



Winners of the *Digital Sky Challenge* announced

For immediate release

09 December 2019

Brussels, 09 December 2019: The winners of the aviation challenge themed as *Digital Sky Challenge*¹ were announced at the awards ceremony as part of the SESAR Innovation Days² on 4 December in Athens.

Jointly organised by the SESAR JU & ACI EUROPE and hosted by Athens International Airport, the *Digital Sky Challenge* took place on 2-4 December in a dedicated airside facility of the airport. The event brought together 52 young tech-talents from 11 European countries competing in 12 teams to create breakthrough prototype solutions to address 3 different challenges: 1. Streamlining the passenger experience, 2. Improving the Environment, 3. Enhancing safety – with the support of several key partners³.

The teams pitched and demoed their solutions to a distinguished judging panel⁴ which selected the winning teams based on four criteria: level of innovation, business value, design and overall quality of the prototypes.

PASSENGER EXPERIENCE CHALLENGE: INNOV'ATM

The winning team⁵ was **Innov'ATM**, who came up with an innovative app to reduce the stress of travelling while improving airline punctuality. The app helps to track passengers with their consent, so that airlines, airports and ATC know where they are. It offers clear benefits which are marketable and doable.

SAFETY CHALLENGE: JBM

The winning team⁶ was **JBM**. With no prior aviation background, the winning team successfully developed from scratch a safety-net capable of analysing distances between aircraft in order to alert of and thus avert potential incidents.

ENVIRONMENT CHALLENGE: ECO-TRAVELLERS

The Environment challenge award⁷ went to **Eco-Travellers**. The team developed a tool that allows passengers to select the best and most green mobility option, integrating multiple modes of transport. The tool took into account existing systems and carbon offsetting schemes.

SPECIAL RECOGNITION AWARDS

Both Honeywell & Airbus selected the **JBM** team, who was also the winner of the Safety challenge. They were impressed by the novelty and usefulness of their separation management tool. Innaxis gave a special recognition to **AerLabs** for its AI-based solution that forecasts weather disruption in order to enable airlines to better access the probability of making flight cancellations.

The solutions that have been generated are now open for further development.

Florian Guillermet, Executive Director of SESAR JU concluded: *"Congratulations to all the winning and participating teams in the Digital Sky Challenge - it was truly inspiring to see how much innovation could be achieved in only 48 hours! It clearly demonstrates the amazing talent pool that European aviation has at its disposal. Industry is already expressing an interest in the solutions so I am confident that this is not the end but the beginning of an exciting journey for our winners!"*

Olivier Jankovec, Director General of ACI EUROPE said: *"Hats off to the winners of the Digital Sky Challenge for delivering in just 48 hours truly innovative solutions that can help advance airport operations – with tangible benefits for passengers, the environment and safety. I have been truly impressed by the agility and creativity of Innov'ATM, JBM, Eco-Travellers and AerLabs. I hope their solutions will soon make their way into fully developed and marketed tools and wish them every success for the future."*

Dr. Yiannis Paraschis, CEO of Athens International Airport said: *"Our highest respect to the winning teams of the Digital Sky Challenge. They gained the admiration of the jury, but they also attracted the interest and attention of highly important aviation stakeholders, with the degree of innovation, and overall quality of their solutions. We feel extremely proud that Athens International Airport was the first airport site to host the Digital Sky Challenge and indeed privileged to have been able to contribute to the "reinvention" of aviation, through this dynamic and innovative 48-hour "digital sprint" that united the aviation industry on our premises".*

ENDS

Notes to Editors:

¹ Find out more about the Digital Sky Challenge [here](#) & check out the Twitter hashtag **#DigitalSkyChallenge**.

² Learn more about the SESAR Innovation Days [here](#).

³ Airbus, Air France, Avinor, BeMyApp, CANSO, EASA, EUROCONTROL, Foundation, Frankfurt Airport, Frequentis, Groupe ADP, IATA, Innaxis Research Institute, Honeywell, Lufthansa, Météo-France, Météorage, MetSafe, OpenSky Network and SITA.

⁴ **Giancarlo Buono**, Regional Director Safety and Flight Operation for the European region IATA; **Léopold Viroles**, Data4Safety Lead Analyst EASA; **Maria Mavrogeni**, Digital Marketing Specialist Athens International Airport; **Miriam Le Fevre**, Programme Manager COOPANS/SESAR JU; **Nicolas Warinsko**, General Manager of SESAR Deployment Manager; and **Philippe Merlo**, Director European Civil-Military Aviation EUROCONTROL.

⁵ The laureates won a cash prize of €2,000 (Athens International Airport) together with other prizes, including flight tickets worth of €2,500 (Air France); 1-day flight simulator in Frankfurt Airport (IATA); 5 mini Google homes (MetSafe); tickets to the annual OpenSky Workshop (OpenSky Network); 1-month hosting at Found.ation's headquarters in Athens and mentorship – onsite and/or mobile (Found.ation) & invitation of one team member to the CANSO ATM Gala dinner on 11 March 2020 in Madrid and invitation of all team members to present the winning solution at the CANSO booth during the 2020 World ATM Congress.

⁶ The laureates won a cash prize of €2,000 (Athens International Airport) & €2,000 (ACI EUROPE) together with other prizes, including €2,500 Miles & More related promotion codes, worldshop vouchers (Lufthansa); invitation to the 2020 High-Level Conference on Environment on 28 April in Brussels (expenses covered by EUROCONTROL); 1-month hosting at Found.ation's headquarters in Athens and mentorship – onsite and/or mobile (Found.ation) & invitation of one team member to the CANSO ATM Gala dinner on 11 March 2020 in Madrid and invitation of all team members to present the winning solution at the CANSO booth during the 2020 World ATM Congress.

⁷ The laureates won a cash prize of €2,000 (Athens International Airport) together with other prizes, including Amazon vouchers worth of €2,500 (SITA); dinner in Vienna to present the solution to Frequentis Management Team (all expenses covered by Frequentis); tickets to the SAFE 360° Conference (EASA); 1-month hosting at Found.ation's headquarters in Athens and mentorship – onsite and/or mobile (Found.ation) & invitation of one team member to the CANSO ATM Gala dinner on 11 March 2020 in Madrid and invitation of all team members to present the winning solution at the CANSO booth during the 2020 World ATM Congress.

Photos of the Digital Sky Challenge Awards ceremony can be downloaded [here](#).

About SESAR JU

As the technological pillar of the Single European Sky initiative, SESAR aims to modernise and harmonise air traffic management in Europe. The SESAR Joint Undertaking (SESAR JU) was established in 2007 as a public-private partnership to support this endeavour. It does so by pooling the knowledge and resources of the entire ATM community in order to define, research, develop and validate innovative technological and operational solutions. The SESAR JU is also responsible for the execution of the European ATM Master Plan which defines the EU priorities for R&D and implementation. Founded by the European Union and Eurocontrol, the SESAR JU has 19 members, who together with their partners and affiliate associations will represent over 100 companies working in Europe and beyond. The SESAR JU also works closely with staff associations, regulators, airport operators, airspace users and the scientific community.

Learn more about SESAR:

www.sesar.eu

www.sesarju.eu

About ACI EUROPE

ACI EUROPE is the European region of Airports Council International (ACI), the only worldwide professional association of airport operators. ACI EUROPE represents over **500 airports** in 46 European countries. Our members facilitate over 90% of commercial air traffic in Europe: **2.3 billion passengers, 21.2 million tonnes of freight and 25.7 million aircraft movements** in 2018. In response to the Climate Emergency, in June 2019 our members committed to achieve **Net Zero** carbon emissions for operations under their control **by 2050**, without offsetting.

Learn more about ACI EUROPE:

www.aci-europe.org

About Athens International Airport

Since March 2001, Athens International Airport has welcomed more than 305 million passengers and over 3.5 million flights, creating significant benefits for tourism, the national economy, and Athens as a destination. In terms of traffic, 2018 was a historic best performance year for the airport, with 24.14 million passengers and growth continuing dynamically for a sixth consecutive year in 2019. Having earned multiple significant international distinctions and awards through its eighteen years of operations, AIA continues, during 2019, its investment programme of aesthetic, functional and operational enhancements at its premises. Today, with more than 300 companies and 13,000 employees, the Athens airport community constitutes one of the biggest employment engines in Greece.

Learn more about Athens International Airport:

www.aia.gr

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