



PRESS RELEASE

SACYR ICHALLENGES BOOSTS GLOBAL REACH, DRAWS 82 PROPOSALS FOR ROAD AUTOMATION CHALLENGE

- **The 8th edition of Sacyr's open innovation program saw a 16% increase in proposals received from the innovation ecosystem, with participants from 28 countries.**
- **Artificial Intelligence is solidifying its role as an enabling technology, featuring in almost 35% of the solutions received.**

Madrid, May 4, 2026 - Sacyr has **successfully concluded the proposal submission phase for its road automation challenge**, part of the [Sacyr iChallenges](#) open innovation program.

The 8th edition of the program garnered 82 solutions from innovators worldwide, **marking a 16% increase** over the average applications received in previous editions' challenges.

The 2026 call attracted proposals from 28 countries, with **Europe** accounting for the largest share (74%), followed by **North America** (13%), **South America** (7%), the **Middle East** (3%), and **Asia-Pacific** (3%).

This strong response underscores the **growing international interest and the enhanced maturity of the submitted proposals**, all geared towards impactful infrastructure solutions.

Dirección General de Comunicación:
Tfno.: + 34 91 545 52 94 / 5153
comunicacion@sacyr.com
<https://www.sacyr.com/sala-prensa/nota-prensa>

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"The surge in applications and the heightened technological maturity of the solutions underscore Sacyr iChallenges' vital role as a bridge connecting our business units with the global innovation ecosystem," stated **Patricia Martínez, Sacyr's Chief Sustainability, Environment, and Innovation Officer.**

The challenge, which ran from February 20 to April 17, aimed to **identify deployable solutions leveraging sensors, robotics, drones, and intelligent equipment.** The core objective was to enhance the design, operation, and maintenance of roads, bridges, and tunnels, alongside improving incident management.

Strong International Participation

Spain continues to lead in the number of applications (34%), with Italy following (9%), and a notable presence from **Canada, Sweden, and the United States** (6% each).

This diverse participation reinforces the program's international reach, further establishing Sacyr iChallenges as a leading platform for global collaboration in sustainable and resilient infrastructure.

The Leading Role of Technology

Within the technological landscape of the submitted solutions, **Artificial Intelligence** is gaining significant prominence, now present in nearly 35% of the proposals. This marks an increase of over five percentage points from the previous edition (30%).

Other notable technologies include geospatial systems, digital twins, IoT, sensors, and applied robotics. This comprehensive technological blend underscores the infrastructure sector's accelerating shift towards automation, digitalization, and data-driven decision-making.

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Mature Solutions Ready for Deployment

The 2026 edition is notable for the advanced maturity of the proposals received. **A significant 46% of solutions come from consolidated and expanding companies**, while 35% are from businesses already serving their first customers. Only 19 solutions are currently in the prototype phase.

These figures highlight the **increasing engagement of companies offering mature, deployable solutions**, aligning perfectly with Sacyr iChallenges' execution-focused model.

Next Steps Towards Real Impact

In the coming weeks, **Sacyr's evaluation committee will meticulously review the submitted solutions** to select those with the greatest potential impact.

The next phase of the program will see **selected candidates invited to participate in Focus Week**. This intensive period includes one-on-one meetings with Sacyr business specialists, designed to gain deeper insights into the proposals, analyze solutions in detail, and assess their applicability within the company's real operational environments.

"We are particularly encouraged by the substantial number of solutions ready for immediate deployment and those already in the scaling phase," said Patricia Martínez. "This reinforces our commitment to forging long-term partnerships that deliver tangible impact across our infrastructure projects worldwide."

Since its inception in 2018, Sacyr iChallenges has attracted over 1,700 proposals from global innovators and has successfully developed more than 20 pilot projects, significantly contributing to infrastructure transformation through collaborative innovation.

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About Sacyr

Sacyr is a global group listed on the IBEX 35 index, operating in over 20 countries. As a leading international infrastructure developer and operator, it boasts a team of more than 15,000 professionals.

Sacyr's purpose is to propel society towards a sustainable future through innovative projects that deliver positive social, economic, and environmental impact.

<https://www.sacyrichallenges.com/>

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