



EXFAN

NOVEL RECUPERATION SYSTEM TO MAXIMIZE
EXERGY FROM ANERGY FOR FUEL CELL POWERED
GEARED ELECTRIC AIRCRAFT PROPULSION SYSTEM



PRESS RELEASE

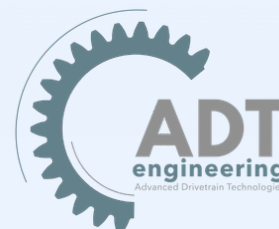
VIENNA AVIATION DAYS 2026 BRINGS TOGETHER EUROPE'S AVIATION LEADERS TO SHAPE THE FUTURE OF SUSTAINABLE FLIGHT

VIENNA, AUSTRIA – JUNE 23RD AND 24TH 2026

The Vienna Aviation Days 2026 (VAD 2026) once again provided a unique platform for researchers, industry leaders, technology developers, policymakers, and European projects to explore the technologies and strategies that will drive the transition towards climate-neutral aviation.

Organized in the framework of the Horizon Europe project **exFan**, the two-day event fostered collaboration between academia, industry, and policymaking, creating opportunities to accelerate the development and deployment of sustainable aviation technologies. Building on the success of previous editions, Vienna Aviation Days 2026 featured increased international participation, exhibitions of state-of-the-art aviation technologies, and discussions on the role of sustainable aviation within Europe's evolving economic, environmental, and geopolitical landscape. The event was designed to strengthen synergies among EU-funded projects, industry stakeholders, and policy initiatives, helping shape a competitive and sustainable European aviation ecosystem.

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DAY 1: FROM DISRUPTIVE TECHNOLOGIES TO FUTURE ENERGY SYSTEMS

The first day of Vienna Aviation Days 2026 focused on the technological foundations of future aviation.

The program commenced with the session Sustainable Propulsion Systems I, highlighting research on disruptive propulsion technologies that have the potential to transform aviation. Presentations examined both innovative concepts and the tools, methodologies, and validation approaches required to bring these concepts closer to practical application.

Here, the first part was about showcasing results of the Horizon Europe Project exFan related to fan & gearbox design and new means of heat exchanger integration for fuel cell electric aircraft. The second part of the session focused on testing infrastructure and the development of related components.

Participants then had the opportunity to engage directly with cutting-edge technologies during the Exhibition Session, showcasing developments and services from across the European aviation sector.





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The exhibition featured innovations ranging from next-generation helicopter engines and hydrogen retrofit solutions to supporting ground infrastructure technologies. During this session, MTU showcased the Next Generation Helicopter Engine, Bosch General Aviation introduced their Hydrogen Conversion of the 916 iS Engine and Rail Tec Arsenal explained more details about their Wind Tunnel. Additionally, a representative of the German Aerospace center presented the Horizon Europe Project FlyEco and ADT Engineering talked about their project on an Aircraft Fast Charger and Hybrid/Electric Aviation Solutions.

The afternoon continued with the session on Powering the Future, dedicated to one of the key enablers of sustainable aviation: Electrical Power.

As aviation increasingly adopts electric and hybrid-electric systems, experts discussed charging infrastructure, airport electrification, energy storage solutions, and the broader challenges of powering future aircraft. The conference concluded with the Special Session on Battery Technologies, providing an in-depth look at one of the most critical technologies for aviation electrification. Participants gained insights into both near-market battery developments and future battery chemistries that could significantly expand the capabilities of electric aircraft. The first day ended with the Evening Event for networking on the 57th floor of the DC Tower. There, the participants shared nice conversations in a comfortable atmosphere with great food.



DAY 2: INDUSTRIAL INNOVATION AND EUROPE'S AVIATION FUTURE

The second day shifted focus towards industrial implementation, manufacturing innovation, and strategic perspectives. The morning began with the session on International Industry, where leading European companies presented developments supporting the transition towards lower-emission aviation. The session highlighted how multidisciplinary collaboration across the aerospace value chain is helping transform research into market-ready solutions.

This was followed by the session on the Austrian Industry, showcasing Austria's strong contribution to aerospace innovation and its important role in shaping the future of sustainable aviation. The session demonstrated how the country's combination of world-class research institutions, highly specialized suppliers, and aviation operators is supporting the development of sustainable aviation technologies and advanced air mobility solutions.





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The dedicated Special Session on Additive Manufacturing explored how advanced manufacturing technologies are enabling the next generation of aviation systems. Presentations demonstrated the pathway from novel materials and manufacturing techniques to high-performance components capable of meeting the demanding requirements of future propulsion systems. The event concluded with the strategic discussion “Sustainable Aviation in a Changing World”, bringing together experts and decision-makers to examine how aviation technologies, industrial competitiveness, sustainability objectives, and policy frameworks can evolve in response to a rapidly changing global environment. During the panel discussion of representatives from Clean Aviation, AZEA, Luchtvaart in Transitie, Austrian and German federal ministries, highlighted the currently developed strategies and frameworks to promote sustainable aviation technologies.

CONCLUSIONS FROM THE EVENT

There is no single solution to decarbonize aviation. Still, future trends of disruptive technologies go increasingly towards hybrid-electric and all-electric aircraft designs. In the short term, SAF will be the go-to fuel to reduce aircraft carbon footprint, but disruptive hydrogen & electric technologies are expected to be implemented commercially after 2035.

To minimize climate impact, not only the reduction of CO₂ emissions, but also Non-CO₂ effects and contrails need to be considered. Non-CO₂ effects can be effectively reduced by optimizing operational measures & air traffic management, aircraft & propulsion systems and alternative fuels.

As a consequence of new propulsion systems, airport operations will change. In the future, high power charging, thermal management and hydrogen to operate will be implemented at airports. Therefore, the infrastructure needs to be adapted to fit all necessary tools to operate sustainable aviation technologies. As a conclusion, airports need energy management systems, stronger grid connections, local energy storage and renewable energy integration. Starting with regional airports, electric aircrafts will be implemented steadily. Testing disruptive technologies is crucial for their development and should already be prepared to address necessary requirements like the correct electrical voltage, power and energy. It is important to do large numbers of test cases. A realistic test setup is therefore essential!

Another aspect that was talked about is industrial cooperation for Austrian research and industry. Sustainability is stimulated by industrial cooperation, as it opens doors for the national supply industry, enhances competition among the national industry and therefore stimulates innovation, research and growth which generates know how, competencies and international competitiveness. In addition to the mentioned topics, special areas like materials, electrical propulsion, batteries, thermal management and many more should be considered to develop disruptive technologies in order to make sustainable aviation happen.





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“ SOME MENTIONABLE QUOTES OF THE VIENNA AVIATION DAYS 2026

Due to the necessity of energy management systems for disruptive technologies, airports will evolve from transportation hubs to integrated energy hubs.

Testing/simulation is mandatory but does not reflect “real” operation conditions - technical issues often emerge many years after Entry into System...

Due to the evolution of materials for Aeroengines, a 50% reduction in fuel consumption was made possible.

DRIVING COLLABORATION FOR LOWER-EMISSION AVIATION

As Europe advances towards its climate neutrality objectives, the aviation sector faces the challenge of balancing environmental responsibility, technological innovation, and economic competitiveness. The Vienna Aviation Days provide a forum where these challenges can be openly discussed and where partnerships can be formed to accelerate progress. By bringing together experts from across the aviation ecosystem, the event aims to strengthen collaboration, promote innovation, and contribute to the development of practical solutions for the future of sustainable aviation.

For more information about the event, visit the [Vienna Aviation Days 2026 website](#).

Previous editions of the Vienna Aviation Days: [2025](#) | [2024](#)



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