

# ECSECO Best Paper Competition

## 1. Timeline

20 May	Call for papers open
05 August	Closure of the application period
16 August -10 September	Selection of the winners
17-19 November	Presentation of the papers at Space Tech Expo Bremen 2026

## 2. Rules and definitions

- 2.1. Author is a person who significantly contributed to the production of a research publication.
- 2.2. Applicant is a person who submits a paper for the competition. Applicant must be an author of the submitted paper.
- 2.3. Only one submission is allowed per applicant.
- 2.4. Submission is a research paper submitted for the competition by an applicant.
- 2.5. Submission may have a few co-authors but only one of them may submit it during the competition.
- 2.6. Applicant must be an active member of the European Centre for Space Economy and Commerce (the application is continuously open)
- 2.7. There are two competition categories:
  - a. Space economy
  - b. Space business and commerce
- 2.8. Each applicant can submit a paper in only one category.
- 2.9. The same submission cannot be submitted in both categories by two different applicants.

## 3. Formal requirements

- 3.1. Paper length should be no more than 6'000 words
- 3.2. Paper should lead to a conclusion and do not present ongoing research project.
- 3.3. Paper must be a result of an original work.
- 3.4. Paper must follow academic ethics (no plagiarism allowed, etc.)
- 3.5. Citation style – common practice (APA, MLA, ...).

## 4. Topics

- 4.1. Space Economy – actors, value-chains, macro-economic trends
- 4.2. Economic models for monitoring/measuring the economic spillovers of the space activities
- 4.3. Analysis of Emerging space markets by space sector or geography
- 4.4. Future space applications for the upstream and downstream domains
- 4.5. New “business models” of Newspace SMEs/start-ups
- 4.6. Innovative ideas for attracting and sustaining private VC funding for European space companies
- 4.7. Long -term trends in commercialisation of space technologies for in orbit satellite servicing, active debris removal mission, in space assembly and manufacturing, in-space robotics and In Situ Resource Utilization.
- 4.8. Innovative ideas for increasing the competitiveness of European space companies (LSE, midcaps, SMEs, startups, etc.)

## **5. Evaluation:**

- 5.1. There shall be a single jury for both categories.
- 5.2. Minimum of 3 s in the jury.
- 5.3. Evaluation method will depend on the number of submissions.
- 5.4. Before the review, all the papers will be anonymised by ECSECO Secretariat, which is not part of the evaluation jury.
- 5.5. Scoring criteria:
  - a. Originality: The paper should present new and innovative ideas, or new ways of looking at existing ideas, that make a significant contribution to the field of the category.
  - b. Relevance: The paper should address an important research question or problem that is relevant to the category and the broader scientific community.
  - c. Methodology: The paper should clearly explain the research methods used, including any experiments, data analysis, or other techniques.
  - d. Clarity on the State of the Art: The paper should be well-written and easy to understand, with clear and concise language and a logical structure and provide background information on the State of the Art of the topics of the paper.
  - e. Results: The paper should present clear and well-supported results that demonstrate the validity of the research findings.
  - f. Conclusions: The paper should draw appropriate conclusions based on the research results and provide insights into the implications and potential applications of the findings.
  - g. Citations: The paper should cite relevant previous research and demonstrate a clear understanding of the existing literature in the field of the category.
  - h. Contribution: The paper should make a significant and original contribution to the field of the category and demonstrate the potential for future research and development.
  - i. Ethics: The paper should adhere to ethical standards and guidelines for research, including issues such as informed consent, confidentiality, and data protection.

## **6. Jury**

The Jury for the 2026 ECSECO Best Paper Competition will consist of:

- 6.1. Vito Albino
- 6.2. Aleksejs Klokovs
- 6.3. Victor Dos Santos Paulino

## **6. Awards**

The ECSECO Award for the 2 winners consists of a free accommodation in Bremen (3 nights) and participation at Space Tech Expo Bremen 2026 with the opportunity to present their paper at the ESA Booth. In addition, a potential speaking opportunity at the Space Economy Days 2027 in Paris can also be considered, although cost reimbursement will not be possible here.

For questions, please contact us via email under: [ecseco@esa.int](mailto:ecseco@esa.int)

Done at Vienna, 18.05.2026  
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c/o European Space Policy Institute