UNIVITY press release
Paris, November 18, 2026

UNIVITY selected by the EIC Accelerator to build a European Direct-to-Device solution

Selected as one of the 35 European companies awarded EIC Accelerator support, UNIVITY is eligible for up to €12.5 million in European funding to accelerate the development of its Direct-to-Device technology. Its ambition: to enable telecom operators to develop and offer their own sovereign satellite connectivity services.



As direct connectivity between satellites and smartphones emerges as one of the telecommunications industry's new strategic markets, UNIVITY, a global space connectivity services provider, announces that it has been selected for the European Innovation Council's EIC Accelerator programme. This support will strengthen the Direct-to-Device (D2D) capabilities of its uniShape demonstration programme, marking a decisive step towards the deployment of uniSky, its future commercial infrastructure.

Direct-to-Device: a strategic market dominated by US and Chinese ambitions

Sending a message, making a call or accessing data services from a standard smartphone, without dedicated equipment and even when no terrestrial mobile network is available: this is the promise of Direct-to-Device (D2D), which establishes a direct connection between a mobile phone and a satellite.

For a long time limited to specialised use cases, this market is now accelerating sharply, driven in particular by non-European players that are stepping up investment in spectrum and satellite capacity to develop direct-to-smartphone connectivity. Behind this technological shift lies a strategic question: who will control the space infrastructure on which tomorrow's ubiquitous mobile connectivity will depend?

As telecommunications networks remain critical infrastructure, geopolitical tensions and the risk of technological dependency are reinforcing the need for European alternatives that enable operators to retain control over their services and strategic choices.

A European, neutral infrastructure serving telecom operators

In response to the emergence of large satellite constellations, UNIVITY is championing a different model: a neutral, shared space infrastructure open to telecom operators. Operators will be able to integrate it into their networks using their own 5G spectrum, while retaining control over their offerings, subscribers and network strategy.

Very Low Earth Orbit (VLEO) is the other pillar of this approach. By bringing satellites closer to Earth, it reduces transmission distances, helping establish communications with compact terminals, including smartphones, while keeping latency low. UNIVITY's infrastructure will combine two complementary markets: Broadband, for ultra-high-speed internet from space, and Direct-to-Device, for smartphones.

UNIVITY's ambition is not to become a new mobile operator, but to give operators the means to remain independent in the era of space-based telecommunications.

Alain JULIER, Head of Institutional Partnerships, says: *"Direct connectivity between satellites and smartphones is set to transform the telecommunications market. But one essential question remains: will European operators have to rely on foreign infrastructure to offer these new services to their customers? Our ambition is to provide them with a neutral, open European alternative that allows them to retain control over their networks and customer relationships. With uniShape, we are developing the technologies needed to make this ambition a reality. Support from the European Innovation Council, alongside that of CNES, marks a major milestone in our development."*

uniShape: one architecture for both broadband and smartphones

In 2026, UNIVITY achieved a world first with uniSpark, establishing a bidirectional 5G connection between space and Earth combining onboard regenerative 5G processing, millimetre-wave frequencies and Time-Division Duplexing (TDD). Building on this success, UNIVITY is now preparing uniShape to validate the technologies underpinning its future commercial infrastructure, uniSky.

Its two demonstration satellites, scheduled for launch in the first half of 2028, will aim to validate two complementary capabilities:

- **Broadband:** deliver ultra-high-speed internet connectivity from space, complementing terrestrial networks;
- **Direct-to-Device:** connect standard smartphones directly to satellites, without dedicated equipment.

To this end, the satellites will carry dual-band 5G antennas that have successfully passed their critical design review. The antennas will operate in the 26 GHz band for ultra-high-speed connectivity and in the 2 GHz band for direct connectivity to smartphones.

This dual ambition is supported by complementary public funding: in France, uniShape's Broadband component is co-funded by France 2030 through CNES support; at European level, the EIC Accelerator will strengthen the development of its Direct-to-Device capabilities and the industrialisation of the satellites.

Up to €12.5 million in European funding

The support provided under the EIC Accelerator includes:

- a **€2.5 million grant** to fund uniShape's D2D technology development;
- an **equity investment of up to €10 million** through the EIC Fund, envisaged as part of UNIVITY's next Series B funding round.

As the European Innovation Council's flagship programme, the EIC Accelerator supports European start-ups and SMEs developing breakthrough innovations with strong potential. UNIVITY's selection among the 35 companies chosen is recognition of the potential of its approach in a market that is strategic to the future of European telecommunications.

Interviews

Charles Delfieux, founder and CEO of UNIVITY, is available for interviews on:

- the rise of Direct-to-Device and international competition with Starlink;
- European sovereignty;
- UNIVITY's neutral model serving telecom operators and its technology roadmap, from uniSpark to uniSky.

Click here to access the visuals

About UNIVITY

UNIVITY develops a wholesale space infrastructure that enables telecom operators to offer their customers high-speed, low-latency internet access from space, complementing their terrestrial networks. Leveraging very low Earth orbit satellites and the innovative use of operators' 5G spectrum, the company provides a

high-performance, affordable and sustainable solution designed for both the broadband and Direct-to-Device markets.
www.univity.global

About the European Innovation Council (EIC)

The European Innovation Council (EIC), established under the European Union's Horizon Europe programme, has a budget of €10.1 billion to support breakthrough innovations from early-stage research through to industrial and commercial development. It supports innovative start-ups and SMEs through grants, equity investments via the EIC Fund and business acceleration services designed to help them scale.

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the EISMEA. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.

UNIVITY press contacts
Stéphane Laurain: +33 (0)6 98 58 38 35 – stephane@edifice-communication.com
Ilinca Spita (international media): +33 (0)6 64 75 12 98 – ilinca@edifice-communication.com