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BRIDGING THE VALLEY OF DEATH – A MUCH NEEDED HANDSHAKE BETWEEN PRIVATE
AND PUBLIC ACTORS.

Abstract

In the development of innovative products at the forefront of technology a concept such as the Valley for Death implies the period of time between the initial investment by the company in the development of a technology and the successful uptake of this technology by the market. Pushing the incorporation of space data and information as well as transfer of technology in non-space markets requires a certain level of support from public entities.

Currently, the ESA Space Solutions Ambassador network consists of eleven Ambassadors from eight different ESA Member States: Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Italy, Norway, Poland, Portugal and the UK. Together with ESA and the local representatives, the Ambassadors work to raise awareness and inform stakeholders of the potential of space to drive innovation in the application domains. Their secondary role is to inform businesses about ESA BASS programme opportunities, and to support the access of the intended beneficiaries (companies or academia which apply) to the BASS programme. Supporting this endeavour also requires a handshake between public and private actors due to the type of financing available from public actors. Indeed, the higher the revenues of a company applying to a project, the lower the contribution from ESA.

In this analysis we will first assess the types of funding set out by ESA TIA department, then analyse the national funding mechanisms and private investment opportunities in a case study of the United Kingdom and finally present recommendations on what would make a successful handshake between public and private actors.