1. **What is the purpose of ESA’s ‘SpaceShip EAC’ NPI Program?**

   ESA’s SpaceShip EAC NPI Program supports work carried out by universities and research institutes on advanced terrestrial technologies with potential space applications relevant to human space exploration in Low Earth Orbit (LEO) and Beyond Earth Orbit (BEO), in particular in lunar vicinity and human surface habitats.

2. **Who is eligible to apply for EAC’s NPI Program?**

   Applications can be submitted by universities or research institutions which are able to award a doctoral title and which are based in:
   - one of ESA’s 22 member states (Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom);
   - Canada or one of the EU states that have a Cooperation Agreement with ESA or are in the accession process (Bulgaria, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Slovakia and Slovenia).

   The nationality of the PhD student/Post Doc should preferentially be of an ESA or EU member state.

3. **What funding is available?**

   The program can co-fund research up to 50% or €30,000 per year, for a maximum of three years for a doctorate degree or two years for post-doctoral investigations. Under certain circumstances, the duration can be extended, but the maximum total funding ceiling of €90,000 will not be adjusted.

4. **What other support does ESA provide?**

   ESA provides the following:
   - **Technical Support**: Once invited to submit a full proposal, NPI participants will be assigned an ESA expert (Technical Officers – TO) with whom they can discuss proposal concepts and verify their potential for space applications. For successful applicants, the TO will also help connect the instructor/student with relevant expertise within ESA.
   - **Access to ESA research facilities**: NPI participants are able to use ESA research facilities (either at the ESTEC site in the Netherlands or at EAC in Germany) for a minimum of 6 months up to 12 months – this period can be split across the duration of the project. Applicants should contact their assigned TO for further information.
   - **Networking**: NPI participants will be able to search for industrial partners for further cooperation and build ‘innovation networks’ through ESA links.
5. **How do I apply and what is the review process?**

Interested parties should submit a short summary (maximum of two pages using the template provided) of the proposed research by email (eacnpi@esa.int).

Summaries will be reviewed and successful applicants will be invited to submit a full proposal (maximum 10 pages). To support the development of full proposals, ESA will assign a Technical Officer to each institution who will provide space-specific expertise and verify the potential of the proposed research for space applications.

6. **The template for the short summary contains a section for the details of a PhD/Post-doctoral candidate – do I need to provide the details of this candidate at this stage?**

If possible, yes, but this is not mandatory for the submission of a short summary – the suitability of the candidate will not be considered as part of the review of short summaries. However, if invited to submit a full proposal, the details of the proposed candidate should be included, because the suitability of the candidate will be considered as part of the review. In exceptional circumstances proposals for which a PhD/Post Doc candidate has not yet been identified might be considered. Note that non-EU students can be accepted, but there is a strong preference for ESA/EU member state citizens as candidates.

7. **How will the final selection be made?**

A selection board will meet periodically and evaluate the full proposals. The selection board will include representatives of management as well as members with relevant technical knowledge.

Proposals will be evaluated based on their innovative potential, as well as the potential to spin-in terrestrial technologies in space applications. The suitability of the candidate will also be taken in consideration.

8. **Who do I contact if I have further questions?**

For further information and/or clarification, please contact SpaceShip EAC’s NPI Program by email using eacnpi@esa.int.