



IAGi Accelerator marks a decade of innovation impact as applications for 2026 programme open

- Accelerator directly connects start-ups with Group airlines to test their technologies on real-world operational challenges.
- 10-year anniversary reflects Group's long-standing use of innovation to enable IAG's transformation and scale impact across the aviation industry.
- Programme works closely with Group's corporate venturing arm IAGi Ventures and has led to long-term commercial partnerships between participants and Group airlines.

London, 26 March, 2026 - International Airlines Group (IAG) has opened applications for the 2026 IAGi Accelerator, marking the 10th year of IAG's flagship open innovation programme. Anchored around fast-tracking collaboration between innovative start-ups and IAG's airlines and operating companies, the programme has so far partnered with over 120 companies – including a record 30 in 2025 - to rapidly test and validate their technologies in aviation operational environments.

Founded in 2016, the multi-track innovation programme supports early-stage start-ups with technology solutions at different stages of development, across six focus areas: artificial intelligence (AI), automation and robotics, sustainability and mobility, experiential platforms, connectivity and next generation computing and cybersecurity.

The Accelerator's model is underpinned by engagement with IAG's airlines and operating companies, who identify priority operational challenges that inform scouting for each year's programme and lead the projects with the start-ups. Examples of the solutions being targeted in 2026 include AI-based optimisers for areas such as disruption management, planning and scheduling, drones to rinse down aircraft, and mixed reality solutions to enhance training and remote technical support.

Ignacio Tovar, Group Innovation Director, said: "Over the past decade, the IAGi Accelerator has been fundamental to establishing IAG's role within the aviation industry as a bridge between innovators and operators. The programme offers a unique opportunity for start-ups to work directly with experts across our airlines and operating companies to better understand aviation, validate their technology in complex, real-world environments and explore potential partnerships or commercial opportunities. As the Accelerator enters its 10th year, we want to hear from bold founders and innovative teams looking to gain a deeper understanding of the industry and a platform to scale the impact of their technologies."

Innovation plays a central role in IAG's transformation programme enabling the Group to maximise value and drive greater efficiencies. The Group continually seeks new ways to enhance the customer experience, strengthen operational efficiency and support long-term environmental sustainability.

Over the past decade, several Accelerator participants have formed extended partnerships with IAG, both through investment from its corporate venturing arm IAGi Ventures and forming commercial relationships with different Group airlines, including:



- [Assaia](#) (3rd Cohort, 2018) - A pioneer in using computer vision to optimise airplane turnarounds. The Accelerator was catalytic for the company and led to investment from IAGi Ventures and a partnership with British Airways.
- [Quantum Metric](#) (4th Cohort, 2019) - A platform that identifies and quantifies friction in digital journeys to improve customer experiences. The Accelerator led to a multi-airline contract with Iberia, Vueling and Aer Lingus.
- [Beder](#) (8th Cohort, 2024) - A content creation platform for showcasing travel destinations. Following the Accelerator, the company has continued to work with Iberia to inspire customers and drive new bookings.

Interested start-ups can find out more and apply through the [IAGi website](#). Early applications are encouraged as submissions will be reviewed on a rolling basis, with the final deadline of 14 May 2026.

ENDS

About International Airlines Group

International Airlines Group (IAG) is one of the world's largest airline groups carrying 122 million customers to 285 destinations across 93 countries each year. Its leading airlines in Spain, the UK and Ireland include Aer Lingus, British Airways, Iberia, LEVEL and Vueling. The Group also consists of two complementary businesses: IAG Cargo and IAG Loyalty. At IAG, transformation and innovation enable us to maximise value and efficiencies across the Group. IAGi, the Group's dedicated innovation function, plays a critical role in scouting and accelerating breakthrough technologies that have the potential to reshape aviation.