

Smallspark Space Systems and Leaf Space enter agreement to offer cutting edge ground station services to the UK

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Cardiff-based aerospace company Smallspark Space Systems has entered into an exciting agreement with Leaf Space, an Italian provider of ground segment services to satellite operators and launchers, to bring cutting edge ground station services to UK Government and private sector clients.

Smallspark and Leaf Space plan for a partnership to deliver joint bids for projects with the UK Government and other commercial operators in the UK, with the aim of becoming the primary contractor for services related to supporting the UK governments ambitions with OneWeb, the proposed 650-satellite constellation which will provide worldwide satellite internet and broadband services to people across the globe.

This major proposed collaboration changes the landscape of UK aerospace, with both companies working together to provide UK-based services for OneWeb, including the development of new, low-cost, rapidly deployable ground stations, expansion of ground segment coverage to new geographies as well as operating & maintaining OneWeb's existing ground station networks.

At a time when the economy has contracted, and many businesses are facing difficult challenges, such positive news will provide a major boost for the UK Space sector.

If successful, the bid will kickstart rapid development across the space value chain, creating new skilled jobs, providing massive opportunities for investment across the sector, with new sites proposed across the country, and exploring the potential of manufacturing opportunities in the UK.

Commenting on this agreement, Joe Ward, Chief Executive Officer of Smallspark Space Systems said:

"Working with Leaf Space is an exciting opportunity for both Smallspark and UK Space as a whole; with the UK's goals of dramatically expanding its reach into space, we're keen to help support the governments ambitions wherever possible. With both satellite constellations and native launch capabilities, it is essential the UK has reliable, agile ground station services to support applications requiring high bandwidth & low latency communications, driven by adoption of 5G technologies via terrestrial & satellite networks. Italy has always been a pioneer in the global space market, and we're thrilled to lead the path to strengthen UK-Italy ties."

Jai Dialani, Sr. Business Developer on behalf of Leaf Space, said:

"Partnership with Smallspark Space Systems is a valuable opportunity for our company to start a collaboration with a pioneering launch service provider. We will provide an immediately available ground segment service capability to broaden their portfolio. This will help potential customers find a complete solution for their missions, assuring a reliable and consistent end-to-end service. Thanks to the continuous work effort to expand and develop our products, customers will be able to find a ground segment solution in the early stages of the mission while choosing Smallspark Space Systems launch solutions, also providing an easier and quicker commissioning phase for their satellites."

"Leaf Space has been offering tailored ground segment services to its customers, including Launch and Early Operations (LEOPS), daily passes, pass distribution and operational conditions, resulting in a perfect solution for in-orbit demonstrations (IOD) or other missions such as serving broadband constellations requiring high contact time and low latency, typical elements of our distributed ground station network.", added Jai, "The proprietary ground segment infrastructure provides redundancy and reliability during the LEOP mission phase, and the versatile service can be easily integrated into third-party service bundles. The two companies are planning to conduct integration and testing activities that will ensure the ground segment service provision is operational on a rapid schedule before OneWeb's satellite launches."

About Smallspark Space Systems

Smallspark Space Systems is a UK Research, Development, and Innovation venture, producing the next generation of aerospace technologies. The company, in collaboration with its partners aims to become the world leader in access to space and artificial intelligence technologies.

The primary goal of the company is to significantly reduce the barriers to accessing orbit, they are redefining the UK space sector by bringing to market a new generation of low-cost, eco-friendly engines and propulsion systems, making cost-effective and environmentally friendly access to space more readily available and lowering the barriers to space entry for UK groups seeking space access. The award of three prestigious grants this year brings this ambition one step closer to reality.

About Leaf Space

Leaf Space operates and continues to develop a solid, secure and reliable distributed ground station infrastructure for a world where Space is for everyone, up there to be discovered and explored with small, versatile and cost-effective satellites. The company's unique concept is focused on creating satellite telecommunications as-a-service, in order to assist companies with their satellite operations by managing, procuring, building and maintaining the entire ground segment system through a complete set of services, including time-shared access to the ground, customized telecommunication solutions, ground station procurement, consultancy and backup services. The outsourcing strategy for space-to-earth communications significantly reduces costs and development time for any satellite operator who relies on us, turning the massive upfront capital expense of ground segment into a predictable recurring cost. Customers include commercial and institutional satellite operators in Europe, Americas, Asia and Australia as well as numerous Space Agencies. For more information, please visit www.leaf.space.

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