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Aena Ventures, Aena's open innovation program aimed at attracting startups worldwide, has concluded its Open Call phase with over 500 proposals submitted. This number is more than double the submissions in the first edition in 2020/21, which received 254 applications. A total of 370 startups from 40 different countries, including Brazil and the UK, where Aena operates, have submitted proposals.

This year, Aena Ventures focused on five major challenges: 'Airport destination,' 'Data-driven airport,' 'Airport efficiency,' 'Virtual airport,' and 'Greener airport.'

Aena is currently evaluating the applications to select the best proposal for each challenge. In October, the acceleration phase will begin, providing each winning startup with a EUR 50,000 prize. Over the course of six months, the startups will collaborate with various teams within the company to plan and execute a pilot project in a real airport environment, followed by a deployment proposal.

Upon completing the acceleration process, participating startups will present their results in a Demo Day. If the pilot test and deployment proposal are successful, they could secure a subsequent contract with Aena worth up to EUR 2 million to implement their project on a larger scale across the airport network. The second edition of Aena Ventures is part of Aena's Strategic Plan for Innovation and Digital Transformation, aimed at fostering innovation, leveraging technology, and embracing new business models to shape the airport of the future.

Bengaluru International Airport (India) is partnering with Industry.ai and Nvidia to integrate a computer vision-based AI platform into its operations at Terminal 2. The AI platform will track queues at various checkpoints in the terminal, analyse and resolve congestion, and monitor abandoned baggage while alerting security staff to suspicious movements. The system will connect to video feeds from 500 cameras in Terminal 2 and use Industry.ai's data analytics portal to produce up to 12 outcomes based on the video feeds, helping identify bottlenecks and security concerns. The deployment is the first of its kind at the airport, and the service will be operated in the cloud.

Hamad International Airport in Doha (Qatar) has introduced passenger digital assistance kiosks in collaboration with Atos and Royal Schiphol Group. These kiosks aim to enhance the passenger experience by providing easy access to information, assisting with navigation, and offering live video calls to customer service agents. The kiosks are multilingual with 20 language options and provide information related to flights, airport services, retail, F&B outlets, and passenger events at the airport. This initiative is part of Hamad International Airport's digital strategy to create a more seamless experience for travellers.

SITA's 2023 Passenger IT Insights report highlights passengers' growing focus on optimizing their airport experience when booking flights. Delays and cancellations have become significant concerns for passengers, leading them to embrace smart technologies for a smoother journey. Biometric identification has gained acceptance, with passengers desiring a frictionless airport experience. Sustainability is a key area of interest, with passengers valuing technologies supporting eco-friendly

initiatives by airlines and airports. Intermodal travel is on the rise, with passengers expecting technology to streamline the entire door-to-door journey. These insights emphasize the importance of technology in enhancing the travel experience and reducing environmental impacts.

Schiphol Airport in the Netherlands is collaborating with baggage handlers to test three new lifting aids aimed at improving the working conditions of baggage employees. The lifting aids being tested are the Turnable CLS, the e-CLS, and the e-CLS Launcher. These tests will assess whether the aids effectively lighten the workload of baggage workers, whether further development is needed, and their suitability for purchase and installation. Schiphol is also working on introducing properly functioning lifting aids across all baggage hall work locations by the end of April 2024.

Airport operator Avinor and Vanderlande have joined forces in an innovation partnership to explore automating the final stage of baggage handling. Vanderlande will provide two innovative solutions, BAGLOAD for robot loading and FLEET Batch for container transport, which will be tested at Oslo Gardermoen Airport. The aim is to enhance baggage handling efficiency and reliability, addressing a process that has remained unchanged for decades and incurs significant costs. Avinor secured funding and selected Vanderlande through a tender process, with the project running from August 2023 to November 2024. The partnership's goal is to automate labor-intensive and costly aspects of baggage handling, benefiting both the industry and workers. The initial stages involve technology development and prototyping, followed by a three-month trial at Oslo Airport. The outcome is expected to positively impact airlines, handling companies, and manual laborers in the industry.

Cologne Bonn Airport (Germany) has transitioned its diesel-powered ground fleet to Neste MY Renewable Diesel, a renewable fuel made from 100 percent renewable raw materials.

This switch is particularly significant for vehicles like the airport's fire trucks that cannot easily be electrified. The move is expected to save nearly 3,000 tons of greenhouse gas emissions annually compared to fossil diesel use. By adopting Neste MY Renewable Diesel, the airport reduces greenhouse gas emissions by up to 90 percent over the fuel's life cycle compared to conventional diesel. The airport also offers Neste MY Sustainable Aviation Fuel to airlines, contributing to its sustainability goals. The transition required no modifications to the existing diesel vehicles as Neste MY Renewable Diesel is a drop-in replacement for fossil diesel.

Reportedly, starting from September 2023, Shirahama Airport in Japan intends to implement autonomous electric vehicles for performing runway inspections. This initiative comes in response to an existing scarcity of labour. These vehicles will employ AI technology to assess images of the runway, effectively identifying issues like cracks and faults. #1200.GSE

Airservices Australia has placed an order for four Oshkosh Airport Products Striker Volterra 6x6 Aircraft Rescue and Fire Fighting (ARFF) hybrid electric vehicles, which will be used at the new Western Sydney International Airport (WSI) opening in 2026. These vehicles feature advanced hybrid-electric drivetrains, enabling zero-emissions operation and uninterrupted power supply. WSI is a significant infrastructure project aimed at supporting economic growth, local employment, and sustainability initiatives. These vehicles align with the airport's commitment to sustainability and emergency response capabilities, offering improved acceleration and advanced firefighting capabilities.

Publisher's note: The articles in this special report, compiled for **inter airport Europe**, are samples from the biweekly **Momberger Airport Information** newsletter, published since 1973. The newsletter is an advertising-free, global airport news service that consists of 8 modules and allows subscribers to customize their own newsletter package. The items in this report represent only a small sample of **Momberger Airport Information**. The modules that make up the biweekly newsletter are Airport Development (DEV), Calendar of Events (CAL), and the subscriber-selectable modules Airport Operations (OPS), Ground Support Equipment (GSE), Air Traffic Services (ATC), Consultant & Contractor / Sustainable Aviation (CON), Airport Information Technology (AIT), and Maintenance Base & FBO (MRO). For more information and to order an annual subscription, please visit www.mombergerairport.info