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Ascendance Scales Production with €12.2M Investment, Advancing Hybrid-Electric Aviation as Credible Decarbonization Path

Toulouse, France – April 8, 2026 – [Ascendance](#), a European pioneer in hybrid-electric technologies for aviation, announced a €12.2M investment through France's [France 2030 – Première Usine](#) (First Factory) program. This support enables Ascendance to reach an industrial inflection point: transitioning from prototype development to series production of its **STERNA Hybrid Pack** propulsion system, including its battery solution, with aircraft assembly to follow. The investment represents a decisive industrial milestone for structuring a decarbonized and sovereign aerospace sector in Europe.

With this four-year funding commitment, Ascendance enters a new development phase: **industrial scaling**. The company will structure its production capabilities in France and accelerate investment to meet growing demand in both civil and defense markets.

Beyond the funding, this decision signals strong support from France for a next-generation aviation sector—one that is both sustainable and sovereign. It also validates the technological choice Ascendance has pursued since its founding in 2018: **hybrid-electric is recognized as the most credible pathway for decarbonizing civil aviation in the near and medium term**, while meeting performance, endurance, and resilience requirements for defense applications.

From Prototype to Series Production

At the core of this scaling: [STERNA Hybrid Pack](#), the modular hybrid-electric propulsion system developed by Ascendance. Built on over four years of bench testing and protected by several patents, STERNA delivers significant reductions in fuel consumption and CO₂ emissions. The system combines next-generation batteries with proprietary energy management software called the *Hybrid Operating System*.

This system is designed to equip regional aircraft and defense drones alike. It forms the technological foundation for **ATEA**, a vertical takeoff and landing aircraft currently in the final integration phase—a low-carbon alternative to light helicopters for regional transport (passengers, cargo, medical, security missions).



A Clear Industrial Roadmap to Market

With France 2030 support, Ascendance has established a concrete, multi-phase production strategy.

Phase 1: Production Capacity – Ascendance will accelerate establishment of **production capacity for STERNA** within its current facilities at Muret L'Herm airfield, enabling equipping of initial civil aircraft programs and defense drones.

Phase 2: Factory Expansion – Over the medium term, Ascendance plans **creation of a new dedicated manufacturing facility to increase production volumes and progressively integrate assembly of its civil and defense aircraft**. This scale-up will leverage optimized industrial processes combining automation, robotics, and advanced manufacturing methods.

Market Impact – This structured roadmap positions Ascendance to meet growing demand across civil and defense sectors, while demonstrating industrial maturity and manufacturing commitment to operators, partners, and investors worldwide.

A Strong Signal for European Technological Sovereignty

By supporting Ascendance, France accompanies the emergence of an industrial actor positioned on critical technologies for tomorrow's aviation. At a moment when the limits of *all-electric* and uncertainties around hydrogen challenge the sector, hybrid-electric is establishing itself as **an immediately deployable solution to reduce emissions while guaranteeing performance and autonomy**.

This funding is part of a broader strategy to strengthen industrial and technological sovereignty for France and Europe, securing key value chains in high-stakes markets.

"Tomorrow's aviation is not decreed—it is built, industrialized, and it must happen here, in Europe. With France 2030 support, we cross a major milestone. This funding enables us to move from prototype to production. It is a decisive step in building a European hybrid-electric sector capable of responding to both decarbonization and sovereignty imperatives."

— **Jean-Christophe Lambert, CEO, Ascendance**

About Ascendance

Founded in 2018 by Jean-Christophe Lambert, Thibault Baldivia, Clément Diné, and Benoît Ferran, Ascendance designs and industrializes next-generation hybrid-electric propulsion systems to meet the decarbonization and performance challenges of civil and defense aviation, driven by the conviction that hybrid-electric opens a new era of modern aviation. Based in Toulouse – Europe's aerospace capital – and backed by Bpifrance, the France 2030 program, and the Région Occitanie, the startup develops STERNA Hybrid Pack, an innovative dual-use hybrid-electric propulsion system combining performance, range, and emissions reduction. This hybrid propulsion system powers ATEA, a vertical takeoff and landing (VTOL) aircraft designed as a low-carbon alternative to light helicopters for regional air transport – passengers, cargo, medical, and security missions. Ascendance thus carries a dual civil and defense ambition in service of a sovereign aeronautical transition. - www.ascendance-ft.com