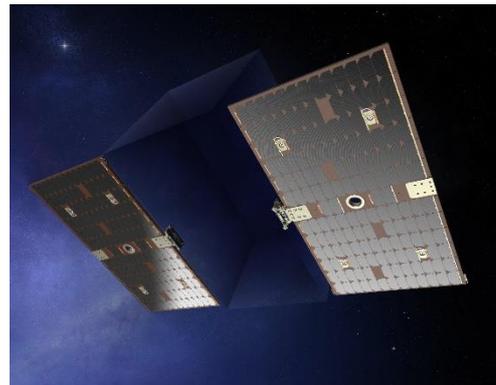


Sparkwing solar panels selected to power Aerospacelab's first Very High Resolution satellite

Leiden, March 31, 2021 – By selecting Sparkwing for their first Very High Resolution (VHR) mission, the Belgian space company Aerospacelab is the launching customer for the novel off-the-shelf solar panels. The satellite is a first step towards Aerospacelab's VHR constellation and will be equipped with two standardised and readily available Sparkwing solar arrays to perform its Earth Observation task in space.

Sparkwing is an Airbus product to power small satellites. Aerospacelab selected the single-deployable 1070x570mm wing configuration from the Sparkwing catalogue. A set of two wings for the first flight model and a structural model for early system level testing will be provided. Like all Sparkwing models, the wings include the substrates with photovoltaic assemblies (PVA), hold-down and release systems and deployment mechanisms.



“Sparkwing’s solution matches Aerospacelab’s mission to design and manufacture high-performance, innovative and affordable ESPA¹-class satellites. Most importantly, Aerospacelab and Sparkwing share a pragmatic approach to the development of Newspace missions, leading to a very smooth collaboration. We are looking forward to this mission and are thrilled to play a role in Sparkwing’s success.” said Benoit Deper, CEO and founder of Aerospacelab.

“Our Sparkwing solar array portfolio is tailored to the ‘new space’ community, yet built on forty years of experience gained from delivering power to international space missions. So, the best of both worlds. Aerospacelab’s openness to a commercial off-the-shelf product confirms that our approach in standardising solar panels is what the smallsat industry is looking for. We are excited to play a part in Aerospacelab’s journey into making the VHR constellation a success”, said Rob Postma, CEO of Airbus Defence and Space Netherlands.

Sparkwing (<https://www.sparkwing.space>) is the world’s first commercially available, off-the-shelf solar array for small satellites. It is optimised for Low Earth Orbit missions that require power levels between 100W and 2000W. The Sparkwing catalogue offers more than thirty different panel dimensions, which can be configured into deployable wings with one, two or three panels per wing. Sparkwing is a product developed by Airbus Defence and Space Netherlands B.V., with the support of the Netherlands Space Office and ESA.

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¹ The Evolved Expendable Launch Vehicle (EELV) Secondary Payload Adapter (ESPA) is an adapter to launch small satellites into space.

About Airbus Defence and Space Netherlands

Airbus Defence and Space Netherlands B.V. is a supplier of high-tech products and services for the international aerospace industry. The portfolio of Airbus Defence and Space Netherlands B.V. includes solar arrays, launcher structures, instruments & services, thermal-mechanical products and communication & control systems. The Leiden-based company employs more than 325 experienced professionals. <http://www.airbusds.nl/>

Airbus Defence and Space Netherlands B.V. is part of Airbus, a global leader in aeronautics, space and related services. In 2020, it generated revenues of €49.9 billion and employed a workforce of around 131,000. Airbus offers the most comprehensive range of passenger airliners. Airbus is also a European leader providing tanker, combat, transport and mission aircraft, as well as Europe's number one space enterprise and the world's second largest space business. In helicopters, Airbus provides the most efficient civil and military rotorcraft solutions worldwide. <https://www.airbus.com>

About Aerospacelab

Aerospacelab is a Belgian company founded in 2018 by Benoit Deper, currently employing more than 70 people. Aerospacelab has expertise both in hardware (satellites, subsystems, and components) and in data processing (extraction of actionable insights from satellite data). With two main constellations in the works, Aerospacelab ambitions to enhance efficiency across various markets, by making geospatial intelligence affordable and actionable. <https://www.aerospacelab.be/>

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