



ASSOCIATION FRANÇAISE  
DES TUNNELS ET DE  
L'ESPACE SOUTERRAIN

**PRESS RELEASE**  
Paris, February 11, 2020

**ASSOCIATION FRANÇAISE DES TUNNELS ET DE L'ESPACE SOUTERRAIN:  
SIXTEENTH INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS LAUNCHED**  
*September 21-23, 2020, Palais des Congrès – Porte Maillot – Paris*

Paris will become the capital of Tunnelling and Underground Spaces from September 21 to 23, 2020!

The International Congress of the French Tunnelling and Underground Space Association (AFTES) is the where the entire profession meets up every three years. The sixteenth congress will be held in the Palais des Congrès at Porte Maillot in Paris when, for three days, specialists from France and overseas will meet to discuss the key theme: **The Underground – A Space for Innovation**. The 2017 congress proved to be a great success, with over 4,000 participants and 156 exhibitors from 56 different countries. Three years later, the 2020 AFTES congress has been launched and registrations are now open!



## THE UNDERGROUND – A SPACE FOR INNOVATION

With a significant rise in the urban population estimated at 70% in 2040, the underground offers huge potential for planning our cities and living spaces now more than ever. At a time when exploiting the underground has become crucial for creating the resilient urban spaces of tomorrow – and when the introduction of smart construction methods is severely disrupting the profession – the 2020 AFTES congress aims to explore new ways of thinking, enrich our knowledge, and share experiences and expertise while uniting a thriving global industry by means of:



## - CONFERENCES

The conferences will be organised around four major technical and scientific areas in line with the general theme of the congress:

- THE CONTRIBUTION OF UNDERGROUND SPACES TO THE CITY OF THE FUTURE
- DEVELOPMENTS IN THE DESIGN OF UNDERGROUND SPACES AND STRUCTURES
- INNOVATION AND EXPLOITATION IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF UNDERGROUND STRUCTURES
- MAINTAINING UNDERGROUND STRUCTURES FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

**A special session will be devoted to the development of urban underground spaces, their planning and architecture, including the construction sites for Grand Paris.**

## - BRIGHT IDEAS COMPETITION

The AFTES congress launched a competition for new ideas in 2019 on the theme of The Underground – A Space for Innovation in order to mobilise future decision-makers in the world of underground construction. The competition aims to highlight new lines of thinking, issues and proposals from students and / or young graduates, architects, urban planners and engineers regarding their forward-looking vision of urban and suburban underground spaces.

## - EXHIBITOR SECTION DEDICATED TO B2B

The AFTES congress is also a chance for participants to exchange ideas and network. It provides an opportunity for all actors in the world of underground spaces to meet up and forge long-lasting professional links.

With more than 150 French and foreign exhibitors occupying over 10,000 m<sup>2</sup>, the congress will be a real highpoint for the industry.

A large area will be dedicated to associations, start-ups and the underground space committee.

## REGISTRATIONS NOW OPEN:

Various packages are available for congress registrations, including **a new package with a daily badge**.

**For more information and to register, visit: <https://www.aftes2020.fr/fr/inscription>**



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### **About AFTES:**

The Association Française des Travaux en Souterrain (AFTES: French Association of Underground Works) was formed in 1972 to respond to the recommendations of the International Conference on Underground Works held in Washington in 1970. This conference advocated that each country should set up an organisation to unite the different actors and stakeholders in underground works in various capacities. In 2005, the Association Française des Travaux en Souterrain became the Association Française des Tunnels et de l'Espace Souterrain (French Tunnelling and Underground Space Association) after joining the Underground Space Association as part of a Committee. Furthermore, AFTES maintains on-going relations with other French associations that share similar concerns: the Mineral Industry, Civil Engineering, Soil Mechanics, Rock Mechanics, Trenchless Works, etc. Finally, AFTES represents France within AITES, the International Tunnelling and Underground Space Association. In 2020, AFTES had 1060 active members.

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