible in Kenya.”

“We are very excited to be partnering with the Airbus Foundation and The Travelling Telescope. The Airbus Little Engineer initiative fits well into how we approach education at the M-PESA Foundation Academy where we focus on leadership, technology, entrepreneurship training and co-curricular activities alongside academic learning,” said Les Baillie, CEO of the M-PESA Foundation.

Like in many African countries, in Kenya the youth will be the driving force behind sustainable growth across the country. According to the UN, in Kenya the small and medium-sized enterprises play a key role in the economic development, contributing 33.8% of GDP and 81.1% of employment opportunities. Most of these enterprises are run by young people aged between 18 and 35. Therefore, investment in education and training is essential in building an educated and skilled workforce. With the Airbus Little Engineer initiative, the Airbus Foundation aims at supporting the countries’ efforts in creating a sustainable pipeline of talent for Africa.

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About the Airbus Foundation

The Airbus Foundation, chaired by Tom Enders, CEO of Airbus, includes Airbus, Airbus Helicopters and Airbus Defence and Space as founding and contributing members. It is the company's vehicle for corporate philanthropy, using the group's resources, aeronautic and space products, competencies, diverse workforce and culture for driving innovation to address societal issues. In particular, the Foundation supports the global humanitarian community and inspires and prepares young people for the challenges of tomorrow. Since its launch in May 2008, the Airbus Foundation has facilitated more than 60 relief or goodwill flights to numerous destinations around the globe. More information can be found at <http://company.airbus.com/company/Foundation.html>.

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