



Through CRIDA, its R&D subsidiary

## **ENAIRe launches the third edition of the Business Ideas Competition in Air Traffic Management, aimed at students, university graduates and entrepreneurs**

- Enrique Maurer, CEO: "The main goal is to promote innovation and support the development of initiatives that create value in the field of air transport"
- The five ideas selected will enter an incubation phase, with personalised mentoring to aid their development and culminating in a business plan. At the end of the phase, the best idea will be awarded €6,000
- The top three ideas will receive prizes of €5,000, €3,000 and €1,000
- The winning business plan will develop a Proof of Concept and may be awarded an additional €10,000 in funding
- The registration period is open until 31 January

### **Madrid, 5 December 2024**

ENAIRe, Spain's national air navigation manager, is launching the third edition of the Business Ideas Competition in Air Traffic Management through CRIDA, its subsidiary specialising in Research, Development, and Innovation. This contest seeks to promote creativity, talent and entrepreneurship in the key sector of air traffic management (ATM), providing a platform to turn initial ideas into real projects that contribute to the advancement of the industry.

The registration period will be open until 31 January 2025 at 23:59 (CET) and is aimed at undergraduate or master's students, university graduates, doctoral students and entrepreneurs with innovative proposals related to air traffic management. ENAIRe remains committed to promoting young talent

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Campezo, 1 - 28022 Madrid. Spain. T. +34 912 967 551/53

[E\\_prensa@enaire.es](mailto:E_prensa@enaire.es) [X@ENAIRe](https://twitter.com/ENAIRe)

**PRESS RELEASE**





and attracting disruptive ideas that provide real solutions to the current and future challenges of the sector.

“The main goal of this competition is to foster innovation and support the development of initiatives that create value in the air transport sector, promoting the creation of an innovative ecosystem that enhances the competitiveness and sustainability of ENAIRE and the sector”, said its CEO, Enrique Maurer.

### **Selection Committee and Awards**

The Business Ideas Competition will have a Selection Committee responsible for evaluating each proposal based on its feasibility, innovation, potential impact, and alignment with ENAIRE’s strategic goals. The top three projects will receive monetary prizes of €5,000, €3,000, and €1,000 for first, second, and third place, respectively.

Additionally, the Committee will select two further proposals that, along with the three winners, will advance to an incubation phase. During this period, between March and May 2025, project owners will receive personalised and group mentoring sessions. These sessions are designed to help participants refine their ideas, structure their business plans and prepare them for implementation in a real environment. The best idea at the end of this phase will be awarded €6,000.

At the end of the incubation phase, the idea selected for the proof of concept will be eligible for an additional €10,000 prize, divided into two milestones.

- 1) Successful completion of the proof of concept as per the established criteria: €5,000.
- 2) Establishment of a company to develop and commercially exploit the proof of concept: €5,000.

This recognition aims to encourage the transformation of ideas into solid proposals that are scalable and professionally applicable in real-world settings.

### **Impact of previous editions**

The first two editions of this competition were highly successful, featuring a large number of innovative proposals noted for their creativity and practicality. The winner of the inaugural edition in 2022 was U-MICROMETEO,

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[E.prensa@enaire.es](mailto:E.prensa@enaire.es) [@ENAIRe](https://twitter.com/ENAIRe)





which proposed the use of a network of drones at varying altitudes to improve micro-scale weather forecasting. Various applications were proposed, such as using it to detect wind shear at airports or in urban environments to ensure safe drone operations. Eduardo Sánchez Ayra (A330/350 pilot and associate professor at the Polytechnic University of Madrid) and Javier Diana López (aeronautical engineer) created this winning idea.

In the second edition, held in 2023, Rodríguez Martínez, Lorena Otero Cerdeira, Rubén Fernández Boullón, Manuel Alonso Carracedo and Antonio Adrián González Pedrouzo designed the winning idea, *AirEmpires: Sky Management*, a real-time strategy game that can be played on the website that combined air traffic management with construction and expansion, *Age of Empires* style, aimed at educating younger audiences about the air navigation system.

### Open innovation at ENAIRE

This Ideas Competition is part of *ENAIRE Open Innovation*, an initiative that promotes the concept of open innovation. This approach seeks to harness external talent by fostering synergies with universities, research centres, startups, and entrepreneurs from within and beyond the sector.

In addition to the Business Ideas Competition, *ENAIRE Open Innovation* also engages in other activities such as the Technological Challenge Competition and an acceleration programme for startups. These initiatives reflect ENAIRE's commitment to attracting and nurturing innovative talent in a constantly evolving environment.

"Air transport faces complex challenges that require innovative solutions. This is why, through this project, we want to open the doors to external talent and seize the opportunities that arise from collaborating with creative and entrepreneurial minds", says José Miguel de Pablo, CRIDA's director.

### How to participate

Participants must submit their applications through the competition website [ideas.enaireopeninnovation.com](https://ideas.enaireopeninnovation.com). The site contains all the necessary information on the competition rules, selection process, and key dates.

The deadline for submissions is 31 January 2025 at 23:59 (CET) and the proposals selected will be announced in February 2025.

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[E\\_prensa@enaire.es](mailto:E_prensa@enaire.es) [X@ENAIRe](https://twitter.com/ENAIRe)





### About CRIDA

CRIDA is a non-profit economic interest group established by ENAIRe, the Technical University of Madrid (UPM) and Ingeniería y Economía del Transporte, S.A. (INECO) to improve the efficiency of the air traffic management system in Spain through R&D projects.

In collaboration with ENAIRe, CRIDA identifies problems, proposes innovative solutions and facilitates their implementation, contributing to the advancement of air navigation on a global scale.

### About ENAIRe

ENAIRe is the air navigation service provider in Spain.

As a company of the Ministry of Sustainable Transport and Mobility, it provides air traffic control services during the en route and approach phases of all flights to and from Spain and overflights. In addition, it manages communications, navigation and surveillance services from ENAIRe in the airspace and the entire AENA airport network in Spain and provides aerodrome air traffic control services in 21 airports, including the busiest.

ENAIRe is the fourth largest European air navigation service provider, and it is a member of international partnerships A6 Alliance, SESAR (Single European Sky ATM Research) Joint Undertaking, SESAR Deployment Manager, iTEC, CANSO (Civil Air Navigation Services Organisation) and collaborates closely with ICAO (International Civil Aviation Organization).

ENAIRe has received the highest score in Europe on the aviation safety key performance indicator for four years in a row. It has also been awarded the EFQM 600 Seal for its safe, efficient, innovative and sustainable management of air navigation services.



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