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PRESS RELEASE

**Space Alliance: Aristotle University and the National Observatory of
Athens Sign Memorandum of Cooperation**

Thessaloniki, 25 June 2026

Aristotle University and the National Observatory of Athens signed a Memorandum of Understanding and Cooperation yesterday, Wednesday, 24 June 2026, at the premises of the National Observatory of Athens, establishing a new framework for collaboration in research, education, and the development of innovative applications.

Professor Kyriakos Anastasiadis, Rector of Aristotle University, and Dr. Spyridon Vasilakos, Director and Chairman of the Board of Directors of the National Observatory of Athens, signed the Memorandum.

The agreement lays the foundation for the development of joint initiatives in the fields of Space Technologies and Applications, Astronomy and Astrophysics, Atmospheric and Environmental Physics, Satellite Remote Sensing, and Climate Change, leveraging the expertise and research infrastructure of both institutions.

The Department of Physics of Aristotle University and the Institutes of Astronomy, Astrophysics, Space Applications and Remote Sensing (IAASARS), as well as Environmental Research and Sustainable Development (IERSD) of the National Observatory of Athens, will play a central role in this collaboration. Both organizations possess significant research and educational infrastructure, creating favorable conditions for further strengthening scientific research in Greece.

The scope of cooperation includes the implementation of joint research projects, the publication of scientific papers, the exchange of expertise and technology transfer, as well as the co-organization of conferences, workshops, seminars, and other scientific activities.

At the same time, the agreement places particular emphasis on education and the mobility of students and researchers. It provides opportunities for undergraduate and postgraduate theses, as well as doctoral dissertations, to be jointly supervised by researchers from the National Observatory of Athens and faculty members of the Department of Physics at Aristotle University.

Within the framework of the Memorandum, the two institutions will also explore the establishment of an Inter-Institutional and Interdepartmental Master's Programme. They further express their intention to develop a joint English-language postgraduate programme in Space Technologies and Earth Observation Applications, with the support of the European Space Agency (ESA).

In addition, the agreement provides for the joint preparation and submission of research and development proposals to national, European, and international funding programmes, with particular emphasis on the applications of space technology in astronomy, atmospheric monitoring, and climate change mitigation.

The event was honored by the presence of the Deputy Minister of Development, Mr. Stavros Kalafatis. Representing Aristotle University at the signing ceremony were the Vice Rector for Research and Innovation, Professor Ioannis Rekanos, the Chair of the Department of Physics of the School of Sciences, Professor Alexandra Ioannidou, and Professor Kleomenis Tsiganis of the Department of Physics.

Professor Kyriakos Anastasiadis, Rector of Aristotle University, stated:

“Today, we are not simply signing a Memorandum of Cooperation. We are creating the conditions for a new national momentum in the fields of space, research, and innovation. The collaboration between Aristotle University and the National Observatory of Athens brings together two historic public institutions that share a common vision: the development of a strong knowledge ecosystem linking education, research, and the technologies of the future.

Aristotle University already maintains a significant and multifaceted presence in the field of space and space technologies. Through its Observatory, its Astronomical Station in Cholomontas, Halkidiki; pioneering student and research teams developing nanosatellites; PeakSat for optical satellite communications; AcubeSAT, an innovative biological laboratory mission in orbit; the participation of its faculty members in the European planetary defense missions Hera and RAMSES; and the Sat4Forest programme, which uses satellite remote sensing to support the protection and sustainable management of Greek forest ecosystems.

Through these activities, our University demonstrates in practice that its engagement with space is not a future ambition but an established reality. Our participation in numerous programmes and initiatives of ESA, NASA, and other international organizations confirms that Aristotle University is currently one of the most active academic institutions in Greece in the rapidly expanding field of space research and technology.

Building on this strong foundation, we are working together with the National Observatory of Athens to develop an international postgraduate programme in Space

Technologies and their Applications—a programme that we aspire to make a reference point for the whole of Southeastern Europe.

Within this context, our collaboration with the National Observatory of Athens gains even greater significance. Through our complementary initiatives, the current momentum creates a unique opportunity—an opportunity for Greece to evolve into an educational and research hub for the space sector. If we achieve this goal, our country will, for the first time, offer a comprehensive academic pathway in the field of space: from undergraduate studies to postgraduate education, doctoral research, extensive opportunities for joint research initiatives and shared research infrastructures, access to competitive European funding, the overall enhancement of Greece’s position on the European and international research map, and participation in international missions.”

Photographs are attached.

We kindly request that this event be published, broadcast, and covered by the media.