Press release

SiPearl, a Member of the ÆTHER Consortium

Leading European companies in industry, artificial intelligence, cloud computing, and energy are joining forces to build the European continent's AI Gigafactories.

The consortium announces its application for the European Commission's AI Gigafactory call for proposals and confirms that it is in advanced negotiations for the development of its first two European campuses in the Strasbourg region.

Maisons-Laffitte - July 8, 2026 – The European consortium **ÆTHER** today unveils the composition of its founding members and announces its application for the European Commission's forthcoming **AI Gigafactory** call for proposals, to be launched as part of the EU's digital and industrial sovereignty strategy.

Bringing together leading European players in energy, construction, cloud computing, semiconductors, high-performance computing, and artificial intelligence, **ÆTHER** pursues a clear ambition: to demonstrate that Europe possesses all the expertise required to design, build, power, operate, and scale AI infrastructure.

Two Sites for a European AI Gigafactory Project

AETHER Infrastructures, the project company behind the initiative, announces that it has entered into highly advanced negotiations to acquire two industrial sites in the Strasbourg region, which are intended to host AI computing facilities.

Already equipped with the required infrastructure and administrative approvals, the first data center, FR-SXB1, is expected to begin operations during 2027, subject to the completion of the site's acquisition by the end of October 2026. FR-SXB2 is expected to follow a few months later, subject to the completion of its acquisition by the end of December 2026.

With a phased deployment, the two sites will initially provide a combined electrical capacity of 42 MW. Within 12 months of commissioning, the objective is to secure an additional 40 MW of electrical capacity across both sites.

The long-term ambition is to reach a total electrical capacity of more than 400 MW, subject to grid availability and the proposals of RTE, France's electricity transmission system operator, which are currently under review and are expected by the end of July 2026 for FR-SXB1.

Located in the heart of Europe, in close proximity to the European institutions and at the center of the Rhine economic corridor, this dual-campus project is intended to become one of the most advanced artificial intelligence infrastructures on the European continent.

More than an AI Gigafactory, **ÆTHER** aims to develop a European industrial model that integrates high-performance computing, sovereign cloud services, energy recovery, scientific research, industrial innovation, and regional development.

The Project Is Built Around Five Core Commitments

The first commitment is to ensure a net zero land take policy through the use of existing industrial sites.

- **Nhood** is an international real estate solutions operator committed to urban regeneration. It supports property owners, public authorities, and investors in the sustainable transformation of their assets and communities through an integrated services platform that develops mixed-use, value-creating projects rooted in local development dynamics,
- Founded in 1861, **Demathieu Bard** is a leading independent construction and real estate group operating in France, Luxembourg, Switzerland, and North America,
- **Equans** is a global leader in the energy and services sector, with expertise in the design, installation, maintenance, and operation of multi-technical facilities, including electrical and thermal engineering systems and digital solutions,

will build and maintain campuses capable of restoring a productive purpose to existing sites while limiting the environmental impact of these new digital infrastructures.

The second commitment focuses on the reindustrialization of Europe's high-performance computing value chain:

- **2CRSi** is a European manufacturer of high-performance servers and an Elite Partner of NVIDIA and AMD,
- **Axelera AI** is a global leader in AI inference platforms, with its headquarters and engineering operations based in Europe,
- **SiPearl** is a European fabless designer of high-performance, low-power CPUs for supercomputing, artificial intelligence, and sovereign data centers,
- and the consortium's future technology partners,

will contribute to the deployment of tens of thousands of processors and accelerators dedicated to the training and inference of artificial intelligence models. The consortium also intends to provide privileged access to emerging European technologies in order to accelerate their large-scale adoption.

The third commitment is to achieve low-carbon energy across all consortium sites planned in Alsace as an initial step, with the support of the following partners:

- **ÉS Group (Électricité de Strasbourg)**, the leading regional multi-energy provider and a mission-driven company, is committed to strengthening the competitiveness, electrification, and decarbonization of the Alsace region through its wide range of energy activities,

- **Socomec** is a French family-owned industrial group specializing in the availability and performance of critical electrical power systems,
- **Projex** is a French multidisciplinary engineering and critical infrastructure company, specializing in the design and delivery of data centers, as well as in energy performance and building decarbonization,
- **Haffner Energy** designs and supplies solutions for the production of electricity, renewable gases, hydrogen, and sustainable fuels from biomass. With more than 33 years of experience, the company has developed proprietary thermolysis and gasification technologies that provide local, cost-competitive, resilient, and low-carbon energy for critical industrial infrastructure, including data centers,

will support the development of energy generation, storage, and management capabilities, as well as the design of the low-carbon infrastructure required for the project. Collectively, these partners aim to demonstrate that the growth of artificial intelligence can be successfully aligned with the energy transition.

The fourth commitment is based on ensuring full sovereignty over data and its use.

ÆTHER's infrastructure will be operated by European companies.

- **Viridien** is a global leader in advanced technologies, digital solutions, and Earth data, pushing the boundaries of science to help build a more prosperous and sustainable future. **Viridien** specializes in the design, optimization, and operation of high-performance computing infrastructures for scientific computing and industrial-scale artificial intelligence,
- **Dassault Systèmes**, through its OUTSCALE Cloud & AI brand, brings to **ÆTHER** the expertise of a sovereign cloud operator capable of industrializing AI in critical, secure, and fully controlled environments that comply with European requirements, serving regulated organizations,
- and the consortium's future partners,

will contribute their respective expertise in sovereign cloud computing, simulation, scientific computing, quantum computing, and mission-critical digital services.

The fifth commitment is to fully integrate AI computing centers into their economic, academic, and regional ecosystems.

In this context, local authorities—including the Grand Est Region and the Eurometropolis of Strasbourg—have already confirmed their support and their commitment to advancing the consortium's vision. With a strong focus on economic development and attractiveness, job creation, regional reindustrialization, sovereignty, technological excellence, they will play a vital role as key partners in the successful delivery of the ÆTHER project, including through their own future use of its capabilities.

*"Artificial intelligence represents a historic opportunity for Europe's reindustrialization. With **ÆTHER**, we are demonstrating that our continent already possesses all the expertise required to build its own strategic infrastructure,"* said Alain Wilmouth, Chairman of **2CRSi** and initiator of the consortium.

*"As Alsace's regional energy provider, **ÉS Group** supports the **ÆTHER** project and will contribute its expertise in decarbonization and electrification solutions to help deliver it,"* said Marc Kugler, Chief Executive Officer of **ÉS Group**.

*"European sovereignty in artificial intelligence will also depend on our ability to master the energy that powers these critical infrastructures. By joining **ÆTHER**, **SOCOMEC** aims to help build a sovereign, resilient, and sustainable AI Gigafactory model, fully aligned with the requirements of the energy transition,"* said Michel Krumenacker, Chief Executive Officer of **SOCOMEC**.

*"European digital sovereignty can only be sustainable if it is built on efficient infrastructure, designed and developed site by site, region by region. This complementary approach is at the heart of **ÆTHER** Infrastructures: **Nhood** brings its expertise in the transformation and regeneration of existing real estate assets, while **Projex** provides end-to-end design and engineering services for critical infrastructure, combining performance, scalability, and low-carbon, water-efficient solutions. Together with this consortium, we are creating the conditions to enable the deployment of sovereign AI across Europe, support the reindustrialization of our regions, and generate long-term, responsible value,"* said Antoine Grolin, Chairman of **Projex** Group and **Nhood**.

*"As a member of the **ÆTHER** consortium, we are extremely proud to contribute our expertise and play an active role in developing this first AI campus in Europe. Our ambition is to support transformative projects that create lasting value for our clients and the regions they serve. Joining **ÆTHER** is therefore a natural step for us. Contributing to European digital sovereignty while putting our expertise at the service of a major, highly technical, and more sustainable construction project is a challenge that inspires every employee at **DEMATHIEU BARD**. We look forward to meeting it with commitment, reliability, and enthusiasm,"* said Stéphane Monceaux, Chairman of the Executive Board of **DEMATHIEU BARD Group**.

*"**Equans** has placed the energy, digital, and industrial transitions at the heart of its strategy. Drawing on more than 20 years of experience in building data centers across Europe, **Equans** will bring its expertise to design and construct a data center that meets the highest standards of environmental sustainability and performance,"* said Thomas Jung, Deputy Chief Executive Officer of **Equans**.

*"By combining **SiPearl's** high-performance processors with **Axelera AI's** accelerators in **2CRSi's** high-density servers, we will deliver a complete hardware solution capable of handling the most demanding AI workloads—with the added benefit of European sovereignty. We are delighted to play an active role in the **ÆTHER** consortium, which confirms Europe's essential position in the global AI race,"* said Philippe Notton, Chief Executive Officer and Founder of **SiPearl**.

*"**Axelera AI** brings to the **ÆTHER** consortium purpose-built inference solutions that maximize performance while reducing energy consumption as well as capital expenditures (CAPEX) and operating expenses (OPEX). We are proud to join forces with these industry leaders and provide a truly European technology, strengthening Europe's economic and environmental competitiveness. Participating in this initiative is of great importance to us. We believe **ÆTHER** demonstrates Europe's ability to design, power, and operate world-class AI infrastructure—*

from the chip all the way to the AI Gigafactory," said Fabrizio Del Maffeo, Chief Executive Officer and Co-founder.

*"**Viridien** brings decades of experience in designing, optimizing, and operating high-performance computing stacks for scientific computing and AI at industrial scale. Through **ÆTHER**, we will contribute our expertise in full-stack HPC design, workload optimization, and the reliable operation of extremely large-scale systems for demanding clients. This collaboration will help advance sovereign, high-performance AI infrastructure capable of supporting Europe's most complex scientific, high-throughput industrial workloads,"* said Anil Vattalai, SVP HPC & Cloud Solutions at **Viridien**.

*"As the Cloud and AI foundation of Dassault Systèmes, **OUTSCALE** brings to **ÆTHER** unique expertise at the intersection of sovereign cloud, high-performance computing, and mission-critical industrial applications. Our ambition is to enable businesses, public institutions, and research organizations to develop and operate their AI models in high-performance, secure, and sovereign environments that protect data, know-how, and intellectual property. With **ÆTHER**, Europe is equipping itself with a strategic industrial capability to design, host, and operate AI at scale,"* said Arnaud Bertrand, Chief Technology Officer of **OUTSCALE** and Senior Vice President, Cloud R&D at Dassault Systèmes.

*"Artificial intelligence infrastructure requires resilient energy solutions that provide secure access to local, cost-competitive, and low-carbon energy. By joining the **ÆTHER** consortium, **Haffner Energy** is leveraging its biomass-to-energy conversion technologies to support a major European ambition: building AI campuses that combine digital sovereignty, energy sovereignty, and industrial excellence,"* said Philippe Haffner, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of **Haffner Energy**.

The development of **ÆTHER's** first campuses already benefits from the support of leading economic and institutional stakeholders across the Grand Est region. This initial deployment represents the first step in a European network of AI Gigafactories designed to meet the needs of industry, research, healthcare, public services, and businesses across Europe.

Against a backdrop of intensifying global competition, **ÆTHER** is driven by a clear conviction: Europe must not only use artificial intelligence—it must also design, power, host, and operate it on its own soil.

As a candidate for the European Commission's AI Gigafactory call for proposals, **ÆTHER** aims to become the starting point for a true European industrial renaissance, driven by sovereign and sustainable artificial intelligence, rooted in local territories, and designed for deployment across the European continent.

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About... SiPearl

SiPearl is the European fabless designer of secure high-performance energy-efficient CPUs built for sovereign HPC, AI and data centre. These CPUs will help address strategic challenges in the fields of security, defence, medical research, energy, climate and engineering with a reduced environmental footprint.

Featuring 80 Arm Neoverse V1 cores with 61 billion transistors, SiPearl's first-generation CPU, Rhea1, will be released end of 2026. Sipearl's CPUs will equip the two first European exascale supercomputers: Rhea1 will be integrated into the JUPITER machine based in Germany and Rhea2 will be part of Alice Recoque in France.

Supported by the European Union and France, SiPearl employs 200 people in France, Spain, and Italy. Following a €130 million Series A, the company has launched its Series B round.

Funded by
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