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## **P R E S S   R E L E A S E**

# **Rewarding the best innovative ideas for EGNOS**

**Satellite navigation is already changing our lives. The search is on for new ideas that could use the European Global Navigation Satellite System (GNSS) to improve life further. The GSA is offering a prize for the best proposal that uses the new EGNOS 'Safety-of-Life Service'.**

The European Satellite Navigation Competition (ESNC) awards the most innovative proposals for new applications in the sector. This is the eighth edition of the competition and the fourth year that the European GNSS Agency (GSA) has offered a Special Topic Prize for the most promising application that uses EGNOS, the European Geostationary Navigation Overlay Service.

### **EGNOS: For safety-critical applications**

EGNOS, Europe's satellite-based augmentation system, improves the accuracy and reliability of GPS signals across Europe. The GSA's Annual Special Topic Prize awards innovative application ideas that make use of EGNOS signals or services.

Entrants should submit their idea before 30 June 2011 on the ESNC website (<https://login.galileo-masters.eu>). Positioning should be a key enabler of the application and EGNOS should be the primary means of positioning.

2011 is already a landmark year, as the EGNOS 'Safety-Of-Life Service' was declared fully operational for civil aviation on 2 March. "This is essential when satellite-based navigation is used for applications where lives are at stake," explains Carlo des Dorides, Executive Director of the GSA, "and it is now fully available, free of charge and here to stay."

### **From innovative ideas to products**

Winners of the GSA's Special Topic Prize for EGNOS will have the opportunity to realise their idea at any incubation centre in the EU for six months (with the option of an additional six months). Ideally, applications this year should leverage the new 'Safety-of-Life Service' and adapt it in innovative ways that have both social and business potential.

Since the GSA Prize's debut in 2008, three previous winners have taken their ideas forward with the help of a business incubator.

The first winner, UK-based Sci-Tech Systems, used the award to complete a working prototype of their location system for people who are lost overboard at sea. Their

proposal for a person-overboard (POB) system that uses EGNOS's positioning accuracy also won the Galileo Masters prize, the ESNC's top award.

The German firm Nogago won the 2009 prize with an EGNOS navigation application for smart-phones. 'Nogago Outdoor' can be used offline, with free and up-to-date satellite positioning data. Users are charged for the digital maps but the free smart-phone app surpassed 15,000 downloads within days of publication.

Last year's award went to Austrian start-up Mobilizy for their 'Wikitude Drive' mobile augmented reality navigation system. It provides smart-phones with driving instructions overlaid on real-time video footage. EGNOS will improve accuracy and speed up positioning signals.

This is also the fourth year that the GSA has sponsored the ESNC awards as 'Co-operation Partner'. Last year's competition was launched at the Galileo Applications Days event, co-organised by the GSA and held in Brussels in March 2010.

The ESNC 2011 kick-off event will be held at the Institute of Engineering and Technology (IET) in London on 11 May 2011.

The GSA, a European Community agency, works with the European Commission on a range of activities aimed at helping European entrepreneurs and businesses – especially high tech small-to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), business incubators and related networks – commercially exploit EGNOS and Galileo. Promotional activities, such as the ESNC, help ensure that European industry maintains a competitive edge in the global satellite navigation marketplace.

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**For more information:**

Donna Reay, Head of Communication and Information  
European GNSS Agency (GSA)  
Rue de la Loi, 56 (L-56, 08/81), B-1049 Brussels, Belgium  
Tel: +32 2 298 52 10, Fax: +32 2 296 72 38, Mobile: + 32 498 98 52 10  
[donna.reay@gsa.europa.eu](mailto:donna.reay@gsa.europa.eu)  
[www.gsa.europa.eu](http://www.gsa.europa.eu)  
[www.egnos-portal.eu](http://www.egnos-portal.eu)

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