



Volotea, Air Nostrum and Dante Aeronautical submit a project for a 100% electric aircraft to the EU Recovery Fund

The consortium is seeking EU funding with an expression of interest for CO₂-emission-free transportation.

Zero-emission air transport resulting from aircraft electrification will help speed up the sector's green transition, contributing to the EU's aim of becoming carbon neutral by 2050.

This project also aims to contribute to the growth of Spain's economy, and to its territorial cohesion.

BARCELONA/ VALENCIA/ MADRID 17 MARCH 2021

The consortium formed by Volotea, Air Nostrum and Dante Aeronautical has proposed a fleet electrification project to the Spanish Ministry of Transport, Mobility and Urban Agenda (MITMA) as part of Spain's Support Programme for Sustainable and Digital Transport, one element of its Recovery, Transformation and Resilience Plan. The initiative plans to convert and electrify fleets of short- and medium-haul aircraft with the aim of making regional air transport in Spain more sustainable, contributing to territorial cohesion by improving communications with outlying areas, particularly with the country's islands.

The project proposes to convert and electrify fleets of in-service aircraft, making them 100% electric. The project scope includes the design, engineering and implementation of adaptations needed **to convert small-capacity conventional planes (between 9 and 19 seats)**, by investing in the development of propulsion technologies that use alternative sources of energy to minimise flight emissions. This approach involves a much faster process, avoiding the long and costly development of an aircraft from scratch.

The certification of the first aircraft is planned for 2024. Once this milestone has been reached, an industrial development and deployment process will take place, culminating in versions of several aircraft being fully operational in 2026.

The technical leadership of the project will be assumed by Dante Aeronautical, an airline technology firm with a presence in both Spain and Australia, with expertise in advanced materials manufacturing, aerodynamics and electric powerplant integration.

Volotea and Air Nostrum will participate in the project by supplying market information and, in particular, by contributing their respective technical capabilities. Both airlines hope to become pioneers in the application of this technology on regional routes.

The consortium **has put forward a proposal for a total budget of 42 million euros in response to a call for expressions of interest by the Spanish Ministry of Transport, Mobility and Urban Agenda (MITMA).** The call was made as part of Spain's Support Programme for Sustainable and Digital Transport, one element of the *España Puede* (Spain Can) Recovery, Transformation and Resilience Plan. The consortium's intention is to co-finance the project through this public-private initiative.

National industry

The scope of these projects will impact the entire value chain of an industry that is of enormous importance to the Spanish economy. **This economic potential represents a significant opportunity for the whole Spanish business and innovation network,** not only in the aviation industry, but also in the technology, start-up and mobility sectors, with a powerful knock-on effect on **high-value job creation.** The development of this project will also enable Spanish companies to become global leaders in the development of practical solutions in sustainable aviation, and to become key strategic and environmental players in the aviation industry.

"We started our collaboration with Dante Aeronautical a few years ago, in 2019, and are very proud to see how the project has grown and gained the support of Air Nostrum, another major airline, as well as several other Spanish technology companies. The development of an electric hybrid aircraft will reduce carbon emissions as well as the noise generated by air traffic. It makes complete sense for Volotea to support this project as it is totally in line with our goal of connecting cities that need better services and, in addition, being able to do so in a way that minimises our environmental impact. We are supporting this project by providing Dante with market analysis and technical data. We have also made our engineers and commercial department available to develop this innovative market opportunity together," announced **Carlos Muñoz, founder and CEO of Volotea.**

Carlos Bertomeu, CEO of Air Nostrum, reiterated that the idea of innovation is fundamental to the Valencian airline's identity. *"Air Nostrum is used to participating in European consortia that are working on cutting edge technology. Our technical department has twice been chosen by the European Space Agency (ESA) for projects*

relating to climate change and aircraft satellite navigation. In fact, the first commercial aircraft to land guided solely by signals emitted from space in European history was an Air Nostrum plane at Valencia's airport," explained Bertomeu.

As the leading regional airline in Spain, he felt that Air Nostrum had to be involved in this project and to make an emphatic contribution: *"We are naturally very interested in operating these routes with electric power when the technology is in place. Our engineers and maintenance technicians are really excited about being able to use their experience to help design more sustainable aircraft."*

Miguel Madinabeitia, co-founder of Dante Aeronautical, is enthusiastic about the agreement that has been reached. *"For Dante Aeronautical, this consortium with Volotea and Air Nostrum, two of Europe's leading regional airlines, which aims to develop, integrate and operate electric aircraft, represents a step forward in our vision for a fully electric aviation sector, shaking up the status quo and moving towards more sustainable and cleaner air transport. We are currently working in Australia to integrate this technology in a 9-seater aircraft and hope to obtain certification in a few years' time,"* commented Madinabeitia.

ABOUT VOLOTEA

Volotea was founded in 2011 by Carlos Muñoz and Lázaro Ros, previously founders of Vueling, and is one of the fastest-growing independent airlines in Europe, increasing year-on-year its fleet, routes served, and seats offered. Since its start, Volotea has carried more than 30 million passengers across Europe.

Volotea is based in 17 European mid-sized capitals: Asturias, Athens, Bilbao, Bordeaux, Cagliari, Genoa, Hamburg, Lyon (opening in 2021), Marseille, Nantes, Naples, Olbia, Palermo, Strasbourg, Toulouse, Venice and Verona. Volotea serves 96 cities across 15 countries including Algeria which will be launched in September from France.

In 2020, Volotea signed an agreement with Bureau Veritas, a world leader in testing, inspection and certification, in order to verify the successful implementation of health and hygiene measures. Volotea is the world's first airline to have its preventive measures against Covid-19 audited by Bureau Veritas.

Volotea is becoming a full Airbus carrier in 2021, by renewing part of its fleet with aircraft from the European manufacturer. The airline, which had planned to perform this fleet unification in 2023, has advanced its plans in order to improve its cost base over the next 2-3 years and increase its network offering, with aircraft that have a higher capacity and a longer flying range. The airline plans to operate a fleet of 35 to 39 aircraft in summer 2021 (versus 36 in Summer 2019).

ABOUT AIR NOSTRUM

With over 90 million passengers carried in its 26 years of operation, Air Nostrum is Spain's leading regional aviation company and one of the largest European airlines of its kind. It has an annual turnover in excess of 500 million euros and employs around 1,400 people.

The company was the first Spanish scheduled airline to obtain environmental certification ISO 14001. It has also introduced an Environmental Management System (EMS) for aircraft maintenance operations and passenger air transportation.

Air Nostrum is an exclusive franchisee of the Iberia Group for regional flights. It operates over 200 flights a day on around 120 routes to and from around 50 airports in seven European and North African countries.

ABOUT DANTE AERONAUTICAL

DANTE Aeronautical is a start-up founded in 2018 by Spanish engineers David Doral and Miguel Madinabeitia, with a presence in Spain and Australia. Its vision is to electrify aviation, shaking up the status quo to make the sector cleaner, more sustainable and more efficient.

DANTE was founded to develop a new 19-seat regional hybrid aircraft, the DAX-19 prototype, which the company has been working on over the last three years. Since early 2020, DANTE has also focused on the modification of existing aircraft to convert them to 100% electric power. Recently, DANTE arrived at an agreement with Sydney Seaplanes, an Australian tourist flight operator, to convert their fleet to electric and help them become the first zero-emission airline in the country.